

THE 6526: THEATRE HISTORY/LITERATURE/CRITICISM 2
ROOM CON 0219
T/R 12:50-2:45 pm
SPRING 2025

COURSE CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Discussions of dramatic literature, performance theory, and stage practice from the 19th century to the modern and postmodern of Western, Indian, Chinese, and African cultures.

COURSE OVERVIEW: This graduate seminar will examine performance theory as a research discipline and will take an interdisciplinary approach to theatre, theory, and criticism, discussing the effect of Modernism in contemporary theatre and performance studies. The main emphasis of this course is to place dramatic texts and performance traditions in the context of contemporary performance, establishing a dialogue between play texts and dramatic theory within the context of the history of theatrical production and performance.

This course incorporates critical and cultural theories, such as semiotics, post-structuralism, gender studies, cultural theory, and other disciplinary approaches—coming from, for instance, anthropology and sociology—that have transformed theatre and performance. Furthermore, this course emphasizes reading beyond texts, acknowledging the significance of a nuanced learning methodology by integrating videos and podcasts into the discussion.

This course approaches theatre studies from the assumption that there is a diversity of ways of knowing and learning. It combines lectures with collaborative projects that will require you to learn through performance/presentation. I will assess your progress throughout the semester by combining the tools explained below.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Name: Jashodhara Sen (Ph.D.)

Email: jsen@ufl.edu

Office: SoTD 224

Phone: 352-294-9124

Office Hours: M/W 12-1 pm

<https://calendly.com/jsen-ufl/30min>

Instructor correspondence:

I prefer UF email over CANVAS messaging, but I will try to respond to both within 24 hours. Website:

REQUIRED BOOKS (all at the UF Bookstore or order via online stores):

- Gerould, D., ed. *Theatre Theory Theatre: The Major Critical Texts from Aristotle and Zeami to Soyinka and Havel*.
- Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*.
- All other texts and plays will be uploaded to Canvas.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

After completing this course, the students will be able to:

1. The students will be able to analyze subject matter relevant to the discipline of performance or design through theory, history, and practice in theatre and Performance Studies.
2. Identify and critically analyze key elements, biases, and influences shaping thought within the subject area.
3. Translate knowledge into practical application in the context of live performance.
4. Develop skills to write analytical academic articles for the conference presentation.



- *A Doll's House*, Henrik Ibsen, 1879
- *Miss Julie*, August Strindberg, 1888
- *Trifles* by Susan Glaspell, 1916
- *Death and the King's Horseman* by Wole Soyinka, 1975
- *Catastrophe* by Samuel Beckett, 1982
- *Phaedra's Love* by Sarah Kane, 1996
- *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, 1959
- *Harvest* by Manjula Padmanabhan, 1997
- *Southern Fantasia* Julie Pearson-Littlethunder (PDF provided), 2024

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Attendance: 25 pts
Participation: 25 pts
**Mid-term Pecha-Kucha
presentation: 50**
Mid-term written exam: 50
**Writing assignment (Critical
Analysis and Creative
Reimagination) draft#1: 50**

**Writing assignment (Critical
Analysis and Creative
Reimagination) draft#2: 150**

TOTAL:

Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
934-1000	93.4-100	A	4.00
900-933	90.0-93.3	A-	3.67
867-899	86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
834-866	83.4-86.6	B	3.00
800-833	80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
767-799	76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
734-766	73.4-76.6	C	2.00
700-733	70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
667-699	66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
634-666	63.4-66.6	D	1.00
600-633	60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-599	0-59.9	E	0.00

NOTE: The grading scale is calculated in proportion to the 100-point scale. **Please note that if you need to discuss any graded materials with me, please recognize the 24/7 grade policy that I follow in my classroom. If you have any issue with a paper or an exam grade, I request that you wait 24 hours to think it over, then write me an email to make an appointment with me to discuss how you can improve your grade and go over any questions. This process must be initiated within a week from the date the grade is published in your grade book.

ATTENDANCE (25 points)

Class attendance is mandatory. You are allowed one “unexcused” absence that does not require documentation and does not conform to the UF “acceptable reasons for absence.” Any other “unexcused” absence will result in a penalty of half a full letter grade (5%) from the final grade per “unexcused” absence. To be considered “excused,” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Please remember that even with a letter from the DRC, you do not receive unlimited excused absences. You can discuss your absences and concerns with me during the first month of the semester, allowing me to consider the number of excused absences. Please follow these instructions to ensure clear and effective communication Any student who acquires 3 absences (either excused or unexcused) will be required to meet with me and/or area faculty to discuss the student’s continued participation in the course. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you are absent for that session. If you come late a lot, that may also result in a cumulative absence count.

Any student who acquires 3 absences (either excused or unexcused) will be required to meet with me and/or area faculty to discuss the student’s continued participation in the course.

See the Student Handbook for more information.

You are absent for that session if you are more than 10 minutes late to class. If you come late a lot, that may also result in a cumulative count of absences.

NOTE: If you are having difficulties meeting the course requirements and are thinking about dropping, please reach out to me. I would like to have the chance to hear about what you are struggling with to see if there is a way to help you meet the outcomes of the course.

PARTICIPATION (25 points)

This course relies on developing a community of researchers, writers, and artists responding to each other's work. Your participation grade is determined by your active, thoughtful, and informed participation in class discussion (distinct from mere attendance) as well as your contribution to the classroom community. Not adhering to these guidelines will result in a greatly reduced participation grade. Tardiness, particularly repeated tardiness, will significantly decrease your participation grade.

Please see the University attendance policy:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Mid-term Pecha-Kucha presentation:

Pecha-Kucha means “chit chat” in Japanese. For this assignment, the student will choose 20 images, each for 20 seconds, to tell a 400 second story with visuals guiding the way. The slides will move automatically as you are speaking. This format ensures that the speaker is concise, keeps the presentation

moving, and gets through their content. For this assignment, please choose a topic; it can be the topic of your final paper. You can choose either Google Slides or PowerPoint Presentation for this assignment. Examples of Pecha Kucha presentations will be shown in class and be available on Canvas.

Note: Choose a topic that excites you. This topic can be a part of your research, a brand-new idea, or a topic that relates to a conference call. Talk to your instructor about how to choose a topic.

More on choosing a topic:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/research_papers/choosing_a_topic.html

To find out more about Pecha Kucha and watch great examples, please see: <https://www.pechakucha.com/>

The Pecha-Kucha presentation will take place on February 22, followed by a discussion. Rubric posted on Canvas.

Check out these field-specific conferences and their requirements:

1. Association for Theatre in Higher Education: <https://www.athe.org/>
2. The Association for Performing Arts and Entertainment Professionals: <https://www.usitt.org/conference22>
3. American Society for Theatre Research: <https://www.astr.org/default.aspx>
4. Mid-America Theatre Conference: <http://matc.us/>
5. The Association for Performing Arts and Entertainment Professionals: <https://www.usitt.org/conference>
6. Black Theatre Network: <https://blacktheatrenetwork.org/>

Design Analysis and Creative Interpretation

Draft#1

Overview:

Students will select one play and one design theory to create a project that critically analyzes the play's design elements and proposes a creative reinterpretation of those elements. This project connects theory, analysis, and creative practice to develop a deeper understanding of design in theatrical storytelling.

Assignment Details:

Critical Analysis:

- Choose a play and a relevant theory (e.g., hybridity, feminist theory (theories), phenomenology in set design, or semiotics in costume design).
- Write a short (1,000-1,500 words) essay analyzing how the original design choices in a notable production reflect or contradict the chosen theory. Discuss how these choices impact the storytelling and audience experience.

Creative Redesign:

- Based on your analysis, create a reinterpretation of one design element (set, costume, lighting, or sound) that applies the chosen theory in a new way.
- An explanation of how the chosen theory informed their redesign.
- Discuss how the redesign aligns with and enhances the themes and storytelling of the play.
- Insights into the challenges faced during the creative process and how they were addressed.
- Word count: 700-100 words.

Grading Scale:

- Excellent: 90-100
- Proficient: 80-89
- Developing: 70-79
- Needs Improvement: Below 70

Draft#2

Presentation:

- Based on your instructor's feedback, re-write the paper.
- Present your analysis and creative redesign to the class in a brief (5-7 minute) presentation. Explain how the design theory influenced your creative choices and how your redesign enhances the play's storytelling.

Assessment Criteria:

- **Understanding of Theory:** Depth and clarity of the connection between the chosen theory and play.
- **Creativity:** Innovation and thoughtfulness of the redesigned element.
- **Execution:** Quality and clarity of visual materials.
- **Integration:** How well the analysis informs the creative work.

Rubric

Criteria	90-100(Excellent)	80-89(Proficient)	70-79(Developing)	<70 (Needs Improvement)
Theory Connection	Strong, insightful, and relevant.	Clear but less detailed.	Weak or superficial connection.	Minimal or no connection.
Critical Analysis	Deep and thorough.	Clear but lacks depth.	Basic or incomplete.	Unclear or irrelevant.
Creative Redesign	Innovative and well-integrated.	Creative but somewhat aligned.	Limited creativity or unclear.	Lacks creativity or alignment.
Visuals	Professional and polished.	Clear but less detailed.	Basic or underdeveloped.	Poor or incomplete.
Presentation	Engaging and well-organized.	Clear but less engaging.	Somewhat clear, lacks focus.	Disorganized or unclear.

Total Points: /100

COURSE SCHEDULE

THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS OR VIA EMAIL

READINGS: Please read/view in the order given.

NOTE: If needed, the selection of readings will be modified during the semester, as every effort will be made to accommodate the students' interests and approach to the selected scholarships.

MONTH	DATE	TOPIC	READING/VIEWING/LISTENING
January	T 14	Introduction	Reading the syllabus together Creating working groups
	R 16	Performance and Performativity	Read: Bibler, Zena. "Interview with Richard Schechner: What Is Performance Studies? (2001)."

			<p>Hemispheric Institute. September 16, 2019. https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/hidv1-collections/item/1979-wips-rschechner.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schechner, “Drama, Script, Theatre, and Performance” <p>(PDF on Canvas)</p>
	T 21		<p>Read: “What is Performance” And “The performance of Culture: Anthropological and ethnographic approaches” Marvin Carlson</p>
	R 23		<p>Read: Conquergood, Dwight. “Performance Studies: Interventions and radical research.” Listen to: “Overthink” podcast: “Performativity” https://www.imdb.com/title/tt14243626/?ref =ext_shr_lnk</p>
	T 28	Modernity, Modernism, and Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podcast: When is Modernism? https://www.mixcloud.com/READDurham/when-is-modernism/ • “First and Foremost a Human Being’’: Idealism, Theatre, and Gender in <i>A Doll’s House</i> by Toril Moi
	R 30		<p>Read: <i>A Doll’s House</i> by Henrik Ibsen (Group A)</p>
February	T 4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read: “Psychoanalytic Criticism” from <i>Beginning Theory</i> <p>Emile Zola: Preface to Thérèse Raquin (1873) and Naturalism in the Theatre (p. 351-367 from Gerould, TTT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read: “Psychoanalytic Criticism” from <i>Beginning Theory</i>
	R 6		<p>Read: <i>Miss Julie</i> by August Strindberg (Group B)</p>
	T 11		<p>Read: <i>Trifles</i> by Susan Glaspell, 1916 (Play PDF provided)</p>
	R 13	Global Modern and Intercultural Performance	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fusco, Coco. “The Other History of Intercultural Performance.” • Chatterjee, Deepshikha. “Cultural appropriation: Yours, Mine, Theirs or a new intercultural?”
	T 18		<p>Read: “Phenomenological Perspectives on Liveness” by Steve Dixon</p>

			<p>from <i>Digital Performance</i>, 2007</p> <p>In-class viewing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gómez-Peña, Guillermo, and Coco Fusco. "The Couple in a Cage: Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit the West." (1994) 	
	R 20	A Discussion on Postmodernism	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Postmodernism" from <i>Beginning Theory</i> <i>Catastrophe</i> by Samuel Beckett (Group B) 	
	T 25		<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foucault, Michel. "Discipline." In <i>Rethinking The Subject</i> <i>Phaedra's Love</i> by Sarah Kane (Group A) 	
	R 27		"Postmodern Design" by Arnold Aronson Discussion continues	
March	T 4		<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The theatre and its double" (1938) / Antonin Artaud from Gerould, TTT) <p>In-class viewing: TBA</p>	
	R 6		<p>Discussion continues</p> <p>Assignment: Design Analysis and Creative Interpretation Draft#1 due by 11:59 pm</p>	
	T 11	Hybridity & Performance	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homi K. Bhabha. "Introduction" from <i>The Location of Culture</i> Chapter 4 "Of Mimicry and Man" (PDF on Canvas) 	
	R 13		In class work on Pecha-Kucha	
			SPRING BREAK	
	T 25		Pecha-Kucha Presentation	
	R 27		Mid-term written exam	
April	T 1	Presentation and Representation, A pan-African Reading	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Death and the King's Horseman</i> by Wole Soyinka 	

	R 3		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collins, Patricia Hill “What's in a name? Womanism, black feminism, and beyond” (1996) <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> by Lorraine Hansberry
	T 8	Representation Matters	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Crossing Borders and Transforming Gender Identities” by Jashodhara Sen José Esteban Muñoz, <i>Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics</i> (selected)
	R 10		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Marginalization” in third world feminism: its problematics and theoretical reconfiguration by Asma Mansoor <i>Harvest</i> by Manjula Padmanabhan (Group A)
	T 15		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Fe/male Impersonation: The Discourse of Camp” by Kate Davy <i>Southern Fantasia</i> Julie Pearson-Littlethunder (Group B)
	R 17		Review
Last Day of Class	T 22		In-class working session
Final Paper Submission		April 28, 2025 @ 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Final submission draft #2 Design Analysis and Creative Interpretation

IMPORTANT: Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

By decision of the faculty in the School of Theatre and Dance, the following statement is included on all departmental syllabi: Since production is the laboratory for all theatre courses, attendance at all mainstage Department of Theatre and Dance productions is required of students enrolled in classes with the following prefix designations: THE, TPA, TPP, ORI. Critiques of and/or responses to these productions may be required. Attendance at all related events is encouraged.

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:
<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades>

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Content Warning

We are building a community that fosters a safe, brave, and encouraging learning environment. If you find any materials we cover in this course unsettling or challenging, please do not hesitate to share your feelings about the materials with me. The purpose of this course is to examine the past to understand the present and shape the future, and in order to do that, sometimes we need to overcome our fears and discomfort and question the established and normative traditions. I will give you advance notice when specific materials or content covered may contain images, language, or perspectives that some may find difficult. In class, if you need to step away for a period of time as we are covering certain content, you may do so without penalty, but I ask that you remember that you are responsible for any information covered in your absence.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a respectful manner to the instructor and fellow students. Please avoid cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in the discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

Counseling and Wellness Center Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see:

<http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or email to Learning-support@ufl.edu.

<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

<https://www.crc.ufl.edu/>.

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

<https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

Student Complaints Campus: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf.

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>.