

**FALL 2009 SYLLABUS: PLAY ANALYSIS
Theatre 213**

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| Instructor: | Tony Horne | Classroom: | Lecture Hall |
| Office: | T264 | Class Days: | M W |
| Office phone: | 229-4108 | Times: | 12:30 – 1:45 |
| Email: | horne@uwm.edu | Course Call #: | 11838 |

Office Hours: TUES 10 – 12 noon or by appointment.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Script Analysis for Actors, Directors, and Designers* (4th edition), by James Thomas (Editions 1, 2, and 3, are also acceptable)
- *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (2002 Edition), by Eugene O'Neill
- *A Raisin in the Sun* (2004 Edition), by Lorraine Hansberry

ON RESERVE IN THE LIBRARY

- *Script Analysis for Actors, Directors, and Designers* (2nd and 3rd edition), by James Thomas

REQUIRED PERFORMANCES - UWM Mainstage

- *What I Did Last Summer*, October 20-25, 2009
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, December 8-13, 2009

DESCRIPTION:

An informed and thorough reading of a script is essential in the creation of a vital and meaningful theatrical performance. Therefore, this course is designed to provide students with a practical method for analyzing stage scripts in preparation for production. Each analysis performed will be based on a close reading of each script and can be used by all theatre collaborators including directors, designers, actors, and technicians.

TEACHING METHOD:

This course combines lecture, class discussion, and experiential activities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES – After successfully completing this course, each student will:

- Have a set of analysis tools that can be applied to any type of stage script.
- Be able to carefully read a stage script in order to unlock the clues that serve as a springboard for engaging in the imaginative act of directing, designing or acting in a particular work.
- Have critical reading and thinking skills in order to increase personal awareness of messages being presented in dramatic literature.

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|---|-------------|-------------------|
| Quizzes | 10% | 10 points |
| Performance Attendance and Response | 10% | 10 points |
| Participation | 15% | 15 points |
| Focused Papers/Lead Class Discussion | 15% | 15 points |
| Group Research Presentations/Papers | 20% | 20 points |
| Analysis of Play of Your Choice | 20% | 20 points |
| Final Exam | 10% | 10 points |
| TOTAL | 100% | 100 points |

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EVALUATION:

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|
| 93 – 100 | A | 73 – 76.99 | C |
| 90 – 92.99 | A- | 70 – 72.22 | C- |
| 87 – 89.99 | B+ | 67 – 69.99 | D+ |
| 83 – 86.99 | B | 63 – 66.99 | D |
| 80 – 82.99 | B- | 60 – 62.99 | D- |
| 77 – 79.99 | C+ | 59.99 and below | F |

Quizzes **10%**

All students are required to read *Script Analysis*, *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *A Raisin in the Sun*. Expect quizzes on all required reading. While some quizzes will be scheduled, most will be unannounced.

Performance Attendance **10%**

Students are required to see both mainstage shows during the Semester and turn in a short typewritten response via the D2L dropbox for each one. Details about the responses will be provided in a separate handout.

Participation **15%**

Students are expected to fully participate in all class discussion and in-class group activities. Each student should prepare for class by reading the assigned material and focusing thoughts regarding the topic of discussion for the day. It is expected that each student will come to every class with a question or comment prepared and written out. These will be taken up at announced times throughout the semester.

In order to prepare for class each day, it is expected that each student will create and utilize a system for marking, color coding, and tabbing relevant information in scripts. **Also, students must always be prepared to cite page numbers when giving examples in class (and papers).** This is why it is important that we all have the same edition of the play.

Focused Papers/Lead Class Discussion **15%**

Each student will be assigned to write a paper on a specific topic. There may be up to three students assigned the same topic. On the due date, those students will serve as discussion leaders during the group study of *Long Day's Journey Into Night (LDJ)*.

The written paper will consist of a 2 - 4 page, typewritten paper regarding the focused elements of analysis for the day. Students will find questions to use as guidelines for their presentations in the Summary section at the end of each chapter. The papers are intended as a stimulus for class discussion. Students are expected to be the EXPERTS on the area they are writing on and will be expected to lead the class discussion on the day that their topic is discussed. Students will bring a copy of each paper for the instructor on due date and will turn in a copy via D2L 24 hours earlier to be posted online for the rest of the class to read and refer to throughout the semester. Additional details will be provided.

Group Research Presentations/Papers **20%**

Students will work in small groups to do seminar presentations on various aspects of external research for *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. Each group will write a 4 - 5 page

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paper and do a 10 - 15 minute in-class presentation. The presentation must be well rehearsed. Topics will include, but not be limited to: biographical context: sources, biographical context: ideas, biographical context: writing, social/historical allusions, major production history, and key words/terms. Additional details will be provided.

Analysis of play of your choice 20%

Each student will write a full formalist analysis of the play of his/her choice. This analysis must be typewritten. The play must be the work of an American playwright, must be written after 1970, and must be full length. Please pick a show that you have not studied or performed before and have not used for another course. A list of possibilities will be provided. The instructor must approve the student's script choice. On the day your analysis is due, you will briefly present the plot, main idea, and metaphor for your play.

Final Exam 10%

You will be provided a short script the week prior to the exam period. At the exam period you will be given a set of essay questions pertaining to the script. Students are permitted the use of textbook, script and class notes during the exam.

COURSE POLICIES

Homework:

- Turning in late work is strongly discouraged. An assignment is considered late if it is turned in any time after the class period has ended. All late work will be severely penalized.
- No work will be accepted electronically unless it is required by the assignment or if the student is absent from class.
- No work will be accepted after the last class period of the semester.

Attendance/Lateness:

- Each student is allowed two absences with out penalty.
- Three lates amount to one absence. If you are late, **you** are responsible for making sure you get marked on the roll sheet.
- In case of an emergency, unforeseen illness, or other extenuating circumstances that result in an accumulation of absences, please see me.
- Excessive absences will jeopardize your grade:

4 unexcused absences: highest possible grade is a "B"

5 unexcused absences: highest possible grade is a "C"

6 unexcused absences: highest possible grade is a "D"

7 unexcused absences: highest possible grade is an "F"

NOTE: If you miss class for any reason, you must take the initiative to find out what material you have missed. You are still responsible for turning in all assignments on time. If you have to miss class due to required college business, you must alert the instructor and turn in all work early.

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UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) is dedicated to a safe, supportive, and non-discriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all students to familiarize themselves with University policies. The policies can be found at this link: http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/news_events/upload/Syllabus-Links.pdf

SCHEDULE: Subject to change at the discretion of the instructor

Note: Reading assignments from the **Script Analysis** textbook will always take place before the presentations on the given topic. The assignments list the chapter in the 4rd and 3rd editions of the book first, followed by the chapter in the 1st or 2nd edition in parentheses.

| WEEK | DATE | DAY | TOPIC | PREP |
|------|-------|-----|---|--|
| 1 | 09/02 | W | Intro to Course | |
| 2 | 09/09 | W | Play Quiz What is the play about? Assign topics for presentation | Read RAISIN Read Chapter 2 (1) |
| 3 | 09/14 | M | Play Quiz What is the play about? Discuss Given Circumstances | Read LDJ for the first time |
| 3 | 09/16 | W | In-Class Exercise: Given Circumstances for RAISIN Introduce topic for Group Papers/Presentations | |
| 4 | 09/21 | M | Tutorial on Library Research Meet at the Library in E281 - the classroom next to the Music Library. 2nd floor. East side | |
| 4 | 09/23 | W | LDJ Given Circumstances <i>Time, Place focus paper _____</i> LDJ Given Circumstances <i>Society, Economics, Politics and Law focus paper _____</i> | Prepare for focused discussion on topic |
| 5 | 09/28 | M | LDJ Given Circumstances <i>Intellect and Culture, Spirituality focus paper _____</i> ALL discuss <i>The World of the Play</i> Lecture on Backstory | Read Chapter 3 (2) Prepare for focused discussion on topic |
| 5 | 09/30 | W | LDJ Background Story Discuss Technique <i>Identification focus paper _____</i> | Prepare for focused discussion on topic |
| 6 | 10/05 | M | ALL work in groups on character background stories in class Lecture on External and Internal Action | Read Chapter 4 (3) |
| 6 | 10/07 | W | LDJ External and Internal Action <i>External Action focus paper _____</i> <i>Internal Action focus paper _____</i> Lecture on Progressions and Structure | Read Chapter 5 (4) |

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| 7 | 10/12 | M | LDJ Progressions and Structure ALL discuss <i>Progressions</i> | Last Day to get approval of play for final analysis |
| 7 | 10/14 | W | LDJ Progressions and Structure <i>Structure focus paper</i> _____ Discuss Character | Read Chapter 6 (5) |
| 8 | 10/19 | M | LDJ Character <i>Mary focus paper</i> _____ <i>James focus paper</i> _____ | |
| 8 | 10/21 | W | LDJ Character <i>Jamie focus paper</i> _____ <i>Edmund focus paper</i> _____ | Read Chapter 7 (6) |
| 9 | 10/26 | M | Discuss <i>What I Did Last Summer</i> LDJ Idea <i>Words, Character/Plot</i> ALL discuss <i>Statement of Main Idea</i> (review <i>what is the play about?</i> response) | Play Response Due |
| 9 | 10/28 | W | LDJ Dialogue <i>Words, Sentences, Speeches, Special Qualities, Theatricality</i> | Read Chapter 8 (7) |
| 10 | 11/02 | M | Team Meetings to discuss Group Presentation/Papers | |
| 10 | 11/04 | W | LDJ Tempo, Rhythm, and Mood <i>Tempo, Rhythm, Mood</i> Exercise: Mapping tempo/mood | Read Chapter 9 (8) |
| 11 | 11/09 | M | Work Day | |
| 11 | 11/11 | W | Present Metaphors for LDJ | |
| 12 | 11/16 | M | Research Presentations/Papers | |
| 12 | 11/18 | W | Research Presentations/Papers | |
| 13 | 11/23 | M | Research Presentations/Papers | |
| 13 | 11/25 | W | THANKGIVING RECESS – NO CLASS | |
| 14 | 11/30 | M | In-Class Presentations of Final Projects | Present Synopsis and Visual Metaphor Turn in final Analysis |
| 14 | 12/02 | W | In-Class Presentations of Final Projects | Present Synopsis and Visual Metaphor Turn in final Analysis |
| 15 | 12/07 | M | In-Class Presentations of Final Projects | Present Synopsis and Visual Metaphor Turn in final Analysis |
| 15 | 12/09 | W | Catch Up Day | |
| 16 | 12/14 | M | Discuss MIDSUMMER | Play Response Due Course reflections |
| | 12/18 | TH | FINAL EXAM | 12:30 – 2:30 |