



SYLLABUS: TH 2140 THEATRE IN WESTERN CULTURE

Professor D. Harlan Wilson
Office 257 Dwyer
Phone 419.586.0317
Office Hours MW 10-12 a.m. and by appointment
Email david.wilson@wright.edu
Website www.wright.edu/~david.wilson
Pilot pilot.wright.edu

Classroom 186 Andrews
Meeting Time online and MWF 1:00-1:55 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

TH 2140 examines the many arts of the theatre, including the role of the playwright, actor, director, designer, critic and audience. Selected scripts from representative historical periods in the western tradition will be used to contextualize and demonstrate the theatrical event. Students can expect to acquire a vocabulary for discussing the various elements of performance while engaging in a concerted historical overview of the theatre's broader cultural framework.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is a multimode course primarily conducted online with clear deadlines for all assignments; as long as you are attentive to these deadlines, you may generally work at your own pace. I am available by email and by appointment for personal consultation. Needless to say, accessing and using computer technology on a regular basis is a crucial requirement for the course. If you do not own a computer at home, make use of the computer labs on campus. TH 2140 is run via WSU's online learning gateway **Pilot**.

You may email me with questions at any time. I always answer within 24 hours, usually sooner, on the condition that emails are written in complete sentences and free of mechanical errors. Please to not email me in Textspeak. This is a college writing course. Make sure your queries are polished and professional and I will promptly address your concerns.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After taking TH 2140, you should be able to do the following:

- ✓ Recognize and understand theatre conventions and personnel.
- ✓ Understand the cultural context of theatre in the development of western civilization.
- ✓ Discuss theatre using a rhetoric specific to the form.
- ✓ Comprehend the structure of a play as well as the different uses of a script for an actor, director and designer.

- ✓ Describe the major historical periods of theatre.
- ✓ Appreciate theatre as an art form as well as a reflection of society.

TEXT

Jacobs, Lee A. *The Compact Bedford Introduction to Drama*. Seventh Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

TH 2140 is part of Element 4 of the Wright State University Core. Learning outcomes for this Element include these criteria:

1. Critically analyzing significant creative, literary, philosophical or religious works.
2. Understanding and discussing the complex blend of imaginative vision, socio-cultural context, ethical values, and aesthetic judgment in creative, philosophical or religious works.
3. Recognizing, evaluating and responding to creative, philosophical or religious works.
4. Developing appropriate and ethical applications of knowledge in the humanities or the arts.

SCREENINGS

There will be **three screenings** of plays adapted into movies that you will be required to attend in person. The screenings will take place during the fifth, tenth and fifteenth weeks of the semester and include, respectively, *Death of a Salesman*, *Hamlet* and *Glengarry Glen Ross*. We will view the better part of each film on **Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:00-1:55 p.m. in 186 Andrews**, reserving Fridays for remaining showtime and classroom discussion.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

There will be a variety of writing assignments in the course. Every **Friday at 11 a.m.**, an assignment will be due, meaning you will be asked to complete one short essay, analysis, summary or reflection per week based upon readings in the textbook and/or screenings. Course grades are based upon a points system. Each assignment is worth 100 points.

An exception will be made for assignments related to film screenings. They will be due the following **Monday at 11 a.m.** in order to give you enough time to reflect on the film and complete your assignment.

All writing will be graded on content as well as proper grammar and syntax. Format your work according to **MLA Style**. Always revise and polish your work carefully before submitting it.

Specific instructions for all assignments are located on Pilot. They must be submitted on their respective due dates and times. Assignments may be submitted as **.doc**, **.docx**, **.rtf** or **.pdf** files. After completing whatever task has been put to you, go to the **Dropbox** and upload the file accordingly.

You are responsible for monitoring the upload of every assignment you submit. Assignments submitted after their due dates have elapsed (whether it be one day, ten days, or one minute) will not be accepted. All due dates are available from the beginning to the end of the course on Pilot so that you can organize and manage your time. Never wait until the last minute to submit work in case of computer glitches or other issues that might crop up. Always provide yourself with enough time to upload your work.

As I grade your work, **Pilot** tallies the points so that you may gauge your performance in the course at any time during the semester. At the end of the semester, points will be converted to percentages, and percentages will be converted to letter grades. Here is the grading rubric:

| | |
|------------|---|
| 90.0-100% | A |
| 80.0-89.9% | B |
| 70.0-79.9% | C |
| 60.0-69.9% | D |
| 0-59.9% | F |

STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER (SSC)



The Student Success Center offers FREE services to help students meet their full potential. Students can find tutoring in any subject, study buddies, one-on-one technology workshops, feedback on writing assignments, and general academic skills coaching. Location: **182 Andrews**. Phone: **419.586.0362**. Web: **www.wright.edu/lake/ssc**.

Students who use the SSC for help on their writing assignments will be given 10 extra credit points for each visit. You may visit the SSC as many times as you like. At the end of the semester, I will tally and add all extra credit points to your final grade. In order to receive extra credit points, you must turn in all assignments for the course.

Call, go to the website, or visit the SSC to make an appointment. If you are a student at the Dayton Campus, you may acquire the same extra credit points by using the SSC in Dunbar Library.

OFFICE OF DISABILITIES SERVICES (ODS)

If you have a disability that will require special accommodations, it is essential that you discuss it with me and the Office of Disability Services before or during the first week of the semester. ODS will work with you on an individual basis to determine what services, equipment and accommodations would be appropriate regarding your documented needs. If you qualify for these types of service, you should initiate contact with me and/or ODS as soon as possible. Please call **Deanna Springer** at **419.586.0366** or **800.237.1477**; she can be contacted by email at **deanna.springer@wright.edu**. For more information, visit the ODS in **225 Dwyer**.

PLAGIARISM & ETIQUETTE

Plagiarism occurs when a writer: [1] copies verbatim from an author without quotation or attempts to disguise the act by selective omissions or alterations; [2] paraphrases from an author without naming the source in the text of the paper or providing a list of references at the end; [3] turns in a paper written by somebody else. As a point of academic integrity, you are required to submit original material of your own creation. Plagiarism of any material is a serious offense

and, if established with sufficient evidence, can result in failure of the course or dismissal from the university.

Under no circumstances should parents or guardians of students contact me with questions or concerns regarding a student's performance or the course itself. Such matters are confidential and protected by university policy. Parents and guardians need to contact the Wright State University administration with questions or concerns. Students, however, may contact me freely and are encouraged to do so.

CLASS CALENDAR

Week Schedule

- 1 **Reading**
INTRODUCTION: THINKING ABOUT DRAMA (1-22)
Writing About Drama (1073-83)
Glossary of Dramatic Terms (1085-92)

- 2 **Reading**
GREEK DRAMA (30-40)
ROMAN DRAMA (104-110)
MEDIEVAL DRAMA (122-32)
Assignment
Summaries of Dramatic Periods

- 3 **Reading**
Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* (41-66)
Sigmund Freud, "The Oedipus Complex" (73-76)
Assignment
Critical Response to Freud & *Oedipus Rex*

- 4 **Reading**
DRAMA IN THE EARLY & MID 20TH CENTURY (494-510)
Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (666-706)
Assignment
Summary of Dramatic Period
Creative Response to *Death of a Salesman*

- 5 **Screening**
Death of a Salesman
Assignment
Analysis of *Death of a Salesman*

- 6 **Reading**
Martin Esslin, "Theatre of the Absurd" (768-70)
D. Harlan Wilson, *Primacy* (online)
Assignment
Critical Response to *Primacy*

- 7 **Reading**
 Samuel Beckett, *Endgame* (739-68)
 Assignment
 Creative Response to *Endgame*
- 8 **Reading**
 RENAISSANCE DRAMA (146-58)
 LATE 17TH & 18TH CENTURY DRAMA (300-12)
 Assignment
 Summaries of Dramatic Periods
- 9 **Reading**
 William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (159-217)
 T.S. Eliot, "Hamlet and His Problems" (227-30)
 Assignment
 Research Essay on *Hamlet* & *Oedipus Rex*
- 10 **Screening**
 Hamlet
 Assignment
 Analysis of *Hamlet*
- 11 **Reading**
 19TH CENTURY DRAMA THROUGH THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY (361-74)
 CONTEMPORARY DRAMA (812-833)
 Assignment
 Summaries of Dramatic Periods
- 12 **Reading**
 Sarah Ruhl, *Eurydice* (996-1016)
 Assignment
 Creative Response to *Eurydice*
- 13 THANKSGIVING BREAK
- 14 **Reading**
 David Mamet, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (online)
 Assignment
 Critical Response to *Glengarry Glen Ross*
- 15 **Screening**
 Glengarry Glen Ross
 Assignment
 Analysis of *Glengarry Glen Ross*