

## THR 463W: DRAMATIC THEORY & CRITICISM

CID 3372

Spring 2008

MWF 1:00-1:50 pm

PAC 240 (Performing Arts Center)

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Office: PAC 284-F

Hours: MWF 10:00-11:45 am

### Catalogue Description

A study of the principles of various styles and periods of dramaturgy, involving a history of criticism from Aristotle to the present. Representative plays will be analyzed for theme, structure, characterization and dialogue with a view to their influences on contemporary theatre. Emphasis is placed on written student criticism and evaluation of plays. Writing Enhanced. Credit 3.

### Course Description

This is a lecture-discussion course on dramatic theory and criticism. While we will read and discuss numerous play excerpts, our focus is not script analysis but, rather, *theory* (why theatre is the way it is—its conventions of writing and production) and *criticism* (how we perceive, understand, and judge theatre). Our study of criticism will be based on the critical perspectives surveyed in Lois Tyson's book, *Critical Theory Today*. On Mondays, we will explore many different forms of criticism. On Wednesdays, we will focus on theoretical issues, particularly those most relevant to current theatre practice. We will spend our Fridays in the computer lab working on five different individual projects.

### Course Objectives

To understand how and why current conventions of writing and production exist.

To understand and apply any of the critical perspectives in analyzing and evaluating a given script or performance

To understand and appreciate how subjective the perception and evaluation of theatre/art is and how these subjective differences, be they individual or cultural, past or present, enrich our art and allow it to evolve continuously.

To understand current theoretical and practical issues facing American theatre.

### Textbook (Optional)

Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*, 2nd Edition. While the first edition is acceptable, all of my page references come from the second edition.

### Graded Components

5 individual projects, each worth 20% of final course grade. You may either post your projects on your blogsite OR type and submit hard copies. No handwriting will be accepted.

Project #1: due Wednesday, February 9, at 1:00 pm

Project #2: due Wednesday, March 2, at 1:00 pm

Project #3: due Wednesday, March 30, at 1:00 pm

Project #4: due Wednesday, April 20, at 1:00 pm

Project #5: due Wednesday, May 11, at 5:00 pm

### Attendance

By university policy for classes that meet three times each week (MWF classes), you may not be penalized for up to 3 absences, nor for any absence due to pre-approved religious observance; beyond that depends on the instructor's discretion.

After 3 absences, you will be penalized 3 points from your final course grade for each excess absence, unless there is written intervention (with specific dates, times, and reason) from our department chair or the Dean of Students.

For each day of class that you arrive on time, you will be rewarded with 1/13th of a point (a "tasty treat") to be added to your final course grade.

### Late Work

Any project submitted late will be penalized one letter grade (-10 points) for each week overdue.

### Final Exam

There is no final exam; however, your final project is due that day (Wednesday, May 11, at 5:00 pm).

### Classroom Conduct

Food and candy are not permitted in the classroom. Beverages are permitted, if they are in spill-proof containers. Laptops are permitted only on Fridays, when we work in the computer lab. Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and stored out of sight.

### Academic Dishonesty

Any incident of academic dishonesty, most notably submitting someone else's work with your name on it, will result in a grade of zero for the project as well as a report to the department chair. Any subsequent incident will result in automatic course failure and a report to the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and the Dean of Students.

### Final Course Grade

90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, 0-59 = F

### Students with Disabilities

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, you should register with the SHSU Counseling Center and then talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. Please note that no accommodation will be made until you register with the Counseling Center.