

English 544, Section 1, Schedule 21131
San Diego State University, Spring 2015
TTH 2–3:15, AH-1112 (LRS)

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The Actor on Stage: wood engraving on paper by Eric Gill, 1923 (Tate Museum)

From Page to Stage

Welcome! This new interdisciplinary, service-learning course combines scholarly research into dramatic literature and performance, outreach to the local theatre community, pre-professional experience, and the creation of a digital repository of accomplishments and resources. We will read, analyze, and write about a variety of diverse plays, studying their contexts and going to see those plays performed around San Diego. We will also learn about some theories and history of theatre practices and the role of professionals such as the dramaturg, who studies drama in order to enhance specific productions. We will organize and lead a post-performance discussion with audience members and actors. Professionals from local theatres, such as Old Globe artistic director Barry Edelstein and Cygnet Theatre dramaturg Taylor Wycoff, will visit the class. For the final project, we will research and produce program notes and a school study guide for an upcoming San Diego show. These will be incorporated into a website that will be available to other students, educators, arts administrators, and members of the general public, further connecting SDSU to the broader San Diego arts community.

Required Texts

Leach, Robert. *Theatre Studies: The Basics*. London: Routledge, 2013.

Edelstein, Barry. *Thinking Shakespeare*. New York: Spark, 2007.

Englander, Nathan. *The Twenty-seventh Man*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 2014.

Shaw, George Bernard and Alan Jay Lerner. *Pygmalion and My Fair Lady*. New York: Signet (Penguin) Classics, 2006.

Shakespeare, William. *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598).

+ one more play, to be determined by partners

There will be readings available on our course Blackboard site and you will need a folder for handouts.

Required Coursework and Grading:

Grading Scale (1000 total points possible)

140: attendance & prepared participation
(5 points each for 28 classes)

60: contributions to class discussions (3/class)

50: research presentation on local theatre

150: 3 essays or attendance at 3 performances

200: midterm exam

200: final research project and presentation

200: final exam

A = 1000-920

B+ = 899-870

B- = 819-800

C = 769-720

D+ = 699-670

D- = 619-600

A- = 919-900

B = 869-820

C+ = 799-770

C- = 719-700

D = 669-620

F = 599 – 0

Formal Statement of Student Learning Outcomes with Connection to Departmental Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate that they have read, attended, and analyzed a selection of plays performed by local theatres in San Diego during the spring of 2015 through:

- creating discussion points and questions to be shared with audience members after performances
- clearly and insightfully articulating their analyses orally and in Web-based and traditional written work
- answering exam questions about the plays

This outcome corresponds to departmental outcomes 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, concerned with maintaining a reading schedule, reading across genre and media, and evaluating literary expression.

2. Students will develop written, oral, and digital literacy through the navigation through, and creation of, Wordpress blog sites or other resources; through in-class and post-show discussions; and through the submission of written analysis.

This outcome corresponds to departmental outcomes 1.2, concerned with digital literacy, and 2.3, concerned with developing writing skills. It also fulfills outcomes 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3, concerned with acquiring and implementing relevant literary and cultural terminology.

3. Students will collaboratively undertake scholarly research on a play to be produced in future by a local theatre, locating and incorporating a primary and secondary sources into their writing and employing precise MLA standards of citation, in order to create a dramaturg's portfolio of performance program notes and a school study guide for that local theatre.

This outcome corresponds to departmental outcomes 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3; as well as 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3, concerned with undertaking scholarly research and identifying and assessing historical periods and features of literature; and 5.2 and 5.3, concerned with different cultural perspectives.

4. Students will connect with staff, performers, crew, and audiences of local theatres, forging a pre-professional career network, through attending performances, facilitating a post-show discussion, participating in discussions with class visitors, and creating program notes and a school study guide for use by local theatres.

This outcome corresponds to departmental outcome 6.2 and 6.3, concerned with synthesizing connections between literature, scholarship, and the world outside of the classroom.

Class Procedure

While class sessions will often include a lecture, on which you should take notes, this course will be conducted as a seminar, in which **the emphasis will be on discussion**, either among the class as a whole or within smaller groups. You are therefore expected to come to class having done the reading very carefully and be ready to participate fully in the analysis of that reading. This is an extremely important aspect of the class and is weighted correspondingly in your final grade. You are further expected to arrive promptly and stay until the end of every class, since arriving late and leaving early is very disruptive. **Punctual attendance is included in the final grade. You will receive points for each day of attendance and additional points for contributions made in class. Points will be deducted for late arrival, early departure, or any disruptive or distracting behaviour. The current reading should always accompany you to class.**

Midterm Exam and Final Exam

The midterm and final exams are intended to be rigorous enough to motivate you to read and watch carefully and to pay close attention in class, since doing so will ensure that you will perform successfully on them. They will cover significant components of the assigned reading, class discussions, lectures, and presentations. You will be required to identify characters, main events, themes, and prominent passages of the plays, as well as demonstrating knowledge of pertinent historical, theoretical, and performance information. You may only make up a missed exam if you provide official documentation of your absence, such as a **doctor's note or a death certificate**.

Research Presentation on Local Theatre

Early in the semester, you will select a local theatre from the list below and do research on it to present to the rest of the class. Your research should include such details as: location, history, mission, space, seating capacity, type of audience, budget, artistic director's name, education and/or outreach director's name, dramaturg's name, past productions, and a list of future productions. You should share the website, a map, a photo of the venue and of a past production, and contact information with us. If possible, you should speak with a theatre staff person to verify details to pass on to the class.

- The Old Globe Theatre
- San Diego Repertory Theatre
- La Jolla Playhouse
- Cygnet Theatre
- San Diego Junior Theatre
- Moxie Theatre
- Diversionary Theatre
- North Coast Rep
- South Coast Rep
- The Coronado Playhouse
- New Fortune Theatre
- Circle Circle Dot Dot
- Starlight Musical Theatre
- On Stage Playhouse, Chula Vista
- California Center for the Arts, Escondido
- Moonlight Amphitheatre
- Lamplighters Community Theatre
- Patio Playhouse, Escondido
- Poway Center for the Performing Arts
- Lambs Players Theatre
- East County Performing Arts Center
- Mo'Olelo Performing Arts

Final Research Project and Presentation (detailed guidelines will be provided)

During the semester, you will be collaborating on a Web or other project that will be presented to the class in April or May. Early on, you and your partner(s) will select a play that is scheduled to be performed at a local theatre, based on the presentations given at the beginning of the semester. You will individually read the selected play and then analyze it together during class sessions designated for this, with the goal of preparing a dramaturg's portfolio on the play to make available to the theatre. The portfolio will include information on the play that could be included in audience members' programs and a school study guide including classroom activities and corresponding Common Core State Standards that teachers could use who are bringing students to see the play. You are welcome to use any sources for your research, but you must cite all of your sources for both quoted material **and ideas**, including a works cited page that follows MLA guidelines. If you wish to make reference to the words or **ideas** of someone else in your writing, you are required to fully and accurately acknowledge your source(s). **Plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and will result in an F for the course.** For your presentation, you will provide a pitch that you could also give to the theatre, promoting the use of your portfolio.

Special Needs

If you have a disability and need special accommodations but have not contacted Student Disability Services, at 619-594-6473 (Calpulli Center, Suite 3101), please do so. Please also make an appointment with me to discuss accommodations privately for which you have received authorization.

Tentative Class Schedule (subject to change)

Date	Assignment to be completed BEFORE class	In-class plan
Th 1/22		Introductions; go over syllabus
T 1/27	Read <i>Theatre Studies</i> , Chapters 1 & 2; complete contract & written assignment	Lecture: Theatre/Performance; bring contract & assignment
Th 1/29	Read <i>Theatre Studies</i> , Chapter 4; get \$37 in exact change for tickets	Lecture: Theatre History +bring \$37 in exact change; +choose project play/ partner(s) +WordPress tutorial
T 2/3	Read <i>Theatre Studies</i> , Chapters 5 & 6	Lecture: Acting & Directing +presentations
Th 2/5	Read Essay 1 in Assignments on Blackboard	Lecture: Dramaturgy +presentations +dramaturg Andrea Kovich talk
T 2/10	Read Essay 2 in Assignments on Blackboard	Discuss essay + presentations
Th 2/12	Read Essay 3 in Assignments on Blackboard + school study guides on Blackboard	Discuss essay + presentations + Marcos Martinez visits
T 2/17	Read <i>The Twenty-seventh Man</i> , p 7-30	Lecture: <i>Twenty-seventh Man</i>
Th 2/19	Read <i>The Twenty-seventh Man</i> , p 31-46	Discuss: <i>Twenty-seventh Man</i> & program; WordPress tutorial + meet with project partner(s)
Su 2/22	See <i>The Twenty-seventh Man</i> at 2 p.m. at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park	
T 2/24	Compose discussion points/questions; if not seeing show, write five-page essay	Barry Edelstein visits; essay
Th 2/26	Study for midterm exam	MIDTERM EXAM
T 3/3	Read <i>Pygmalion</i> , Acts 1-3	Lecture: Shaw & <i>Pygmalion</i>
Th 3/5	Read <i>Pygmalion</i> , Acts 4-5	Discussion: <i>Pygmalion</i> ; meet with project partner
T 3/10	Read <i>My Fair Lady</i> , Act 1	Lecture: <i>My Fair Lady</i>
Th 3/12	Read <i>My Fair Lady</i> , Act 2; compose discussion points/questions	Discussion: <i>My Fair Lady</i> + Taylor Wycoff visits
Su 3/15	See <i>My Fair Lady</i> at 7 p.m. at the Cygnet Theatre & contribute to post-show discussion	

Date	Assignment to be completed BEFORE class	In-class plan
T 3/17	If not seeing show, write five-page essay	Discuss show/program; essay
Th 3/19	Read <i>Thinking Shakespeare</i> , Chapter 1-2	Shakespeare in Performance
T 3/24	Read <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> , Acts 1-3	Lecture: <i>Much Ado</i>
Th 3/26	Read <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> , Acts 4-5	Discuss: <i>Much Ado</i> ; compose discussion points/questions
Fri 3/27	See <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> at 7 p.m. at San Diego Junior Theatre in Balboa Park	& contribute to post-show talk

SPRING BREAK

T 4/7	If not seeing show, write five-page essay	Discuss show/program notes & study guide; essay due + Jason Maddy visits
Th 4/9	Read <i>Thinking Shakespeare</i> , Chapter 8	Lecture/discussion; finalize presentation & website/project
T 4/14	Read <i>Thinking Shakespeare</i> , Chapter 11-12	Lecture/discussion; finalize presentation & website/project
Th 4/16	Prepare presentation	Final rehearsal for presentations
T 4/21	Prepare presentation	Project presentations
Th 4/23	Prepare presentation	Project presentations
T 4/28	Prepare presentation	Project presentations
Th 4/30	Prepare presentation	Project presentations
T 5/5	Prepare presentation	Project presentations
Th 5/7	Review for final exam	Review for final exam; submit project with works cited page
T 5/12	Review for final exam	FINAL EXAM: 1-3 p.m.

