

Department of English & Writing Studies

**Understanding Performance
Theatre Studies 2201F (001)**
Fall 2016

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Location: Arts & Humanities Building 1B06

Date/Time: Monday 11:30am-1:30pm,
Wednesday 11:30am-12:30pm

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course will equip students with the interpretive and theoretical tools necessary to conduct basic performance analysis. From costumes to lighting to sound effects to textual alterations, students will learn to analyze a production while exploring the social, political, and aesthetic meanings of the required texts.

Course Materials

Textbooks (available at the bookstore):

1. Balme, Christopher B. *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008. Paperback ISBN 978-0-5216-7223-8
2. Bennett, Alan. *The History Boys*. London: Faber and Faber, 2004. Paperback ISBN 0-571-22464-4
3. *A Chorus Line: The Book of the Musical*. New York: Applause, 1995. Paperback ISBN 1-55783-131-9
4. Ibsen, Henrik. *Four Major Plays: A Doll's House, Ghosts, Hedda Gabler, The Master Builder*. Trans. James McFarlane and Jens Arup. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1981. Paperback ISBN 978-0-19-953619-1
5. Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. Folger Shakespeare Library. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992. Paperback ISBN 978-0-7434-7712-3

Theatre Productions:

Live:

1. *The History Boys* (McManus Theatre, London, Ontario), Wed. 5 Oct. 8pm
2. *A Chorus Line* (Stratford Festival, Stratford, Ontario), Wed. 26 Oct. 2pm
3. *Q1 Hamlet* (ARTS Project, London, Ontario), Wed. 9 Nov. 8pm

Videos (screened in class):

1. *A Chorus Line* (dir. Richard Attenborough)
2. *A Doll's House*, Young Vic Theatre (dir. Carrie Cracknell, available through Digital Theatre Plus, Weldon)
3. *A Doll's House*, Mabou Mines (dir. Lee Breuer, available on DVD, Arts Video Library)
4. DV8, *Enter Achilles*
5. *The History Boys* (dir. Nicholas Hytner)

Methods of Evaluation

Performance Analysis (1000 words)	due Oct.19	15%
Monologue from one of the plays on the course	in class Nov. 7	20%
Essay (2000 words)	due Dec. 7	25%
Attendance, taken at each class and at performances		5%
Final Exam (2 hours)	Christmas exam period	35%

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. **Please note:** The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

Timetable:

Sept.12-14	Introduction; performance studies (Balme, Introduction)
Sept.19-21	Space, place, and dance (Balme, Chapters 3 and 10); DV8, <i>Enter Achilles</i>
Sept.26-28	Performers and actors (Balme, Ch.1): Alan Bennett, <i>The History Boys</i> Wed. Sept. 28, choosing and approaching monologues
Oct.3-5	Watch film of <i>The History Boys</i> in class and discuss; Balme, Ch. 2 Wed. Oct. 5, 8 pm, see the play onstage at the McManus Theatre
Oct.12	Brainstorming performance analysis of <i>The History Boys</i> ; Balme, Ch. 8
Oct.17-19	film of <i>A Chorus Line</i> in class Mon; Wed. Music Theatre (Balme, Ch.9); Performance Analysis due Wed. Oct.19
Oct.24-26	Mon. Oct. 24, work on monologues; Wed. Oct.26, 2 pm, see <i>A Chorus Line</i> at Stratford Festival
Oct. 31-Nov.2	Dramatic Text: William Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> and <i>Q1 Hamlet</i>
Nov.7-9	Mon. Present Monologues; Wed. <i>Hamlet</i> (continued) Wed. Nov.9, 8 pm, see <i>Q1 Hamlet</i> at the ARTS Project

Nov.14-16	Mon. Nov. 14 first hour, discuss Q1 <i>Hamlet</i> ; Second hour and Wed., Dramatic Text: Henrik Ibsen, <i>A Doll's House</i> ; Balme, Ch. 7
Nov.21-23	<i>A Doll's House</i> : watch Young Vic version in class
Nov.28-30	<i>A Doll's House</i> Mabou Mines version in class
Dec.5-7	Mon. Dec. 5, discuss exam format; Essay due Wed. Dec. 7

Assignments:

1. **Performance Analysis** (1000 words) due Oct.19, worth 15%

Take extensive notes at the performance of *The History Boys*, Wed. Oct. 5, 8 pm, at the McManus Theatre.

In class on Oct. 12, we will brainstorm a Performance Analysis of *The History Boys*, reading Balme Chapter 8 and adding to our notes so that they answer the Questionnaire for Performance Analysis (Balme 140-1).

Use your notes to write an analysis of the performance that focuses on one specific element and presents a clear argument about that element of the performance.

Your analysis, due Wed. Oct. 19, will be a short essay, in MLA format with MLA style documentation.

Refer to sources for your analysis: the performance, the text, the program, any reviews or other media materials, possible actor and director interviews, talk backs or Q & As, recorded or printed interviews, memoirs, and other biographical material from the playwright, as well as secondary sources in the form of critical articles or monographs.

Include all needed citations and Works Cited list. Number every page of your essay. See OWL Purdue website for information on MLA style guidelines and ask me if you need help with MLA.

2. **Monologue from one of the plays on the course**, Nov. 7, worth 20%

In class on Wed. Sept. 28, we will choose monologues and talk about how to approach them. On Mon. Oct. 24 we will rehearse monologues for presentation and analysis. Then on Mon. 7 Nov., we will present all our monologues, each one followed by discussion and analysis.

You must memorize the monologue; however, you can give a copy of it to a classmate, and then call line if you forget a line.

Your mark will be based not so much on memorization of text or the effectiveness of your acting as on the insightfulness and clarity of your analysis of the passage from the text. For this, you need to answer three questions about this monologue: what is its function in the play as a whole, what is its importance as a performance piece, and what are its major problems or questions.

After presenting your monologue, tell the class your answers to those three questions and also tell us what was most difficult about understanding and performing this monologue and what it revealed to you about the play and performance specifically.

3. **Essay:** 2000 words, due Dec. 7, worth 25%

Compare and contrast the performances with detailed reference both to the text and to production choices found in TWO productions of one of the plays we studied this term in a critical research essay of 2000 words.

e.g.- film versus play of *The History Boys*

- film versus play of *A Chorus Line*
- production of *Q1 Hamlet* versus any filmed or taped onstage production of *Hamlet*
- Young Vic *A Doll's House* versus Mabou Mines

N.B. Do **not** simply describe the performances or summarize the plot; instead, present a focused and persuasive argument about the performances based on searching and specific questions about precise elements. Aim at specificity rather than generalization.

As with the Performance Analysis, refer to multiple and varied sources for your analysis: the performances, the text, the program, any reviews or other media materials, actor and director interviews, talk backs or Q & As, recorded or printed interviews, memoirs, and other biographical material from the playwright, as well as secondary sources in the form of critical articles or monographs.

Include all needed citations and Works Cited list. Number every page of your essay. See OWL Purdue website for information on MLA style guidelines and ask me if you need help with MLA.

4. **Attendance** 5%

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at every class and performance. Missing any class or performance without prior approval will result in the loss of 1% to a maximum of 5%.

5. **Final Examination**, Dec. 2016, 2 hours, worth 35%

See OWL under Resources for sample exam.

Essay Due dates, Late policy, Extensions:

- All overdue essays will receive a penalty of 1% per day late.
- Late essays may be dropped in the English Department Essay Drop-Off Box.
- Do NOT slide essays under office doors.
- No essay will be accepted 14 days after the due date.
- Essays must be typed, double-spaced, and stapled in the upper left hand corner. No binders or protective covers of any kind are necessary. Essays must follow current MLA format and must include a list of Works Cited at the end (see *MLA Handbook* for details).
- Essays must be on works studied in **this** section of the course.

IT IS ADVISABLE TO RETAIN AT LEAST ONE HARD COPY OF THE ESSAY IN THE EVENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE TO THE ORIGINAL.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.