

THAR 151: Fundamentals of Playwriting

Instructor: Garret Schneider
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Office Hours: By Appointment

Class Sessions: MWF – 2:10-3PM
Course Number: 06961, Section A02
Room: Putnam 204

Objectives

This class serves as an introduction to theories of playwriting in particular, and dramatic writing in general. Students will be expected to complete one ten-minute play in addition to several shorter writing projects. All writing projects are assigned so that you can work towards a mastery of the playwriting theories presented in this class.

Format

Lecture / Seminar / Workshop

Required Texts

All of these are available at the bookstore. ISBNs are provided if you want to obtain the books through another way. Since they are available in Athens, no excuses will be accepted for not having the play/text 'in time'.

Four Major Plays, by Henrik Ibsen
ISBN-10: 0199536198

The Theban Plays, by Sophocles
ISBN-10: 0140440038

Backwards & Forwards: A Technical Manual for Reading Plays, by David Ball
ISBN-10: 0809311100

Required Performances

Plays are meant to be performed, and to understand how they function, it is important to see them off of the page. Each of these viewing assignments have a review/analysis component as well.

You are required to attend the following:

1. *Marisol* by Jose Rivera
February 17-20, 24-27
Doors Open: 7:30pm / Play Starts: 8pm
Forum Theater, RTV Building

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2. One of the 'Lab Shows'.

All tickets are given on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Carapace

by David Robinson

Feb 5-7

Play Starts: 8pm

Baker Theater, Kantner Hall

Proof

by David Auburn

Play Starts: 8pm

Dinner With Friends

by Donald Margulies

Play Starts: 8pm

Attendance

This class is a seminar, with some lecturing in it. Ideally, you will talk as much (hopefully more) than I will be. Therefore, it's essential to the success of the class that you come prepared.

Prepared means not only doing the assigned readings, but also thinking of them critically, and coming into class prepared to discuss the work of your peers.

Each unexcused absence will lower your grade by 5 points out of 100 possible. For example: two unexcused absences (a loss of 10 points) will change the grade of 'A' to 'B'. Two unexcused tardies, each under twenty minutes, will be considered one absence.

If a class is missed, you will only be excused with: (a) a verifiable health center visit, with the name and phone number of the physician scene, (b) a verifiable family emergency, or (c) Dean's excuse.

Academic Honesty and Discrimination Policies

Submitting work of other students as your own, or plagiarism in any form will result in penalties ranging from an 'F' on the assignment to expulsion from the University, depending on the seriousness of the offense.

There will be no discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation or physical handicap.

Grading

Participation	20 points
Take-home and In-class Writing Assignments / Portfolio	35 points
Play / Performance Analysis	25 points
Ten-Minute Play (Final)	<u>30 points</u>
TOTAL	110 points

Note

Templates for analysis will be handed-out before the analysis is due. All work is due typed, and before class starts.

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Tentative Schedule

The following schedule is subject to change. Everything on it will be covered, but the speed and depth of the subjects will vary.

Class	Lecture	Assignment
M 1/4	Introductions – Difference between playwrighting and screenwriting – Character Desires – Definition of Ideas	Definition of Ideas
W 1/6	Syllabus -- Conflict Practice – Go-over Syllabus – Read Definition Exercises and talk about them – Beginning/Middle/End	Object with meaning
F 1/8	Read Objects with meaning exercise, talk about them	Start Reading <i>Backwards and Forwards</i>
M 1/11	Presentations on the first three chapters of <i>Backwards and Forwards</i>	
W 1/13	Start watching <i>Dr Horrible</i>	
F 1/15	Finish watching <i>Dr Horrible</i>	Read <i>Oedipus Rex</i> Finish reading <i>Backwards and Forwards</i> OPD #1 Assignment
M 1/18	MLK DAY	
W 1/20	Finish presentations on <i>Backwards and Forwards</i>	
F 1/22	Start Class-discussion of <i>Oedipus Rex</i>	Goals and tactics in <i>Oedipus Rex</i>
M 1/25	Finish Class-Discussion of <i>Oedipus Rex</i> Realities → Poetic and Absolute → Perception Shift	Pass-in Oedipus Paper
W 1/27	Go-over Perception Shift Exercise – Onstage Manifestations and Tactics	Write a paragraph on what interests you. Write a second on what you want to say about it.
F 1/29	Perception-Shift Exercise	Read <i>Dollhouse</i>
M 2/1	Class Discussion of <i>Dollhouse</i>	
W 2/3	Finish Class-discussion of <i>Dollhouse</i> Discussion of Onstage Manifestation with a Tactic	
F 2/5	Reading of <i>Armed With Peanut Butter</i> → Discussion of Onstage Manifestation with a tactic – Synthesis of Realities and Perception shifts	<i>Carapace</i> opens Write One-page dialogue of character with a goal, and onstage manifestation of goals
M 2/8	Read One-page dialogues and discuss	SCHEDULE MEETINGS for portfolio and ten-minutes
W 2/10	Class Discussion of <i>Carapace</i>	
F 2/12	Story vs Plot → using all previous texts as examples – How are ten-minutes coming?	

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M	2/15	Re-examination of the arch	
W	2/17	Workshop: TBA	
F	2/19	Workshop: TBA	<i>Marisol</i> opens
M	2/22	Workshop: TBA	
W	2/24	Workshop: TBA	
F	2/26	Workshop: TBA	
M	3/1	Workshop: TBA	
W	3/3	Workshop: TBA	
F	3/3	Class Discussion of <i>Marisol</i>	
M	3/8	Movie and Prep	
W	3/10	Movie and Prep	
F	3/12	Prep	
M	3/15	FINAL READINGS	
W	3/17		
F	3/19		