

## Syllabus

THEA 313WR/ENG 389

History of American Theater and Drama

Professor: James Flannery

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This course intends to provide students with a broad overview of the history of American theater and drama in relation to those political, social, religious and cultural forces that shaped the theatrical art of their time. As such, the course is also a history of the changing dynamics of American culture and society over the past two and a quarter centuries. For each class session students will be expected to read at least one full length play as well as other material to be distributed. Much of the course will focus on class discussion of the assigned plays.

Students will be required to write short response papers every other week on assigned plays. These are due at the Tuesday class. The papers will be graded both for expressive form and substantive content. Class attendance is compulsory and absences must be explained in writing.

Students will be required to write a final paper of approximately 3000-5000 words due on the last day of the exam period. That paper can be an analysis of a single play not on the reading list, the work of a particular playwright, a theme explored by several different authors or a theatrical movement of special significance. Students should consult the instructor regarding the topic and the approach they intend to take.

Grades will be determined on approximately the following basis:

Class participation: 20%

Short papers: 40%

Final paper: 40%

There will also be a mid-term exam mainly focused on terminology as well as historical and critical concepts. The exam will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

## Assignments

Th. Jan. 15 Introduction

T. Jan. 20 Introductory material

Th. Jan. 22 *The Contrast*, Royal Tyler (Meserve)

T. Jan. 27 *Metamora*, John Augustus Stone (Meserve)

Th. Jan. 29 *Fashion*, Anna Cora Mowatt (Meserve)

T. Feb. 3 *Rip Van Winkle*, Joseph Jefferson/Dion Boucicault (Meserve)

Th. Feb. 5 *Glance at New York*, Benjamin A. Baker (Meserve)

T. Feb. 10 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe

Th. Feb. 12 *Girl of the Golden West*, David Belasco (Meserve)

T. Feb. 17 *A Man's World*, Rachel Crowthers (Barlow)

Th. Feb. 19 *Trifles*, Susan Glaspell, and *Plumes*, Georgia Douglas Johnson  
(Barlow)

T. Feb. 24 *Machinal*, Sophia Treadwell (Barlow)

Th. Feb. 26 *The Hairy Ape* and *Emperor Jones*, Eugene O'Neill

T. Mar. 3 *Street Scene*, Elmer Rice

Th. Mar. 5 *Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck

Spring Break March 9-13

T. Mar. 17 *Golden Boy*, Clifford Odets

Th. Mar. 19 *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder

T. Mar. 24 *Death of A Salesman*, Arthur Miller

Th. Mar. 26 *Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams

T. Mar. 31 *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Edward Albee

Th. Apr. 2 *America Hurrah*, Jean Claude Van Itallie

T. Apr. 7 *West Side Story*, Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen

Sondheim

Th. Apr. 9 *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, Eugene O'Neill

T. Apr. 14 *M. Butterfly*, David Henry Hwang

Th. Apr. 16 *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, August Wilson

T. Apr. 21 *The Colored Museum*, George C. Wolfe

Th. Apr. 23 *Buried Child*, Sam Shepard

Textbooks

- *On Stage America*, ed. Walter O. Meserve
- *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Edward Albee
- *Plays by American Women, 1900-1920*, ed. Judith Barlow
- *M. Butterfly*, David Henry Hwang
- *Death of A Salesman*, Arthur Miller
- *Westside Story*, Laurents, Bernstein, and Sondheim
- *Golden Boy*, Clifford Odets
- *Anna Christie, The Hairy Ape and The Emperor Jones*, Eugene O'Neill
- *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, Eugene O'Neill
- *Street Scene*, Elmer Rice
- *America Hurrah*, Jean Claude Van Itallie
- *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder
- *Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams
- *The Colored Museum*, George C. Wolfe
- *Buried Child*, Sam Shepherd
- *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, August Wilson