

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

APPROVED NOV 18 2009

Undergraduate Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Core Category: VPA-Critical Effective Fall 2010

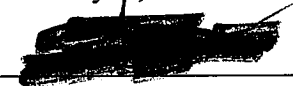
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or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Effective Fall \_\_

RECEIVED SEP 29 2009

- Department: School of Theatre & Dance College: CLASS
- Faculty Contact Person: Dr. Robert Shimko Telephone: 3-1243 Email: rshimko@uh.edu
- Course Information on New/Revised course:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
THEA / 2343 / Introduction to Dramaturgy
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
THEA / 2343 / INTRODUCTION TO DRAMATURGY
  - SCH: 3.00 Level: SO CIP Code: 5005050003 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0
- Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
- 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):
- Authorized Degree Program(s): B.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)
- Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)
- 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  
THEA / 2343 / Dramaturgy
  - Course ID: 46277 Effective Date (currently active row): 20093
- Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)  
 Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: None Description (30 words max.): Students learn skills in production-oriented research, text analysis, collaboration techniques, and season development.


10. Dean's Signature:  Date: 09/28/09  
 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 & Dance, CLASS

Person making request: Dr. Robert Shimko Telephone: 3-1243

E-mail: rshimko@uh.edu

Dean's signature:  Date: 09/28/09

**I. General Information:**

Course number and title: THEA 2343: Introduction to Dramaturgy

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

Specialized skills in production-oriented research, text analysis, collaboration with directors, and season development.

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](http://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.

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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.

Theatre 2343: Introduction to Dramaturgy introduces students to the history and practice of dramaturgy in the theatre as it has evolved since the eighteenth century. Significant emphasis is placed on how dramaturgical investigation has shaped cultural, sociological and aesthetic responses to the theatre arts. Because the dramaturgical perspective begins from the viewpoint that all acquired knowledge is meaningful to the extent that it can be employed in service of art, students spend a great deal of time exploring the world of the play. That exploration includes examining how theatre is an expression of human nature, how an artist interprets that expression, and how the historical and social context in which a play is created helps to mold the story. Issues of structure, character, meaning, language, genre, and style are also part of the students' world-of-the-play analysis. Equally important, dramaturgs must know how to function as a practicing, collaborating artist in the theatre; therefore, students spend a considerable amount of time thinking about how theatre functions as a social, cultural, political, aesthetic and entertainment institution. Through course work, students discover how to apply this information to the rehearsal process. This practice requires intelligence, creativity and interpersonal insight in equal measure.

B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.

Communicating via the written and spoken word, actively listening, and effectively collaborating with an artistic team are among the dramaturg's essential skills. The activities in Introduction to Dramaturgy target and develop these particular proficiencies. Course work includes personal reflections on why students are studying theatre; discussions of how our world's social, political, and cultural issues impact the art of theatre; deep analytical investigation, questioning and discussion of play scripts; collaborative application of the information and conclusions drawn from class discussions; and developing an appreciation of the aesthetic principles that guide the practice of dramaturgy through watching and examining live theatre performances. To learn how to responsibly and effectively gather the necessary information for the course work, students attend a workshop at the library led by a reference librarian early in the semester.

C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.

Reflection is a key component of the dramaturgical process; therefore, at the conclusion of each activity, students are asked to reflect on the assignment by discussing the knowledge they gained from the task and how they will apply their new-found awareness to the next assignment. Dramaturgy is a cumulative art form, so drawing connections among assignments is a dramaturgical function. If students are unable to make these associations, the professor will adjust the course content to more clearly and effectively reveal these links. The course content will also keep up to date with current trends in the theatre and dramaturgical approaches. While the study of classic plays and theatre history will always be included in the course to establish the roots of dramaturgy, contemporary plays and performances will also be added to illustrate how dramaturgical practices continue to evolve in the modern theatre.

1/2/2010

University of Houston School of Theatre & Dance  
**THEA 2343: Introduction to Dramaturgy**  
Fall 2009: Mondays, 6:00-9:00 p.m.  
Instructor: Amy Steele Wernig, Adjunct Professor  
afsteele@gmail.com; (713) 315-3385  
Office Hours by Appointment

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the history and practice of dramaturgy in the theatre as it has evolved since the age of Lessing. Although selective emphasis is placed on European dramaturgical traditions, the majority of our time will be spent learning about the role of the modern dramaturg and the dramaturgical process in America. The dramaturgical perspective begins from the point of view that all acquired knowledge is meaningful to the extent that it can be employed in service of the art. Dramaturgy is an act of "applied imagination."\*\* Equally important, one must know how to function as a practicing, collaborating artist in the theatre. By the end of the semester, students will have spent a considerable amount of time thinking about how theatre functions as a social, cultural, political, aesthetic/artistic and entertainment institution. On the human side, students will be working on how to bring the fruits of their labors into the rehearsal hall and the theatre. This requires intelligence, creativity and interpersonal insight in equal measure.

**Readings and Required Texts:**

- Readings will be drawn, for the most part, from *Dramaturgy in American Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. Susan Jonas, Geoffrey S. Proehl, and Michael Lupu.
- Readings will also include essays from the March 2003 issue of *Theatre Topics*.
- *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by Edward Albee (Acting Edition published by Dramatists Play Service)
- *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage (available from Theatre Communications Group bookstore at [www.tcg.org](http://www.tcg.org))
- *Marisol* by Jose Rivera (Acting Edition published by Dramatists Play Service)

**Course Requirements and Activities:** Communicating via the written and spoken word, actively listening, and effectively collaborating with an artistic team are among the dramaturg's essential skills. The activities throughout the semester, therefore, will target and develop these particular proficiencies.

- **Personal Theatre Manifesto:** Understanding and identifying what you love about theatre will help you develop your dramaturgical sensibility. This three-page individual writing assignment will challenge you to proclaim your reasons for wanting to be a part of the theatre.
- **Article Discussions:** At the beginning of every class, each student will share and discuss an intriguing news or magazine article, essay, blog entry, short story, etc. that you read during the week. Remember that the most effective and engaged theatre artists are informed individuals who continue to learn from a variety of sources.
- **Essay Responses and Discussion Questions:** Each student is expected to write a one-paragraph personal response to one assigned reading a week, as well as two discussion questions about the reading to pose to the class.
- **Dramaturgical Teams:** The class will be divided into two (or three) dramaturgical teams. We will imagine that we have been hired as production dramaturgs for a hypothetical theatre season of two or three plays. For one of the plays, each team will be assigned *three* dramaturgical tasks that, once completed, will be presented to the class. Different tasks will be assigned to each team for the other play(s). As a result, each team

will have worked on at least six different tasks by the end of the semester. The three plays we will dramaturg are *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by Edward Albee, *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage, and *Marisol* by Jose Rivera.

- **Season Planning:** In addition to dramaturging our hypothetical season, we will plan the plays for a hypothetical five-play season for next year. We will establish the criteria for the season (type of theatre, artistic mission, budget, audience demographics, etc.) and develop a list of plays that we would like to consider producing. The plays will then be divided among each team for reading and analysis. Once the plays have been studied, each team will give a brief presentation during which each member of each team will be responsible for one play from the list, describing the play and making a recommendation about its inclusion in the next season. At the end of the semester, we will select the five plays for the hypothetical season, based on the individual and team recommendations.
- **Dramaturgy Casebook:** At the end of the semester, each team will create a dramaturgy casebook for one of the plays selected for the hypothetical five-play season. This project will culminate in a "world of the play" presentation. The guidelines for the casebook and presentation will be distributed at the appropriate time in class.
- **Play Attendance:** Students must see at least two productions outside of the University of Houston during the course of the semester. A five-page reflection paper will be due for each play (see Amy before you attend the play for your essay assignment).

**Academic Honesty:** All work handed in for this course must be your own and must be written for this course. All language and ideas from sources must be properly cited. Deliberate plagiarism will result in an F with no possibility for rewriting.

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

**Grading:** Grading breakdown is as follows:

- Personal theatre manifesto	10%
- Weekly articles	10%
- Essay responses and discussion questions	10%
- Dramaturgical team tasks	15%
- Season planning presentation	10%
- Dramaturgy casebook	20%
- World of the play presentation	15%
- Play attendance and essays	10%

\*The term "applied imagination" became popular with the publication of Alex Osborne's book of the same name in 1958. Osborne first described in this text the process he called "brainstorming." Always cite your sources. In that spirit, the course description in this syllabus was provided by Dr. Cynthia SoRelle, who teaches theatre history and dramaturgy at McLennan College. The course description was used by permission.

**COURSE SCHEDULE: *This is subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up to date. Readings are due on the day listed.***

**August 24:** Course Introduction

**August 31:** What is dramaturgy?

Readings: "Enter Dramaturgs" by Bert Cardullo, "Dramaturgy: An Overview" by Anne Cattaneo, excerpts from Hamburg Dramaturgy by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, "What We Talk About When We Talk About Good" by Todd London  
***Theatre Manifesto due!***

**September 7:** No Class

**September 14:** Developing a Dramaturgical Sensibility

Readings: "The Compleat Dramaturg" by Leon Katz, "Pressing an Ear Against a Hive or New Play Explorations in the Twenty-First Century" by Mark Bly, "What Makes a Turg Tick" by Liz Engelman and Michael Bigelow Dixon

**September 21:** The Dramaturg as Researcher (a.k.a. Library Visit)

Readings: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Ruined*, *Marisol*

**September 28:** The Dramaturg as Collaborative Artist

Readings: "The Images Before Us" by Geoffrey S. Proehl, "Exploration Through Imagery" by Gregory Gunter, "Dramaturgy and Silence" by Geoffrey S. Proehl

**October 5:** Dramaturgy Case Studies

Readings: "Conceiving the Forms" by Lee Devin, "Dramaturging Non-Realism" by Tori Haring-Smith, "The Four Elements: New Models for a Subversive Dramaturgy" by Judith Rudakoff, "Questioning the Text" by Rachel Ditor, "Multicultural Approaches in Dramaturgy: A Case Study" by Elizabeth C. Ramirez, "LMDA's Elliott Hayes Award: A Complete History" ([www.lmda.org](http://www.lmda.org))

**October 12:** Library Visit to work on Dramaturgy Team Presentations

**October 19:** ***Dramaturgy Team Presentations due!***

**October 26:** Planning and the Ideal Theatre

Readings: "Thinking Through the Audience" by Paul Kosidowski

**November 2:** Season Planning, continued

Readings: Plays assigned for Season Planning Project

**November 9:** Season Planning, continued

Readings: Plays assigned for Season Planning Project  
***Season Planning Presentation due!***

**November 16:** Season Planning, continued

***Plays selected for hypothetical season; Plays assigned to teams for Dramaturgy Casebook!***

**November 23:** Season Planning; Casebook work

**November 30:** Last day of class; Casebook work

**December 14:** Casebooks due; World of the Play Presentations