

Syllabus for
COM 215—Introduction to Theatre
3 Credit Hours
Fall 1999

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the various elements and functions of theatre in society. Focuses on becoming an intelligent artistic critic and evaluating art from a Christian perspective.

This course is designed to provide the student with an overall introduction to the theatre arts. Students will study theatre as an art form, the basic elements of a play, the role of the critic, the audience, the scene designer, the director, the customer, and the director. Special emphasis will be placed on developing evaluative skills while watching theatre.

II. COURSE GOALS

Introduction to the theatre will present a broad perspective of theatre to enhance the college student's experience and understanding in the field of drama, as well as television and film. Special emphasis is placed on the development of an intelligent critical attitude of the student as an audience participant. Also special emphasis is placed on evaluating art from a Christian perspective.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. Terminal Objectives

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student will be able to do the following:

1. List and discuss the components of a well-made play.
(General Competency No. 1 and Subject Competency No. 1 and No. 10)
2. Define and discuss the different facets of the theater arts including playwriting, acting, directing, and design. (General Competency No. 1)
3. Use the elements of dramatic criticism in the form of a written critique of this semester's production. (Subject Competency No. 8 and No. 10)
4. Use the elements of dramatic criticism in the form of a written research paper concerning a play he or she will view this semester. (Subject Competency No. 8 and No. 10)
5. Use the lab experience given to him or her which is the opportunity to construct, paint, and assemble the settings and costumes for the major productions this semester.
6. Develop a personal method of evaluating art from a Christian perspective.
(Subject Competency No. 8 and No. 10)

B. Unit Objectives

As a result of successfully completing these units, the student will be able to do the following:

Unit I

1. Define art according to Schaeffer, Goethe, and Wright.
2. List Goethe's three purposes of art.

3. List perspectives Schaeffer uses to evaluate art.
4. Compare and contrast acting in life and acting on stage.
5. Discuss the role the audience plays in a theatrical experience.
6. Discuss Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's theory of evaluating art and its application to today's theatre.
7. Define empathy and aesthetic distance.
8. Discuss and contrast the role of the drama critic and reviewer.
9. Discuss the Stanislavski system of acting.
10. Define the functions and responsibilities of the actor and director.
11. List the director's qualifications and obligations.
12. Define the function of the producer.
13. Compare and contrast the roles of the playwright, director, and producer.
14. Summarize the plot structure, dramatic action, and theme of A Raisin In The Sun, and The Glass Menagerie.
15. Discuss the process the playwright goes through from idea to production.
16. Compare and contrast rhythm, tempo and pace.
17. List and describe the different schools of acting.
18. Compare and contrast the method approach of acting to the technical approach.

Unit II

1. List Wright's definition of comedy and list its elements.
2. Contrast a comedy with a farce.
3. Summarize the plot structure, dramatic action, and theme of The Little Foxes, Odd Couple, Tartuffe, and Death of a Salesman.
4. List Wright's definition of tragedy.
5. List five basic principles of pure tragedy.
6. List and define eight major genres of the theatre.
7. Discuss the form and structure of musical theatre.
8. Discuss the playwrights effective use of dramatic characters.

Unit III

1. List the purpose of costume design.
2. List the elements of scenic design.
3. List the principles of lighting design.
4. Identify the advantages and disadvantages of the basic auditorium shapes.
5. List the obligations and responsibilities of the scenic, costume, and lighting designer.
6. Discuss the chain of authority governing the back stage of the theatre.

C. Objectives for Students in Teacher Preparation Programs

The Teacher Preparation Program meets the competency-based requirements established by the Oklahoma Commission on Teacher Preparation. This course meets the following competencies: General Competency 1, Subject Competencies 1, 8 and 10.

- GC 1: The teacher understands the central concepts and methods of inquiry of the subject matter discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.
- SC 1: Maintains a current knowledge of concepts of the field of speech communication including: oral interpretation of literature, theater, the electronic media, public speaking, argumentation, and critical thinking skills.

SC 8: Uses differing assessment strategies to evaluate student competencies in a variety of speaking/listening situations.

SC 10: Understands and uses teaching strategies appropriate for the analysis and presentation of a variety of forms (genres) of public address and literature of the theater, available in electronic media and from printed sources.

IV. TEXTBOOKS

- A. Schaeffer, Frank (1981). Addicted to mediocrity. New York: Crossway Books.
- B. Wilson, Edwin (1991). The theatre experience. St. Louis: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

V. COURSE PROCEDURES

A. Course Prerequisites—None

B. Evaluation Procedures

The grade in this course will be based upon the following items:

1. Two one-hour exams (30%)
2. One term paper (15%)
3. Crew Grade (10%)
4. Final Exam (30%)
5. Quiz Average (15%)

C. University Policies

1. "Consistent with Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, ORU ensures that no 'qualified individual' will be denied reasonable accommodation in the form of modification of policies, practices and/or procedures." Students with disabilities who wish to access services should contact their professor(s) and the Office of Disability Services at Ext. 7355 to initiate the process.
2. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, video, multimedia, or computer software.
3. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence will be charged a late exam fee.

D. Other Information

Literacy--The Communication Arts Department will not accept for credit any written assignment which contains more than an average of three grammatical and/or typographical errors per page.

VI. ATTENDANCE POLICY

- A. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University.
- B. Double cuts will be assessed for absences immediately preceding or following holidays or breaks.
- C. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.

D. Unexcused Absences

1. One unexcused absence will be allowed per the number of times a class meets per week. For example, if a class meets twice a week, two unexcused absences will be allowed over the course of the semester.
2. Absences in excess of the allowed number will assess the following penalties:
 - a. one absence: one letter grade dropped
 - b. two absences: two letter grades dropped
 - c. three absences: three letter grades dropped
 - d. more than three: the student will fail
3. A student missing class due to illness must take an unexcused absence. Extended illnesses will be handled on an individual basis and will require a doctor's excuse.
4. The student is responsible for obtaining class assignments and material covered during an absence. All work must be completed as scheduled. An absence is not an excuse to turn in late work.

E. Administratively Excused Absences

Students who must miss class for University-sponsored activities must do the following:

1. Inform the professor before the event.
2. Arrange to complete missed work within one week.
3. Not commit to class performance (oral reports, speeches, television tapings, group presentations, etc.) on a date the student will be gone. Makeup work will not be permitted for students voluntarily committing to performance on the date of an administratively excused absence.
4. Present an excuse, signed by the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the first class session upon return.

VII. COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK	SCHEDULE	ASSIGNMENT
Week 1	Class Intro Discussion of Art and Definition of Art Discussion of <u>Addicted to Mediocrity</u>	Read: <u>Addicted to Mediocrity</u> Read Chapter 1
Week 2	Discuss the Functions of Art in Our Society	
Week 3	Discuss Actor - Audience Relationship Contrast - Chapter One	Read Chapter 2 Read " <i>A Raisin In The Sun</i> "
Week 4	Discuss Play #1 Discuss Expectations of the Audience	Read Chapter 3
Week 5	Discuss the Role and Responsibilities of a Critic Discuss Play #2	Read Play #2 - " <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> " Read Chapters 5 and 6
Week 6	Discuss Acting Review Different Stage Positions Discuss Character Development	Read Chapter 7 Read Play #3 - " <i>The Little Foxes</i> "

Week 7	Discuss Play #3 Discuss Role of Director Good Director's Checklist Role of the Producer Exam I	Prepare for Exam 1
Week 8	Discuss Playwright and Convention of Dramatic Structure	Read Chapter 8 Read Chapter 9
Week 9	Compare Climatic to Episodic Structure Discuss Nontraditional Forms and Musical Theatre	Read Chapters 10, 11 and 12 Read Play #4 - " <i>Tartuffe</i> "
Week 10	Discuss Play #4 Discuss Genres - Purpose and Point of View - Tragedy and Serious Drama	Read Chapters 13 and 14 Read Chapter 15
Week 11	Discuss Comedy and Tragicomedy Exam II	Review for Exam II Read Play #5 - " <i>The Odd Couple</i> "
Week 12	Discuss Play #5 Discuss Stage Space Discuss the Scenic Design	Read Chapter 16 Read Chapters 17 and 18
Week 13	Discuss Costume Design	Read Chapter 19
Week 14	Discuss Lighting Design	Read Play #6 - " <i>Death of a Salesman</i> " Chapter 20
Week 15	Discuss Play #6 Discuss Play's Process	Review for Final Exam

Laura Holland
Name of Instructor

COM-215
Course No.

Introduction to Theatre
Title of Course

Communication Arts
Name of Department

MISSION

The lifestyle at ORU is rooted in the word "Wholeness." ORU seeks to educate the whole person, with balanced emphasis placed on the development of mind, spirit, and body.

GENERAL OUTCOMES

1. Spiritual Development
2. Physical Development
3. Communication
4. Analysis
5. Problem Solving
6. Valuing in Decision-making
7. Social Interaction
8. Global Perspectives
9. Effective Citizenship
10. Aesthetic Responsiveness

MAJOR OUTCOMES

The student will be able to define and discuss the different facets of the Theatre arts, including play writing, acting, directing, and design.

The student will be able to use the elements of dramatic criticism in the form of a written critique of this semester.

The student will develop a personal method of evaluating art from a Christian perspective.

The student's lab experience will give him or her the opportunity to construct, paint, and assemble the settings and costumes for the major productions this semester.

The student will be able to use the elements of dramatic criticism in the form of a written research paper concerning a play he or she will view this semester.

COURSE GOALS

The student will be able to list and discuss the components of a well-made play.

Define comedy and tragedy: List its elements; and contrast comedy to farce; tragedy to melodrama.

List and define eight major genres of the theatre.

List the obligations and responsibilities of the playwright, director, actor, designers, and producers.

Detail the entire theatrical process from idea to opening night.

ASSESSMENT OF COURSE GOALS

STIMULI:

Two hour exams and final.

One term paper that is half research and half critique of a live theatre performance.

The student will take six quizzes over assigned plays and discuss the plays in class.

The student will fulfill a crew assignment by working on a production during the semester.

CRITERIA:

The teacher assesses the following projects: the exams, the paper, and the quizzes.

The students will assess a group grade, and the crew will also assign an individual grade.