

THEATRE 4380
LGBTQA+ Theatre
Spring 2023
Lang 311
Fridays 9:00 AM-11:50 AM

Professor: Dr. Gina Weber

Email: gina.weber@unt.edu

Office: Fridays, 11:50 am-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. We will examine historic representations of queer life, which involved a persistent drumbeat of suffering: suicide, alcoholism, abuse, persecution, and loss. 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. Analyze and comprehend play scripts.
- C. Develop an appreciation for the cultural expressions of theatre in its many aspects.
- D. Motivate students to examine their own political, economic, social, and cultural positions as a way to prepare students to inhabit and contribute to an increasingly diverse society.

III. Introduction to the Course

Thea 4380: LGBTQA Plays is a 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.

IV. Course Requirements

A. Grading

Open discussion is 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 12 = total of 600 pts, includes class attendance and participation see below in other factors for grading)**

2. Weekly Poster Presentation: Every week a selected student(s) will prepare a short presentation on a LGBTQ+ company, a self-identified LGBTQ+ theatre artist, or a LGBTQ+ play. **(150 points)**

3. Final Project Work: To be discussed in detail later in the semester **(250 points)**

4. 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, submit via Canvas.**

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.

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 and presentations.

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 a few resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) (<https://disability.unt.edu/parents-facultystaff/taglines>)
- Pride Alliance (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- UNT Food Pantry (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

E. Final Note:

Conversations that take place in this class, or topics that we discuss may be uncomfortable to some, including the plays assigned. Sexuality, gender, personal relationships, political and religious beliefs, and personal ideals will be examined. Talk will undoubtedly be candid and possibly bold. 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
Indecent by Paula Vogel
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
Angels in America by Tony Kushner
M. Butterfly David Henry Hwang
Hedwig and the Angry Inch by John Cameron Mitchell
Remedial English by Evan Smith
A Strange Loop Michael R. Jackson
Swimming While Drowning by Emilio Rodriguez

ALL PORTIONS OF THIS SYLLABUS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Course Calendar

Friday, January 20, 2023 Class Introduction Review Syllabus	Homework: Read <i>God of Vengeance</i> by Sholem Asch
January 27 Discuss <i>God of Vengeance</i> by Sholem Asch	Homework: Read <i>Indecent</i> by Paula Vogel
February 3 Discuss <i>Indecent</i> by Paula Vogel	Homework: Read <i>Bent</i> by Martin Sherman

February 10 Discuss <i>Bent</i> by Martin Sherman	Homework: Read <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> by Tennessee Williams
February 17 Discuss <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> by Tennessee Williams	Homework: Read <i>The Boys in the Band</i> by Mart Crowley
February 24 Discuss <i>The Boys in the Band</i> by Mart Crowley	Homework: Read <i>As Is</i> by William M. Hoffman
March 3 Discuss <i>As Is</i> by William M. Hoffman	Homework: Read <i>The Laramie Project</i> by Moises Kaufman
March 10 Discuss <i>The Laramie Project</i> by Moises Kaufman	Homework: Read <i>Angels in America</i> by Tony Kushner
March 13-17 Spring Break!	
March 24 Discuss <i>Angels in America</i> by Tony Kushner	Homework: Read <i>M. Butterfly</i> David Henry Hwang
March 31 Discuss <i>M. Butterfly</i> David Henry Hwang	Homework: Read <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i> by John Cameron Mitchell
April 7 Discuss <i>Hedwig and the Angry Inch</i> by John Cameron Mitchell	Homework: Read <i>Remedial English</i> by Evan Smith
April 14 Discuss <i>Remedial English</i> by Evan Smith	Homework: Read <i>A Strange Loop</i> Michael R. Jackson

April 21 Discuss <i>A Strange Loop</i> Michael R. Jackson	Homework: Read <i>Swimming While Drowning</i> by Emilio Rodriguez
April 28 Discuss <i>Swimming While Drowning</i> by Emilio Rodriguez	
May 5 No Class! Reading Day!	<u>FINAL PROJECT DUE THURSDAY, May 12 at 12 noon!</u>