

**THEATRE 4380**  
**LGBTQA+ Theatre**  
**Spring 2022**  
**RTFP 135**  
**Fridays 9:00 AM-11:50 AM**

**Professor:** Dr. Gina Weber

**Email:** gina.weber@unt.edu

**Office:** RTFP 223, Fridays 11:50-12:50 pm, and by appointment.

### **I. Course Description**

This course will examine contemporary plays with a concentration in LGBTQA+ performance and production. We will back up the timeline of these plays to the early twentieth century, and see it progress over the decades into today. We will specifically examine significant plays, playwrights, and the theatre groups that produced those plays. The course is geared towards those interested in both theatrical production and criticism. This is a genre within theatre of the oppressed, which dictates how we approach this art. Therefore, in addition to script and production analysis, we will discuss political actions and ramifications, social and cultural contexts, current events, and sociological identities and roles.

### **II. Course Goals**

The goals of the course are to:

- A. Introduce students to a variety of performance texts and styles.
- B. Provide a set of intellectual “strategies” with which to conceptually approach a script.
- C. Develop the ability to analyze and comprehend play scripts.
- D. Develop an appreciation for the cultural expressions of theatre in its many aspects.
- E. Motivate students to examine their own political, economic, social, and cultural positions as a way to prepare all students to inhabit and contribute to an increasingly diverse society which may demand new modes of interaction and integration.

### **III. Introduction to the Course**

Thea 4380: LGBTQA Plays is an intense study of various dramatic texts, thus, requiring detailed reading and critical examination. Typically, we will analyze a play each week in our ongoing search to find production and performance values in a given play-script. Students of the theatre need to learn how to read, interpret, and analyze dramatic texts because this is an essential basis for any type of production work.

### **IV. Course Requirements**

#### **A. Grading**

Your creative growth and thoughtful responses constitute the major focus of this class. Therefore, open discussion and deep involvement are essential. A point system will be used to determine your final course grade. Each assignment for this course will have a point value. The grade for this course will be based on the following 3 assignments:

1. Weekly play analysis: Read and submit the assigned weekly play analyses. Look for recurrent images, phrases, ideas, events, character types that give the work its coherence. Your analysis should include the following questions:
  - What are the key ideas presented in the play?
  - What is the most significant thing(s) you learned by reading the play?
  - What question(s) is uppermost in your mind after reading it?
  - How is the information/issue applicable today?

Current News Project Option: Find a current news item that demonstrates one or more of the themes we cover in class that is related to the weekly play.

**(50 pts each x 11 = total of 550 pts, includes class attendance)**

2. Weekly Poster Presentation: Every week 3 selected students will prepare a poster presentation on a LGBTQ+ company or a self-identified LGBTQ+ theatre artist.  
**(220 points)**
3. Final Project Work: **To be discussed in detail later in the semester, and the following is subject to change!**
  - A. Analysis Paper - Students write an insight paper (6-8 pages in length) based on a play NOT on the play class list.
  - B. Producer Project - Students will write a proposal (6-8 pages in length) mapping out a production plan from a play NOT on the play class list. Specify where you want it staged, dramaturgical background, and your directorial and design concepts for the production.
  - C. Performance Project - Monologue; 2-3 minutes in length or as an ensemble to present an excerpt (5 to 8 minute scene) from a play NOT on the play class list.**(230 pts)**

### **Total Points: 1000**

The final semester grade will appear in letter form, according to the UNT grading system:

900-1000--"A"

800-899--"B"

700-799--"C"

600-699--"D"

599 points or below--"F"

Weekly assignments are due the **Thursday before class by 6 pm, email to [gina.weber@unt.edu](mailto:gina.weber@unt.edu)**. Assignments emailed in after that time will be late and have points deducted. Late work (with points subtracted) will be accepted for **only one week** after the original due date. NOTE: Please keep all graded papers until the end of the semester.

### **Two other factors determining your final grade:**

#### 1. Attendance

You are expected to attend each class for the entire period. You have the syllabus and will be expected to keep up - even if you miss a class. Active class participation is important, and you need to be in class to participate. Attendance will be taken during each class session. NOTE: In class exercises and discussions cannot be made up.

Therefore, regular attendance is expected and will factor into your final grade. When possible, please notify me before the absence.

## 2. Participation:

A vital element of every class will be discussion and participation. Beneficial discussion is only possible if everyone keeps up with the reading assignments. It is also expected that you give your undivided attention and support to your classmates during discussions.

## B. Communication:

I want to be as accessible to you as I can be. I will hold regular office hours, and I will also meet by appointment. I encourage you to visit me in office hours to discuss any aspect of this course or whatever else is on your mind. If you cannot visit during office hours, please email me. I will do my best to respond as soon as possible.

## C. Plagiarism:

Play analysis is part of the process by which the written script is translated into living action on the stage. The focus is on developing interpretive skills, rather than to gather facts. Any information you transmit from another source, such as a previous course or your own reading, must be cited. All the work you do in this course must be entirely your own, with the exception of cited references to sources, as mentioned above. Plagiarism or collaboration with another student in your receiving a grade of “0” for the assignment. According to UNT policy, specifically in the area of Students Rights and responsibilities, plagiarism is grounds for a failing grade in the course and/or possible disciplinary action.

## D. Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) (<https://disability.unt.edu/parents-faculty-staff/taglines>)
- Student Health and Wellness Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- UNT Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- UNT Psychiatric Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- Individual Counseling (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)
- Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- Pride Alliance (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- UNT Food Pantry (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

#### E. Final Note:

Conversations that take place in this class, or topics that we discuss may be uncomfortable to some. Sexuality, gender, personal relationships, political and religious beliefs, and personal ideals will be examined. Talk will undoubtedly be candid and possibly bold. Persons of delicate sensibilities may wish to choose another class. My hope is that you will approach this course with a sense of intellectual wonder and adventure. My goal is for this course to expand what you know and believe it means to be LGBTQA+. This requires that you take as much responsibility for your own education as I do in creating an environment where learning can occur for everyone. I approach this work as a mutual exchange of ideas, theories, hypotheses, and propositions about how theatre works in contemporary U.S. society. I am not here to merely to feed you information just as you are not here to accept all that I say without thinking critically.

(Please note that I will provide ALL reading materials on Canvas. You do not need to purchase any texts or plays for this course).

#### **Plays**

*God of Vengeance* by Sholem Asch  
*Bent* by Martin Sherman  
*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* by Tennessee Williams  
*The Boys in the Band* by Mart Crowley  
*As Is* by William M. Hoffman  
*The Laramie Project* by Moises Kaufman  
*Blu* by Virginia Grise  
*Angels in America* by Tony Kushner  
*Hedwig and the Angry Inch* by John Cameron Mitchell  
*Remedial English* by Evan Smith  
*Swimming While Drowning* by Emilio Rodriguez

**ALL PORTIONS OF THIS SYLLABUS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

#### **Course Calendar**

<b>January 21, 2022</b>  Class Introduction Review Syllabus	<b>Homework:</b>  Read <i>God of Vengeance</i> by Sholem Asch
<b>January 28</b>  Discuss <i>God of Vengeance</i> by Sholem Asch	<b>Homework:</b>  Read <i>Bent</i> by Martin Sherman  <b><i><u>EVERY WEEK:</u> 3 students to do a poster presentation on a LGBTQ+ company or a self-identified LGBTQ+ theatre artist</i></b>

<b>February 4</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Bent</i> by Martin Sherman	Read <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> by Tennessee Williams
<b>February 11</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> by Tennessee Williams	Read <i>The Boys in the Band</i> by Mart Crowley
<b>February 18</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>The Boys in the Band</i> by Mart Crowley	Read <i>As Is</i> by William M. Hoffman
<b>February 25</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>As Is</i> by William M. Hoffman	Read <i>The Laramie Project</i> by Moises Kaufman
<b>March 4</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>The Laramie Project</i> by Moises Kaufman	Read <i>Blu</i> by Virginia Grise
<b>March 11</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Blu</i> by Virginia Grise	Read <i>Angels in America</i> by Tony Kushner
<b>March 14-18 Spring Break! October 22</b>	
<b>No Class March 18</b>	
<b>March 25</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Angels in America</i> Part 1 by Tony Kushner	Read <i>Angels in America</i> Part 2 by Tony Kushner
<b>April 1</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Angels in America</i> Part 2 by Tony Kushner	Read <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i> by John Cameron Mitchell
<b>April 8</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i> by John Cameron Mitchell	Read <i>Remedial English</i> by Evan Smith
<b>April 15</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Remedial English</i> by Evan Smith	Read <i>Swimming While Drowning</i> by Emilio Rodriguez
<b>April 22</b>	<b>Homework:</b>
Discuss <i>Swimming While Drowning</i> by Emilio Rodriguez	Final Project Preparation

<b>April 29</b>	
Final Project Presentations	
<b>May 6 No Class!</b>	<b><u>FINAL PROJECT DUE May 13 at 12 noon!</u></b>
<b>Reading Day!</b>	