

THEATRE 4380.001:
LGBTQA+ Theatre
Spring 2020
Room: RTFP 127
Time: F 9:00 AM-11:50 AM

Professor: Kerry Goldmann

Email: kerry.goldmann@unt.edu

Office: RTFP 215

Office Hours: MW 10:00AM-11:30AM

*If you are unable to make any of the office hours listed above for the professor or graders, you can email any of them and schedule an appointment.

I. Course Description

This course examines contemporary plays and performance art 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 and 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 aesthetic autonomy, 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 assignments:

List of Assignments

1. Play Analyses: Individual written assignments in which students look for recurrent images, phrases, ideas, events, character types that give the work its coherence. (50 pts each x 10 = total of **500** pts)
2. Poetry Project: Each student will choose a poem that demonstrates one or more of the themes we cover in this class. The student will perform the poem in front of the class while offering a short analysis of the poem's importance to LGBTQA art. (**50** pts)
3. Weekly Discussion Question: You must submit one discussion question each week with the corresponding play. Because discussion is such a vital part of this course, creating your own questions will help you engage with a play on a deeper level. (15 pts each x 10 = **150** pts)
4. Final Project Work: Options: (**300** pts)
 - A. **Insight Paper**—Students write an insight paper (5-6 pages in length) based on a play from on or off the class list.
 - B. **Teaching Portfolio**—Students create a portfolio of class materials for a course similar to this one (8-10 pages) including a syllabus, discussion outlines, selected plays, project descriptions, and class assessments (such as quizzes or tests).
 - C. **Producer Project**—Students will write a proposal (5-6 pages in length) mapping out a production plan for a play from on or off the class list. Specify where you want it staged, a short dramaturgical background, and your directorial and design concepts for the production.
 - D. **Performance Project**—Students work solo (monologue; 2 minutes in length) or as an ensemble to present an excerpt (a 5-8 minute scene) from on or off the class list.
 - E. **Playwriting project**—Students work collaboratively to create and perform a short (10 minutes max) play, based on a subject relevant to this class.

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."

All assignments are due during the scheduled class time. Assignments handed 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. Healthy 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. You can learn a great deal from listening to others.

B. Communication:

I want to be as accessible to you as I can be. I will hold regular office hours for 2 hours per week on a first-come, first-served basis, and I will also be happy to schedule an appointment with you at any time outside of regular office hours on which we can both agree. 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 can't visit during office hours, please email me. I will do my best to respond immediately.

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 (at the very least) in your receiving a grade of "0 (Zero)" 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. Withdrawal:

Should a student chose to drop this course, he or she must initiate the drop and acquire all the proper signatures and paperwork to ensure that he or she is dropped officially; otherwise, you will be subject to a WF or F at the close of the semester. The official drop date is **March 20th**.

E. Course-Related Academic Adjustments In Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (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 see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

F. Acceptable Student Behavior:

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at ww.unt.edu/csrr

G. 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. In this way, perhaps this course will expand what you know and believe it means to be LGBTQA in U.S. society. Please keep in mind that academic investigation need not be either stodgy, boring, tiresome, or dull. This requires, however, that you take as much responsibility for your own education as I do in creating an environment where learning can occur for everyone. The class will be as exciting and life-enhancing as you help make it. 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.

Class Schedule

Week 1: January 17—Syllabus/Class Intro

Week 2: January 24— Sholem Asch's *God of Vengeance*

Week 3: January 31—Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour*

Week 4: February 7—Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

Week 5: February 14—Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band*

Week 6: February 21—William M. Hoffman's *As Is*

Week 7: February 28—Moises Kaufman's *The Laramie Project*

Week 8: March 6— Poetry Performance Project

Week 9: March 13— SPRING BREAK

Week 10: March 20— Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*

Week 11: March 27—???

Week 12: April 3— Evan Smith's *Remedial English*

Week 13: April 10— John Cameron Mitchell's *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*

Week 14: April 17—Holly Hughes' *The Well of Horniness*

Week 15: April 24—Final Project/Class Evaluation

Week 16: May 1— Work day/No class

Week 17: May 10— Final Project Performance