

## THEA 280: Theatre of Revolt

Fall 2006

Instructor: **D. Ohlandt**

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MWF 1:15pm - 2:30pm

Dewing 310

office hours: Tu 1pm - 2:30pm

W 2:30pm-4pm

Th *by appointment*

### Course Goals & Objectives:

In terms of content, the goal of this course is to learn the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century theatre and drama in Europe and the US by examining specific plays and productions from this period. To this end, the course is designed so that, by the end of the term:

1. Students will be familiar with a representative cross-section of examples from the drama and theatre of the US, Britain, and Europe from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present.
2. Students will be able to locate each play or production in the context of the socio-historical moment in which it was created.
3. Students will be able to discuss each play or production as an example of a particular genre, style, or movement. *Specifically, students will become familiar with the following terms from theatre history and dramatic criticism: realism, naturalism, symbolism, futurism, dada, epic theatre, the Federal Theatre Project, v-effect or a-effect, theatre of the absurd, the Black Arts Movement / Black Theatre Movement, feminist theatre, performance art, postmodernism.*
4. Students will be able to articulate how each play, production, or movement was, at the time it was generated, a revolution against "what came before" – either a revolt against a historical event or atmosphere, or a revolt against the ways that other plays and productions have attempted to represent in performance what is "real."

In terms of process, the goal of this course is to develop students' skills in critical reading, writing, and thinking, as these skills are used in both cooperative and independent research. To this end, the course is designed so that, by the end of the term:

1. Students will have learned and practiced the skills specific to reading plays.
2. Students will have worked with at least two of their classmates on a cooperative research project resulting in an historical re-enactment or an oral/visual presentation.
3. Students will have gone through a guided process of planning, drafting, and revision after feedback for a paper assignment before the final essay.
4. Students will have practiced peer-to-peer learning by taking turns introducing each play or production and its historical context.
5. Students will have had an opportunity to guide the class towards critical issues of their own interest by setting discussion questions for the play they introduce.

**Texts:** *Modern Drama*. W.B. Worthen (ed).

*Ghosts*. Henrik Ibsen (Dover Thrift Ed. in bookstore)

*The Weavers*. Gerhardt Hauptmann. (in *Three Plays: The Weavers, Hannele, The Beaver Coat*, trans. Frenz & Waggoner, in bookstore)

*Look Back in Anger*. John Osbourne. (in bookstore)

*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Edward Albee. (in bookstore)

*Travesties*. Tom Stoppard (mass-market paper ed. in bookstore)

*Copenhagen*. Michael Frayn (mass-market paper ed. in bookstore)  
coursepack, available in bookstore

Please obtain the bookstore's edition of Worthen's anthology *Modern Drama*. For the other plays, any edition is acceptable if you choose to obtain them from someplace else.

**Recommended Texts (not ordered through bookstore):**

*History of the Theatre*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition or later. Oscar G. Brockett.

*Theatre of the Avant-Garde*, Bert Cardullo and Robert Knopf, eds.

\*\* note, if you purchase both of these recommended texts, you do not need to purchase the coursepack, but you will need to secure additional articles from the coursepack on reserve in the library.

**Materials on Reserve:**

*Ghosts*, *The Weavers* (in *Three Plays* by Hauptmann), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Travesties*, and *Copenhagen* have been placed on closed reserve in the Upjohn library. (*Look Back in Anger* may be borrowed from Dr. Ohlandt.) Brockett's *History of the Theatre*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed, and the anthology *Theatre of the Avant-Garde* have also been placed on closed reserve. Most of the articles from the coursepack will be on electronic reserve. Check the course webpage for up-to-date information.

**Additional materials:**

1) Students should expect to be finding and using texts other than the ones required for the course, especially when they are assigned to introduce to the class a play and its historical context. On the course webpage, we will be jointly maintaining a bibliography of resources for 20<sup>th</sup> century world history and theatre history. Plan to CONTRIBUTE and USE THEM.

2) Students should have installed on their computers a recent copy of the free Adobe .pdf reader (Acrobat), in order to read .pdf documents that the professor may post on the course webpage or email to the class. If you choose to submit your papers via email, your paper will be returned to you in .pdf format.

**Attendance:**

When you are in class, you should be focused on class: turn off cell phones, no food, no writing letters or reading for other classes. Bring any texts under discussion that day.

You are required to attend all class meetings, and to arrive on time, ready to work. Attendance will be taken every day (tardies will be noted) and every absence will lower your participation grade. More than three absences will lower your overall grade. (*Conflicts with observed religious holidays excepted, if brought to the attention of the professor ahead of time.*)

Exceptions made ONLY in cases of documented exceptional circumstances.

Students will also be required to attend two events outside of regular class time, for which Dr. Ohlandt will "trade" days we won't have class in weeks 9 and 10.

### Assignments:

**1) daily reading** assignments, as listed on the term schedule. For every play that we read, we will be focusing our discussion on two questions. The better prepared we are to answer these two questions, the better our discussions will be:

- a) What is happening in history at the time the play or a significant production of it was created, and in the time leading up to its creation? *Any event or attitude that might reasonably have been on an artist's mind is relevant.*
- b) How is the play or a significant production of it different from the plays and productions that people at the time would have already known? *Think about differences in style, genre and technique as well as differences in content, politics, and general philosophy.*

**2) mini-presentation on play and its historical context:** Each student will sign up to give a mini-presentation introducing one play (or set of plays, in some cases) that we are reading in class. This presentation should include: a) information about the playwright, b) information about the region where the play was written or where the playwright lived, c) information about what is going on in history at the time the play was written, d) information about the time period of the play (if it is specific and different from the time the play was written), e) information about the stylistic movement with which the play is affiliated, if any. *[Of these, B) and C) are the most important.]*

This presentation may be informal (I'm looking for content, not a polished oral presentation) and it **MUST** end with 3-4 open-ended critical questions to begin class discussion on the play. These questions should be relevant to the two questions listed in #1 around which we will be focusing our discussion, but they cannot be those questions. Mini-presentations should not exceed 10 minutes, but they do not have to be that long.

**3) group re-enactment/demonstration/presentation on a theatre history topic:** Each student will work with a group of 3-4 members to prepare a re-enactment, presentation, or demonstration of an event related to an assigned topic in theatre history. These topics are as follows: 1) Appia and Craig (due 10/2) 2) Richard Schechner and TPG (due 10/23), 3) the August Wilson - Robert Brustein debate (due 11/3), or 4) Augusto Boal (due 11/15). *(Note: Topic #1 must be a presentation, #2 and #3 must be re-enactments, and #4 must be a demonstration, unless group members can present a compelling argument to the professor for doing it differently.)*

Theatre is a collaborative art, and one of the objectives of this course is to develop cooperative research skills. To that end, you will not be graded only on the content or on the final presentation, but on how well your group works together on the project. That means, if it becomes obvious that one or two people did most of the work, or that each person did their own thing and the group never worked together outside of class, then *everyone's* grade will be lower. "So-and-so didn't do his/her work," or "we met, but so-and-so didn't come to our meetings," will not raise your grade, because it is the group's responsibility to ensure that everyone is working together. If your group runs into trouble, come and see Dr. Ohlandt ahead of time.

**4) attendance at screening of feature film The Cradle Will Rock:** Every student is required to attend a screening of the film, whether or not s/he has seen it before. The film will be shown twice, both times on campus. (In week 3 or 4, times and places TBA.) This film is a fictional but historically-based depiction of a reasonably significant event in theatre history, during the time of the Federal Theatre Project, part of the Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression. This is the only time in US history that we have had a federally-subsidized "national theatre." Students are encouraged to take and keep notes for later reference.

**5) attendance at performance of Copenhagen, by Michael Frayn, at the New Vic Theatre (134 E. Vine St.), 269-381-3328.** This production runs Oct 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28, and Nov. 3-4 @ 8:30pm each night. Ticket prices are listed as \$21, but the theatre may have a discount for students. It is the responsibility of each student to make the booking arrangements for him- or herself- Think of it as a way to develop and practice theatre appreciation skills! Retain your ticket stub and your program (at some theaters, your program is your ticket stub), and turn it in with the following completed assignment:

*Read the play before attending the performance, and write one paragraph describing how you would stage, design, or act/interpret one aspect of the play. (Just one!) After attending the production, write a second paragraph describing how the New Vic Theatre company staged, designed, or acted/interpreted that same aspect of the play.*

In class on Nov. 10, we will be discussing the play both as a text and as a production. At that point, we will be discussing the ways that theatre in the 1980s and 1990s re-imagined the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It may be helpful to think about this as you read the play and watch the production.

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**6) analytic paper, 3-5 pages:** You will choose one due date out of three in the course of the quarter, so that you may manage your time most effectively. You may NOT choose the same due date for this paper as for the research paper.

**7) research paper, 5-8 pages:** You will choose one due date out of three in the course of the quarter, so that you may manage your time most effectively. You may NOT choose the same due date for this paper as for the analytic paper.

***Note about the papers:** Topics for both papers (see separate page) are organized according to what we have covered in the course by the time the first draft of the paper is due. You must use one of the topics listed under the due date you choose; you cannot choose a topic from one due date but use a different due date. You may propose a different topic to the professor at least one week before the due date (email is okay), but, to be approved, it must be historically relevant to the material we have already covered.*

*Both papers will be turned in twice, regardless of the due dates you choose. The due dates listed are for a first, complete draft of the paper. This draft will be returned to you will be marked with comments only. You will have one week from the day the paper is returned to you in class to make substantial revisions of the paper, taking into account Dr. Ohlandt's comments and suggestions. If you are not present in class the day the papers are returned, the one week due date still stands. It is your responsibility to arrange with Dr. Ohlandt to get your paper back. Papers will only be given to the*

*student who wrote it; another student may not "pick up" your paper and bring it to you. This is a confidentiality and privacy issue.*

**8) final exam:** An essay-style take-home exam will be distributed in class on Monday of week 10. (If you are absent in class that day, you must arrange to pick up the exam from Dr. Ohlandt after that class meeting.) The exam must be completed and turned in on Tuesday evening of exam week– 4pm if you are turning in a hard copy to the Theatre Arts Dept. office, or midnight if you are turning it in by email. If you turn in your exam to Dr. Ohlandt as an email attachment, follow the guidelines for submitting papers via email. Hard copies must be turned in on Tuesday before the building closes! Exams received after midnight on Tuesday will not be accepted under any circumstances.

### **Special Accommodations:**

Everyone is built a little differently, and it shouldn't be surprising that everyone has different needs when it comes to learning in the classroom. I have attempted to design this course for a range of learning styles, but I urge you to come and talk with me if I am not meeting your needs.

I am happy to provide large-print copies of any materials that I hand out, and I can also make available written outlines of the things that I have prepared to say in class. If differences in your ability to see, hear, or learn require more elaborate aids than this– if, for example, you need outlines of what everyone else says in class– then you will need to alert me before the end of week 1, and you will also need to arrange for services through the college.

If you have concerns about mobility requirements for any assignment or physical access to the classroom, performance spaces, or any resources, please see me and we will work together to resolve the problem.

### **Continuing Conversations (Mondays after class at Beaner's in the library):**

We will be reading quite a bit for this class, and it would be impossible for us to exhaust every aspect of every play in our discussions. . . or even come close! At the end of the day, we will for the most part, leave behind the play we've been discussing, even if there are lots of juicy open questions left to discuss. (You are encouraged to relate these questions to the next play on the syllabus!)

I know this can be frustrating, especially if you love this stuff as much as I do! If you would like to "continue the conversation" about any of the plays or issues that we've discussed in class, Dr. Ohlandt will be in Beaner's in the library immediately after class on Mondays. Come join her, and we'll keep talking!

This is not in any way a requirement for the course, and you will not be penalized if you never attend. If, however, you are concerned about your participation grade, you may arrange with Dr. Ohlandt (at her discretion) for your contributions at Beaner's to count towards it.

### **Grading:**

analytic paper = 20%	participation = 20%
research paper = 20%	(class facilitation / mini-presentation = 5%)
group presentation = 20%	(film / performance attendance & report = 5%)
final exam = 20%	(contributions in class and to online bibliography = 10%)

**Notes about email, voicemail, internet, and other aspects of a college education in a high-tech world:**

**- Email vs. Voicemail**

As a member of the email generation myself, I use my email far more than I use my phone. Particularly if you have an urgent or time-sensitive issue, email me rather than trying to call my office phone. I use voicemail, but often reluctantly.

**- Email response time**

That said, in this day and age, people who use their email as part of their job often have to set boundaries on their time and availability if they are ever to have "down-time." Although I check my email many times a day, it is unrealistic to expect a reply any sooner than within 4 hours. Furthermore, emails sent after 10pm and anytime on Saturdays and Sundays will most likely not be replied to until the following morning (Monday if on the weekend).

If I choose to make an exception to this policy from time to time, that does not mean that I will do so every time.

**- Course webpage (URL to be announced)**

By the end of Week 1 Friday, I hope to have a course webpage up and running. This webpage will include a downloadable copy of the syllabus, any handouts that I give out (if you make a handout for a mini-presentation or a group presentation, email me an electronic copy and I'll post it, too), downloadable information about the assignments, a jointly-constructed bibliography of additional sources, my office hours and contact information, and any announcements or new information about the course. Other than contributing to and utilizing the bibliography, you will not necessarily have a need to check this webpage regularly; however, it will serve as a resource for you to obtain or clarify information about the course. Moreover, maintaining a course webpage is beneficial to me as I apply for permanent teaching jobs at other universities when my fellowship at K College is over.

**- Submitting papers via email**

I encourage you to submit your papers and the final exam via email to me at [<dohlandt@kzoo.edu>](mailto:dohlandt@kzoo.edu). Papers submitted electronically MUST be emailed to me as an attachment, and they MUST be formatted like other papers— double-spaced, paginated, with a title and your name, in MLA format, etc. ONLY the following formats are acceptable: 1) .pdf (Adobe Acrobat) - preferred, 2) WordPerfect, 3) MS Word. On receipt, I will convert your file to a .pdf document, and I will mark/grade it using a stylus input, so it will look like handwriting. I will save the marked paper as a different .pdf and return it to you in that format. You should be able to print .pdf files should be printable on any computer with the free Adobe reader installed. *If I have technical difficulties with the stylus input, I reserve the right to print a hard copy of your paper, mark it, and return it to you in hard copy.*

**- A note on research**

The internet provides access to a phenomenal store of information, ranging from posted copies of reliable research to personal opinion pages that contain "facts" which are simply wrong. KEEP IN MIND that when researching events or periods prior to 1996, most of the internet will be of limited reliability. ALWAYS check information against reliable sources.

## Papers:

All of the 200-level theatre history classes have been designated as "Second Tier" writing courses at the college. This means that we will be moving beyond the "basics" of critical writing and target the following skills:

- 1) revising for clarity
- 2) using / citing sources properly
- 3) constructing a cohesive, compelling argument using evidence

Even if you are a junior or senior, practicing these skills will help you enormously as you prepare to write your SIP and your comps, not to mention your written work in other classes.

Papers are due in class on the due dates you choose. If you choose to submit your paper via email, it must be sent before class begins that day.

Written work must be in MLA format, using MLA standards for citation, and be printed double-spaced in 11- or 12- pt font, with 1" margins. Your pages must be numbered, and the first page should have a header that includes a title (or "final exam" if it is the final exam), the course number, the date the paper was turned in, quarter and year, and your name, in whatever arrangement you find aesthetically pleasing, *as long as the information is clear and logical*.

You should use parenthetical citations in the body of your paper, and you must include a works cited page with bibliographic entries at the end, under its own heading. It is expected that your research paper will include significantly more sources than your analytic paper. *Your works cited page does not count towards your total page count!*

All ideas that are not your own must be cited (parenthetical citations are appropriate here), even if you do not quote them directly.

If you choose to submit your papers in hard copy, you may print on both sides of the page—*however*, if your last page is printed on both sides, please staple a blank page on the end for me to write my comments. You must staple your pages together if you submit a hard copy—paper clips are not acceptable.

If you choose to submit your papers electronically via email, the formatting and citation standards apply. Please see the info about electronic submission on page 6 of this syllabus.

Grammatical, spelling, and formatting errors will absolutely lower your grade.

Complete drafts are due on the listed dates you choose; a final revision based on the professor's comments is due one week after papers are returned in class.

Late papers will be docked 5 points (out of 100) for every day they are late, beginning with 5 points off at the end of class the day papers are due, and another 5 points if they are not turned in by the next morning. No late work for group project or the final exam.

**Research paper (5-8 pages):**

*choose one of the following due dates and a topic that goes with it*

**DUE DATE #1: Friday - Week 2 (9/29)**

*topics:* life and work of Alfred Jarry  
the Moscow Art Theatre  
The Abbey Theatre  
life and work of George Bernard Shaw  
Stanislavsky's acting method  
Vsevolod Meyerhold  
the Federal Theatre Project (*not Marc Blitzstein's The Cradle Will Rock*)  
life and work of August Strindberg  
André Antoine and the Théâtre Libre  
life and work of Anton Chekov  
Elizabeth Robins and the Actresses' Franchise League

**DUE DATE #2: Friday - Week 5 (10/20)**

*topics:* life and work of Eugene O'Neill  
life and work of Arthur Miller  
German Expressionism  
dramatic / theatrical work of Zora Neale Hurston  
life and work of Erwin Piscator  
The Group Theatre  
the "New Stagecraft": Lee Simonson, Robert Edmond Jones, Jo Mielziner  
life and work of Clifford Odets  
life and work of Stanislaw Witkiewicz  
Lee Strasberg and the Actor's Studio  
life and work of Elia Kazan  
history of London's Royal Court Theatre  
20<sup>th</sup> century Irish dramatists

**DUE DATE #3: Friday - Week 8 (11/10)**

*topics:* Ellen Stewart & Café La MaMa  
Joe Chaikin & the Open Theatre  
The Living Theatre  
the Black Arts Movement (*must be other than what we discussed in class*)  
life and work of Robert Wilson  
Megan Terry & the Women's Theatre Movement of 1960s-1980s  
Holly Hughes (K College alum!) and the "NEA Four"  
Peter Schumann & the Bread & Puppet Theatre  
disability performance troupes  
Latino/a theatre in the US  
"In-yer-face" theatre in Britain  
AIDS plays as a genre or sub-genre



**Research paper guidelines & grading rubric:**

- must have a clear and compelling thesis statement, with a structured argument to support it, based on evidence derived from your research
- organize what you have to say
- analyze, do not just describe or summarize!
- argue convincingly how the artist, movement, or event can be considered a part of a Theatre of Revolt
- you must use at least 5 sources, including 1 journal article, and no more than 2 websites, then only if necessary. Discriminating among people is bad, discrimination among sources is good, especially when we're talking about websites!

*An "F" paper has one of the following characteristics:*

- you didn't do it, or you didn't do anything resembling the assignment
- you turned it in so late that you can't earn a passing grade

*A "D" paper has several of the following characteristics:*

- unclear or non-existent thesis statement
- very poor organization
- serious, persistent problems with sentence structure or grammar
- many repeated mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc.)
- ignoring or not completing the directions for the assignment
- very little critical analysis (all description)
- very little or no use of supporting evidence
- no transitions
- little research beyond texts already assigned in class, or inappropriate sources

*A "C" paper has several of the following characteristics:*

- underdeveloped ideas
- some mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc.)
- some problems with sentence structure or grammar
- too general or "surface" exploration of the topic, or else a "just the facts" approach
- weak thesis statement, weak topic sentences for supporting paragraphs
- uninteresting, irrelevant, or too general intro and conclusion
- minimal or inappropriate use of examples
- weak transitions
- minimal research

*A "B" paper has several of the following characteristics:*

- good, but not absolutely thorough development of ideas
- a few mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc.)
- minor, isolated problems with sentence structure or grammar
- solid, clear thesis supported by rest of paper; clear, relevant topic sentences for supporting paragraphs
- good overall organization; good use of examples / evidence
- solid, interesting intro and conclusion; mostly smooth transitions
- good amount of research using reliable primary sources

*An "A" paper has the following characteristics:*

- no serious grammar problems; one or two mechanical errors *at most*
- expression of ideas is accurate and lucid
- explores ideas beyond the "safe" and "general"; makes fresh and creative connections
- interesting and provocative thesis statement; all points in the essay support this thesis
- argument supported by evidence that is often overlooked or points that have not been made in class
- attention-grabbing intro that leads into the thesis statement, and a conclusion that poses a new way of looking at the material; smoothly integrated transitions
- excellent use of *more than 5* reliable sources

**Analytic paper (3-5 pages):**

*choose one of the following due dates and a topic that goes with it*

**DUE DATE #1: Friday - Week 2 (9/29)**

- topics:*
- 1) Compare and contrast Glaspell's play *Trifles* with the short story she wrote about the same incident ("A Jury of Her Peers"). How does the genre change the story / perspective / reader's experience? How does each genre work (or not work) to advocate for a specifically womanly way of experiencing the world?
  - 2) Compare and contrast Ibsen's *Ghosts* with Hauptmann's *The Weavers*, looking specifically for the ways that realistic and photographic detail is deployed. Ibsen's play is generally considered to be "dramatic Realism" while Hauptmann's is generally considered to be "dramatic Naturalism." Is there a significant difference in style between the two plays, or is the difference merely in subject matter (e.g. the social class to which its main characters belong)?

**DUE DATE #2: Friday - Week 5 (10/20)**

- topics:*
- 1) Compare and contrast Tzara's *The Gas Heart* to Stein's *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*. Both plays are considered "dada." How are they different examples of one genre? How do the differences in the year and country (and gender?) in which each play was written affect how / why the genre was deployed?
  - 2) Choose Tzara's *The Gas Heart*, Genet's *The Balcony*, or Osbourne's *Look Back in Anger*, and explain why it is a good example of the kind of theatre that Artaud is calling for in his essay "The Theatre and Its Double." Provide evidence from the play and from Artaud's essay.
  - 3) Compare and contrast the ways that Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and Osbourne's *Look Back in Anger* address issues of gender and socioeconomic class after WW2. Connect differences / similarities in style and content to differences / similarities between postwar Britain and postwar US.

**DUE DATE #3: Friday - Week 8 (11/10)**

- topics:*
- 1) Compare and contrast Baraka's *Dutchman* with Shange's *spell #7*. Specifically considering how gender is represented in both plays, should Shange's play be read as a criticism of Baraka or as a complement to / completion of it?
  - 2) Compare and contrast how Churchill's *Cloud 9* and Wasserstein's *Uncommon Women and Others* demonstrate the performativity of gender as Butler explains it in "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution." In each play, does the style reflect this notion more than the content, or vice versa? Which seems more effective and why?
  - 3) What, precisely, is the "travesties" to which the title of Stoppard's play refers? Argue for a specific answer. You must refer at least to Tzara's work and Wilde's *Importance of Being Earnest* to support your answer.

### Analytic paper guidelines & grading rubric:

- must have a clear and compelling thesis statement, with a structured argument to support it, based on evidence from the texts you are analyzing
- give a clear answer to the question posed in whichever assignment you have chosen
- organize what you have to say
- it is okay if you do not cite any sources other than the texts you are analyzing; however, you should feel free to cite additional sources if you wish
- you must cite the texts you are analyzing, and you must provide a complete Works Cited page, even if you only use one text (but you shouldn't only have one text for any of the assigned topics)

An "F" paper has one of the following characteristics:

- you didn't do it, or you didn't do anything resembling the assignment
- you turned it in so late that you can't earn a passing grade

A "D" paper has several of the following characteristics:

- unclear or non-existent thesis statement
- very poor organization
- serious, persistent problems with sentence structure or grammar
- many repeated mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc.)
- ignoring or not answering the question posed for the assignment
- very little critical analysis (all description)
- very little or no use of supporting evidence
- no transitions

A "C" paper has several of the following characteristics:

- underdeveloped ideas
- some mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc.)
- some problems with sentence structure or grammar
- too general or "surface" exploration of the topic, or else a "just the facts" approach
- weak thesis statement, weak topic sentences for supporting paragraphs
- uninteresting, irrelevant, or too general intro and conclusion
- minimal or inappropriate use of examples
- weak transitions

A "B" paper has several of the following characteristics:

- good, but not absolutely thorough development of ideas
- a few mechanical errors (spelling, typos, etc.)
- minor, isolated problems with sentence structure or grammar
- solid, clear thesis supported by rest of paper; clear, relevant topic sentences for supporting paragraphs
- good overall organization; good use of examples / evidence
- solid, interesting intro and conclusion; mostly smooth transitions
- makes use of outside criticism using reliable sources

An "A" paper has the following characteristics:

- no serious grammar problems; one or two mechanical errors *at most*
- expression of ideas is accurate and lucid
- explores ideas beyond the "safe" and "general"; makes fresh and creative connections
- interesting and provocative thesis statement; all points in the essay support this thesis
- argument supported by evidence that is often overlooked or points that have not been made in class
- attention-grabbing intro that leads into the thesis statement, and a conclusion that poses a new way of looking at the material; smoothly integrated transitions
- excellent integration of own analysis and outside criticism found in reliable sources

## Course Contract

*In a learning-centered environment like K College, knowledge is not dispensed by the all-knowing and full-brained professor into the empty brains of students. Rather, students and faculty enter as collaborators into an agreement about how knowledge will be developed and exchanged. Of course, in this agreement, faculty and students do not have the same responsibilities, but a professor has as many (or more) responsibilities to her students as the students have to her.*

This course contract, detailing the responsibilities of professor and students for this course, should be read alongside the K College Honor System (available online at <http://www.kzoo.edu/studev/honorsystem.htm>), not in place of it.

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Dr. Ohlandt's responsibilities in THEA 280:

- to come to class on time and prepared to facilitate meaningful discussion on the day's readings, whether or not students are expected to lead the discussion that day
- to make clear the purpose of each assignment, and to answer questions about the design and choice of assignments openly and as non-defensively as possible
- to provide to students the criteria by which their work will be graded, and to be willing to discuss any grade given on a particular assignment with the student who wrote it
- to return assignments to students within three class meetings of their turning it in, with clear and useful feedback
- to elicit and consider formal or informal feedback from students about the effectiveness of the course and her teaching style, making reasonable adjustments if possible
- to recognize and affirm that the students are human, have feelings, and are learning not just about 20<sup>th</sup> century theatre, but also how to be college students, adults, and citizens
- to be open to learning from her students unfamiliar aspects of the historical events that we study, as well as different ways of reading and understanding the plays
- to safeguard the integrity of the intellectual community by checking individual students' written work for plagiarism when a reasonable suspicion is raised
- to make available, to the best of her ability, the materials and texts used in this course to students who are unable to purchase them
- to assist students in locating and using additional resources necessary to prepare for this course and to complete their assignments for this course
- to be available (via email and office hours) to students to address any individual concerns, comments, or questions that might arise

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THEA 280 students' responsibilities:

- to come to class on time and prepared to participate in meaningful discussion on the day's readings, whether or not s/he is scheduled to lead the discussion that day
- to complete written and oral assignments in a timely manner according to the guidelines established for the project, striving for personal standards of mastery and excellence
- to exceed the syllabus, seeking out additional resources to supplement the texts assigned in class; to use the library as well as the internet to prepare for class
- to extend the benefit of the doubt if s/he is unclear or unsure about the purpose and value of an assignment, and to approach the professor for an explanation if desired
- to read the comments given to her/him (not just the grade) on each assignment, and to make a good faith effort to consider this feedback in subsequent work
- to meet with the professor to discuss grades the student considers unsatisfactory or unfair, and not to complain to others (faculty or students) before speaking with the professor
- to be constructive rather than negative when offering feedback to the professor on the course or her teaching style, and, when possible, to provide specific examples rather than broad comments
- to recognize and affirm that the professor is human, has feelings, and is undergoing her own learning process in teaching K students
- to be open to learning from her/his fellow students, even when their ideas at first seem wrong or misguided
- to be open to teaching her/his fellow students, and to develop confidence in her/his own knowledge, experience, and unique perspectives
- to safeguard the integrity of the intellectual community by adhering to the K College Honor System

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_