

Introduction to Theatre and Drama - Discussion Section 003

THEATRE 211/ENGLISH 245/RC HUMS 280

Fall 2002

Section GSI: **D. Ross**

Office: **3540 Frieze Building**

Phone: **764-6304**

email: **drossz@umich.edu**

Fridays 11am - noon

3532 Frieze

office hours: **Fridays 9am - 11am**

and by appointment

Objectives:

Overall, to further explore the theatrical and dramatic concepts presented in lecture.

1. To examine closely the plays assigned in lecture from both a literary and a production-oriented perspective.

2. To become familiar with the "constituent arts" of theatre (acting, directing, design, playwriting, architecture) through classroom experience and/or research.

Assignments:

In addition to the three papers due for lecture, you will be responsible for completing four assignments for discussion:

1. Analytic presentation on one of the plays assigned in lecture. One group will present each week.

2. Artistic presentation on one of the plays assigned in lecture. One group will present each week.

3. Design proposal for *Hamlet*. Due December 6; some groups may present on November 22.

4. Schedule and participate in a one-on-one conference with me between November 1 and November 12.

Grading:

Your four discussion assignments will be graded +/- . A "+" will be awarded if you complete the project on time and if you take the assignment seriously and put time and effort into it and into working with your group. *Theatre is a collaborative art and therefore your "+" or "-" is earned in part by how well you work with your group on the projects assigned.* You will earn a "-" for your participation in a project if it is 1) late (or not done at all), 2) done poorly, or 3) done in isolation or contention with the rest of your group.

If you earn a "+" on all four projects, the lowest grade received for lecture (on a paper or the exam) will increase by one letter grade (e.g. C to B). If, on the other hand, you earn a "-" on all four projects, the highest grade in lecture will decrease one letter grade. If your discussion projects are mixed, no lecture grade will be changed.

Attendance Policy:

As in lecture, there are *no free cuts or tardies*. Attendance is always taken the first day of class. Anyone entering after attendance has been taken will be marked "tardy". Three tardies = one unexcused absence. Each unexcused absence will drop your final grade one third of a letter (i.e. from B to B-). You earn one grade for both lecture and discussion, so absences and tardies in both will be added together.

Excused absences must be approved prior to your missing class, at least two class meetings in advance.

Absences for conflicting school-related activities must be approved prior to the absence and accompanied by a signed note on returning to class.

In case of family emergencies or sudden illness, please call or email prior to the class.

Just to remind you: flight reservations, hangovers, auditions, rehearsals, disinterest, or alien abduction are unexcused absences.

Secrets of Getting Good Grades on Your Papers:

All assignments from lecture or discussion are due in section and will be graded by me. Written assignments will be graded for punctuation, grammar, spelling, and style, *as well as content*. All lecture assignments will be penalized one letter grade for each day they are late (e.g. if your paper earns a B and is one day late, the grade will be a C). Late assignments are due in my mailbox (2450 Frieze Building) by 5pm. Assignments received after 5pm will be marked an additional day late.

The key to getting good grades on papers for me is: **organization**. I expect a clear, strong thesis near the beginning of your paper, and I expect the rest of your paper to follow logically from your thesis and not to wander from it.

When in doubt, use a three-prong thesis and a five-paragraph essay format.

If you have trouble with this, come to my office hours for help— *that's my job!* In addition, I will offer email help on thesis statements in this way:

Wednesday 16 October: email me your thesis for *The Imaginary Invalid* by 5pm, and I will email you comments/suggestions back by midnight.

Monday 11 November: same deal with theses for your analytic essay

Monday 9 December: same deal with theses for *Hamlet*

It is not mandatory to take advantage of this offer; however, in most cases it is proven to raise paper grades. . .

While we're on the topic: "criticism" does not necessarily mean "negative." I am more sympathetic to production reviews in which you look for at least some positive aspects of the show you are reviewing. It is often the easy way out to harp on all the things the director and the actors did wrong; it is more difficult (and therefore looked upon better by your grader, me) to bring out what they did well and balance it with things they could have improved. Just a suggestion. . .