

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

Undergraduate Council
 New Course Course Change
Core Category: WI-ID Effective Fall 2009

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council
 New Course Course Change
Effective Fall __

1. Department: School of Theatre & Dance College: CLASS

RECEIVED OCT 24 2008

2. Faculty Contact Person: Dr. Robert Shimko Telephone: 3-1243 Email: rshimko@uh.edu

3. Course Information on New/Revised course:

APPROVED DEC 10 2008

• Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
THEA / 2344 / American Drama

• Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)
THEA / 2344 / AMERICAN DRAMA

• SCH: 3.00 Level: SO CIP Code: 5005050003 Lect Hrs: 3.0 Lab Hrs: 0.0

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet instructional needs of students

5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course? Yes No

If Yes, please complete:

• Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:

____ / ____ / ____

• Course ID: _____ Effective Date (currently active row): _____

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): B.A., B.F.A., Theatre

• Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department? Yes No

• Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments? Yes No

• Can the course be repeated for credit? Yes No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title

____ / ____ / ____

• Course ID: _____ Effective Date (currently active row): _____

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)

Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: THEA 2342 and consent of instructor. Description (30 words max.): Survey of drama in the United States from the eighteenth century to the present, representing a broad variety of periods, styles and perspectives.

10. Dean's Signature: _____ Date: 10/22/08

Print/Type Name: Dr. Sarah Fishman

U N I V E R S I T Y of H O U S T O N

CORE CURRICULUM COURSE REQUEST

Originating Department/College: School of Theatre and Dance/CLASSPerson making request: Dr. Robert Shimko Telephone: 713-743-1243E-mail: rshimko@uh.eduDean's signature: [REDACTED] Date: 10/29/08

I. General Information:

Course number and title: THEA 2344: American Drama

Catalog description must be included on completed CBM 003 form and attached to this document.

Survey of Drama in the United States from the 18th century to the present, representing a broad variety of periods, styles, and perspectives.

Category of Core for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
 Mathematics
 Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
 American History
 Government
 Humanities
 Visual/Performing Arts Critical
 Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
 Natural Sciences
 Social/Behavioral Sciences
 Writing in the Disciplines (IDO)

II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):

Call ext. 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses" or visit the website at www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**)? Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.

Objectives and Evaluation for THEA 2344: American Drama

Critical writing in the field of theatre generally centers on the examination of plays, in the form either of scripts or full productions. Theatre professionals working in any area of the field (acting, directing, design, dramaturgy, etc.) are expected to possess an overarching knowledge of a large body of plays, particularly those that are frequently read, restaged, and studied. Therefore, the notion of a theatrical canon exists, although it is continually in flux and under debate. The major writing component of this course is intended to involve students in the process of assessing a given play on the grounds of historical and cultural interest, uniqueness of artistic project, execution of aesthetic goals, and contemporary relevance. These are the criteria (apart from more quotidian concerns like budgets and available actors) that professional and university theatres use in deciding which plays to include on their seasons.

Students in THEA 2344 will write a 12-15 page critical introduction to an American play of their choice that they feel merits serious attention at the present moment. The final result of this project will resemble an editor's introduction to a scholarly edition of a play or an especially in-depth program essay for a regional theatre production. Class time will be devoted to selection criteria and research methods, and a full class period, halfway through the semester, will be devoted to a workshop on revision and editing. The final class meeting will be devoted to individual presentations of arguments. These presentations will be modeled on similar practices in the literary departments of some prominent regional theatres. Please see the attached syllabus for further details about this assignment.

To some degree, the effectiveness of the writing component of the course can be determined by comparing the students' work to similar critical introductions to plays written by scholars and dramaturgs. Indeed, students will be provided many such models throughout the semester and will therefore have a clear yardstick for measuring proficiency in their own writing. A somewhat softer measurement will be the verbal presentations of their work on the last day of class. Ideally, every student will show a high degree of passion and knowledge in regard to their chosen play. I am currently considering the possibility of adding one of the students' chosen plays to the reading list the following time I teach the course. This would serve as an object lesson in the mutability of the American dramatic canon as well as an acknowledgement of excellent persuasive writing.

To: CLASS Undergraduate Studies Committee and Undergraduate Council
From: Brian Byrnes, Head of Undergraduate Programs (Director of Undergraduate Studies),
School of Theatre & Dance
RE: MEMO FIVE – Amendment to CBM – THEA 2344: American Drama – as a Writing in the
Discipline course
(Unanimously approved by the School of Theatre & Dance Faculty)
Date: Oct. 13, 2008

RECEIVED OCT 24 2008

Dear Undergraduate Studies and Undergraduate Council,

We wish to propose THEA 2344: American Drama as a Writing in the Discipline course. Attached to this memo are supporting documents to amend the recently submitted CBM – including:

- Core Curriculum Course Request Form
- A Narrative of Objectives and Evaluation for THEA 2344
- Syllabus for THEA 2344

If you need further information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Brian Byrnes, Associate Professor
Head of Undergraduate Programs
School of Theatre & Dance

[REDACTED] by CLASS USC
10/24/08
[REDACTED]

U N I V E R S I T Y of H O U S T O N

CORE CURRICULUM COURSE REQUEST

Originating Department/College: School of Theatre and Dance/CLASSPerson making request: Dr. Robert Shimko Telephone: 713-743-1243E-mail: rshimko@uh.eduDean's signature:  Date: 10/23/08**I. General Information:****Course number and title:** THEA 2344: American Drama**Catalog description** must be included on completed CBM 003 form and attached to this document.

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The effectiveness of the writing component of the course can be determined by comparing the students' work to similar critical introductions to plays written by scholars and dramaturgs. Indeed, students will be provided many such models throughout the semester and will therefore have a clear yardstick for measuring proficiency in their own writing. A somewhat softer measurement will be the verbal presentations of their work on the last day of class. Ideally, every student will show a high degree of passion and knowledge in regard to their chosen play. I am currently considering the possibility of adding one of the students' chosen plays to the reading list the following time I teach the course. This would serve as an object lesson in the mutability of the American dramatic canon as well as an acknowledgement of excellent persuasive writing.

THEA 2344: American Drama
T/TH 1:00-2:30 pm

Instructor: Dr. Robert Shimko

E-mail: rshimko@uh.edu

Office: 133K Wortham

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30-3:30pm or by appointment.

Course Description

This course is a survey of drama in the United States from the eighteenth century to the present. Although this is an enormous topic, the 24 plays we will read have been selected to represent a broad variety of periods, styles, and perspectives.

Learning Outcomes

I've designed this course with the following goals in mind:

- You will become conversant with many of the major periods, movements, figures, debates, and events in the history of American theatre.
- You will grapple with the issue of canonicity in theatre: how and why certain works are selected to stand out among others as especially worthy of attention and production.
- You will understand that writing is contextual and develop skills in research, textual analysis, and persuasive writing specific to theatre.
- You will be able to construct a coherent, non-obvious thesis statement for a critical essay, and that essay will demonstrate your understanding of the conventions, standards and methods of scholarly writing within the discipline of theatre.
- You will be able to make a clearly written, thoroughly researched, and correctly documented argument about the theatrical qualities and cultural significance of a selected play.

Required Texts

Jeffrey H. Richards, ed., *Early American Drama*
Sophie Treadwell, *Machinal*
Eugene O'Neil, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*
Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*
Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*
Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*
Maria Irene Fornes, *Fefu and Her Friends*
Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit*
Sam Shepard, *Buried Child*
David Mamet, *Oleanna*,
Anna Deavere Smith, *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*
Suzan-Lori Parks, *Topdog/Underdog*
John Patrick Shanley, *Doubt*
Tracy Letts, *August: Osage County*

Assignments and Grading

Quizzes (48%):

Starting in week two, nearly every one of our class meetings will be devoted to the discussion of a particular play. At the beginning of each of these class periods, you will be given a quiz made up of **four short-answer essay questions** about the play of the day. Each individual quiz is worth **two points**. Obviously, these quizzes are meant to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading, but they are also intended to help foster lively classroom discussions by calling attention to important aspects of the plays.

Research Paper (52%):

Your major written assignment in this course will be to research and write a comprehensive critical introduction to an American play of your choice. This means that you will create a critical frame for readers to understand multiple aspects of the play: its historical context, its author's life and other works, its dramatic structure, its production history, its theatrical qualities, and its cultural significance. The ultimate aim of your paper will be to argue for the inclusion of your chosen play in the canon of American drama. Canonicity (in our usage, the way certain works are deemed standard or essential to a knowledge of American drama) will deeply inform this course. We will examine historical and current debates surrounding the idea of canonicity itself. The final paper will allow you to make a well-thought-out contribution to this discourse.

The paper should run **12-15 double-spaced pages** (12-point Times New Roman font). You should have the play you wish to write about selected by **March 11**. The class period on **March 13** will be devoted to a workshop on framing your argument and organizing the structure of your paper. A first draft of your paper will be due in class on **April 8**. [Turning in the first draft on time is worth **two points**. If you turn it in late, you will lose these two points. If you fail to turn in the first draft within **one week** of the deadline, you will fail the course.] On **April 24**, each student will be given class time to present an abbreviated version of your argument about why your chosen play merits attention today. This is a chance to demonstrate your research and thinking. The final draft of your paper is due by noon on **May 1**.

Final Grade Breakdown:

Play Quizzes (24 @ 2 pts. apiece)	48
On-time submission of First Draft	2
<u>Final Draft of Research Paper</u>	<u>50</u>
Total	100

Final Grading Scale:

A	94-100	C	74-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-73
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	84-86	D	64-66
B-	80-83	D-	60-63
C+	77-79	F	0-59

GPA Protocol:

To satisfy prerequisite and degree requirements, students must earn a minimum C (2.00) grade in each course attempted in theatre and dance (both required and elective) at the University of Houston School of Theatre & Dance. Students who receive a grade of C- or below in a School of Theatre & Dance major course must retake the course and complete it with a minimum of a C grade.

Course Policies

Class Environment: In class, I expect you to be attentive and respectful toward your classmates. Such respect involves: arriving on time to class, silencing cell phones, refraining from texting, keeping outside reading material stored away, and generally staying alert.

Absence and Lateness: This course follows the UH School of Theatre & Dance policy regarding absence and lateness.

- Three absences = one full letter grade deduction (i.e. a "B" becomes a "C").
- Four absences = two full letters grade deduction.
- Five absences = automatic "F" grade for the course.

Entering class after the roll has been called constitutes lateness. Lateness for two classes = one absence.

Course Outline

Week 1 INTRODUCTIONS

Jan. 15 COURSE INTRODUCTION

Jan. 17 LECTURE: The Beginnings of American Drama

Week 2

Jan 22 *THE CONTRAST*, by Royall Tyler

Jan. 24 *FASHION*, by Anna Cora Mowatt

Week 3

Jan. 29 *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*, by George Aiken

Jan. 31 *THE LITTLE FOXES*, by Lillian Hellman

Week 4

Feb. 5 *THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER*, by Kaufman & Hart

Feb. 7 *MACHINAL*, by Sophie Treadwell

Week 5

Feb. 12 *A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN*, by Eugene O'Neill

Feb. 14 *A RAISIN IN THE SUN*, by Lorraine Hansberry

Week 6

Feb. 19 *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*, by Tennessee Williams

Feb. 21 *DEATH OF A SALESMAN*, by Arthur Miller

Week 7

Feb. 26 *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?*, by Edward Albee

Feb. 28 *FEFU AND HER FRIENDS*, by Maria Irene Fornés

Week 8

Mar. 4 *ZOOT SUIT*, by Luis Valdez

Mar. 6 *BURIED CHILD*, by Sam Shepard

Week 9

Mar. 11 *BOBRAUSCHENBERGAMERICA*, by Charles Mee

Mar. 13 WORKSHOP FINAL PAPERS

****SPRING BREAK****

Week 11

Mar. 25 *OLEANNA*, by David Mamet

Mar. 27 *YANKEE DAWG YOU DIE*, by Philip Kan Gotanda

Week 12

Apr. 1 *THE MYSTERY OF IRMA VEP*, by Charles Ludlam

Apr. 3 *ANGLES IN AMERICA PART ONE: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES*, by Tony Kushner

Week 13

Apr. 8 *TWILIGHT: LOS ANGELES 1992*, by Anna Deavere Smith

Apr. 10 *MARISOL*, by José Rivera

Week 14

Apr. 15 *TOPDOG/UNDERDOG*, by Suzan-Lori Parks

Apr. 17 *DOUBT*, by John Patrick Shanley

Week 15

Apr. 22 *AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY*, by Tracy Letts

Apr. 24 GROUP DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH PAPERS

FINALS WEEK

May 1 (Thursday) FINAL PAPERS DUE—NO LATER THAN 12:00 p.m.