



SYLLABUS v.040324

TA 388 RECENT BRITISH THEATRE

Language of Instruction: English

UO Credits: 8

Contact Hours: 250

Total Hours of Student Engagement (THSE) in all course activities: 268

LONDON, ENGLAND

INSTRUCTOR

Tricia Rodley / rodley@uoregon.edu

OFFICE HOURS

- Available by appointment outside of classes or related meeting times.
- We will also plan individual meetings as the program progresses to check in.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A mandatory course that requires attending plays and participating in classroom discussions five-six days each week. Four written papers are required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Instructional Goals. This course will:

- Introduce students to London theatre in its widest variety of venue, format, and style.
- Increase student skills in engaging and analyzing contemporary aims and strategies of theatrical production.
- Develop more sophisticated approaches to understanding and articulating the variety and complexity of current theatre topics and aesthetics.
- Bridge current and historical topics and trends in British life and culture to the theatre-making and audience markets for theatre in the UK.
- Engage London life: including independent navigation of London's transport system, differences in language, conduct and social diversity.

Student Outcomes. Students who successfully complete this course will:

- Develop a foundational wealth of experience regarding current theatre aims and practices.
- Achieve advanced critical engagement in different areas of theatrical production.
- Experience the diversity and intensity of London's theatre industry.
- Experience London's multiple cultural currents and everyday challenges.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

Instruction for this course involves faculty-led discussions about aspects of previously attended performances, aiming for more incisive and informed critical awareness of different theatrical intentions and practices. Guest artists from productions the group has attended may occasionally be invited to join in morning discussions.

The faculty leader will provide programs and scripts (when available) for every production scheduled. Relevant internet articles are also sometimes assigned.

In addition to morning class discussion and evening play attendance, students for this course will participate in excursions out of London – the main cost for which is included in the program fee. (Also see Winter 2024 “Excursions” handout for extended details.)

- Regularly scheduled excursions include transport and overnight accommodation, breakfasts and one group meal on two extended visits:
 - Prehistoric sites of Avebury and Stonehenge, the city of Bath (with a guided tour of the Georgian center, admission to the Roman Baths and Fashion Museum Bath), Salisbury or Wells Cathedral;
 - Stratford Upon Avon, to see plays at the Royal Shakespeare Company and visit numerous sites associated with the life of Shakespeare.
- One additional day trip to Brighton (or another beach town like Hastings, Margate).

COURSE READING and MATERIALS

- **Course Reading:** Will include scripts (when available) for all productions related to response papers, detailed programs, critical reviews from various London newspapers (when relevant to discussion) and occasional brief histories or news reports about theatres in London or theatre companies.
- **Course Materials:** A journal is highly recommended for keeping notes about ideas that occur after seeing plays as well as during or after discussions (the journal is for your use – not to be turned in).

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Course Requirements – Overview

- **Attendance, Participation, Engagement**
 - A major aspect of your grade for this course is attendance – and that’s not just showing up but getting to each venue ahead of time, attending each performance with an open mind, respectful conduct and full inquisitive patience throughout each entire performance.
 - Similar expectations support the scheduled morning discussions following plays, workshops, excursions, or events.
- **Written Papers**
 - Written work is equally important to the final grade because it requires you to synthesize and expand your ideas in response to productions and discussion.
 - You will submit: 3 Production Response Papers and 1 Final Paper.

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Requirements – Details

Summary of Assignments

Attendance, Participation, Engagement	60%	60 points
Production Response Papers (3)	30%	30 points
Final Paper (1)	10%	10 points
	100%	100 points

Attendance, Participation, Engagement

Attend all scheduled plays or events and all planned excursions.

- If a student misses a performance, they will need to book another ticket, at their own expense, to make up for the loss (usually on the weekend following their absence).
- If a student misses an event or planned excursion, it will not be possible to make up.
- Two or more missed performances will lead to reduction in the final course grade.
 - Serious illness is the exception.

Attend, participate positively, and engage respectfully in scheduled morning discussion of the previous evening's performance or event.

- These meetings are regularly scheduled on weekday mornings each week, with exceptions for regular acting classes, excursion trips, and holiday break. Occasionally a weekend class meeting may be required just to catch up.
- We will set up expectations and community guidelines in our first discussion.
- If a student misses one morning discussion unexpectedly, a conversation with the instructor will follow as a makeup. However, this conversation will also include planning and strategies to make sure missing discussions does not become a pattern.
- Two or more absences will lead to a reduction in the final course grade.
 - Serious illness is the exception.

Production Response Papers – 3 Written Submissions [30 points / 10 points each]

- *Content:* Each paper will focus on a particular quality or attribute of a production and will use one of the following options (you may use an option once):
 - A. The playwright's work (structure, language, character, action).
 - B. A technical aspect that significantly contributed to or detracted from the production.
 - C. A particular actor's performance and its contributions or detractions (if the production is a devised or ensemble-based play, it may be allowable to write about the ensemble – check with the instructor).
 - D. Social relevance or mission – how the themes or production values aimed at (or missed) contemporary social concerns/events/issues.
 - E. Some other significant aspect of the production not listed here (must be cleared with the instructor before the paper is written).
- *Due Dates (summary reminder: 3 days after + 1 by Week 4 / 3 by Week 8)*
 - Each paper is due three days after attending the related performance and discussion.
 - All three papers are due within the program's first eight weeks:

- The first paper must be completed by Monday of the program Week 4.
- Recommended submission: Week 3, Week 5; Week 8.
- *Submission:* Submit via Canvas (we will use email only if Canvas fails for most).
- *Grading Criteria:*
 - 80% Ideas and Critical Thought
 - Clarity of organized thought.
 - Level of observation detail.
 - Effort in supportive research (making use of reviews, program notes, scripts, notes from class discussions and other available resources).
 - 20% Length & Formatting
 - Either 2 full pages, single-spaced -OR- 4 full pages double-spaced.
 - Carefully edited and proofread with appropriate citation.
 - Please italicize play titles.

Final Paper – 1 Written Submission [10 points]

- *Content:* Please reflect more broadly on your personal experience of London and London theatre – our main subject – as a whole. The following prompt questions are meant to help you get started (you do not have to answer them all):
 - What were some specific moments in performance or realizations from seeing a particular production that had the highest impact for you?
 - What experience in London and London theatre enhanced or changed your sense of history and its relationship to your experience of our current world?
 - What do you think you have gained from your experience in London and London theatre in terms of how you think about your future aspirations or your relationship to theatre?
- *Due Date:* Complete by Friday of the program Week 9.
- *Submission:* Submit via Canvas (we will use email only if Canvas fails for most)
- *Grading Criteria:*
 - 80% Ideas and Critical Thought
 - Clarity of organized thought.
 - Level of observation detail.
 - Effort in supportive research (making use of reviews, program notes, scripts, notes from class discussions and other available resources).
 - 20% Length & Formatting
 - Either 3 full pages, single-spaced -OR- 6 full pages double-spaced.
 - Carefully edited and proofread with appropriate citation.
 - Please italicize play titles.

GenAI Use for Written Assignment Completion

- **Students may NOT use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) to help with written work in this course.**
- All work you submit for this course toward completion of the written paper requirements must be your own original work done specifically for this course and without substantive assistance from others, including GenAI.
- Please do not submit written work with text generated by GenAI as if the text is your own writing.
- In accordance with UO policy, if I believe you have handed in work created all or in part by GenAI, I may submit a report of suspected academic misconduct to the Office

of Student Conduct and Community Standards for that office to make a determination of responsibility and, if warranted, assess a grade penalty.

- If you have any questions or doubts, please ask before you submit assignments!

Assignment Due Dates/Late Assignments

- If you are not able to complete coursework for any reason, please arrange an individual meeting with me as soon as possible to discuss completion steps.
- Otherwise, due to the content and circumstances of this course within a study abroad program, late assignments will not be accepted.

Course Grade Guidelines

- Your final course grade is based on completion of each area in the Course Requirements – Details section.

Grading Scale (Theatre majors must receive at least a C grade to pass this course.)

A+	100%+ *	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%
A	95-100%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%
A-	90-94%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%
						F	59% or lower

Department of Theatre Arts Grading Standards

A = complete success in idea, exploration, expression, extraordinary work reflective of genuine investment, discovery, and critical thinking – mastery

B = success in meeting most expectations of the assignment, good work reflective of sincere effort and basic comprehension – competence

C = some success in meeting minimum requirements only, poor organization, weak technical or group focus, half-rehearsed, lack of critical thinking – incoherence

D = significant lack of completion, ineptitude, disrespectful attitude towards others, failure to engage some minimum requirements, serious lapse of attention – indigence

F = major failure to meet deadlines and basic commitments, extraordinary lack of discipline or focus, clear evidence of plagiarism, cheating, bullying – negligence

**NOTE: In the Department of Theatre Arts, a grade of A+ is rare. 100% with perfect attendance or total points or straight As across a term do not guarantee an A+ – instead, this grade is entirely a matter of subjective instructor evaluation above and beyond the excellence described for an A grade.*

OTHER COURSE EXPECTATIONS – UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES

- Please see the page posted on Canvas that includes content as well as links.
- Much like a course on UO's campus, policies such as academic misconduct or accessible education and accommodations may apply to London coursework.

COURSE SCHEDULE (available on Canvas)

- We will use a “Combined Course Schedule” for all three London program courses.