

TH 390: THEATRE HISTORY I
MWF 9-9:50 a.m.
King Hall 216

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theatre History I is a survey of the history and development of theatre arts from ancient Greece to the English Restoration. The course combines lecture with assigned readings, discussion and student research.

TEXTBOOK

History of the Theatre (Foundation edition)
Oscar Brockett and Franklin J. Hildy



RECOMMENDED READING

The Oresteia (Aeschylus)
The Trojan Women (Euripides)
Lysistrata (Aristophanes)
The Menaechmi (Plautus)
Phaedra (Seneca)
The Second Shepherd's Play
Everyman
Dr. Faustus (Christopher Marlowe)
Hamlet (William Shakespeare)
The Masque of Blackness (Ben Jonson)
The Knight of the Burning Pestle (Francis Beaumont)
Fuente Ovejuna (Lope de Vega)
The Misanthrope (Moliere)
The Duchess of Malfi (John Webster)
'Tis Pity She's a Whore (John Ford)
The Cid (Corneille)
All for Love (John Dryden)
The Way of the World (William Congreve)
The Rover (Aphra Behn)

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (600 points possible)

1. Attendance and participation (50)
2. Exam over Classical Theatre (100)
3. Exam over Medieval Theatre (100)
4. Exam over The Golden Age (100)
5. Play outline. From the reading list. (50)
6. Research paper. Minimum of 5 typed pages. (100)
7. Final exam over Restoration Theatre (100)

GRADING SCALE

A	93-100%	558-600	C	73-77%	438-467
A-	90- 92%	540-557	C-	70-72%	420-437
B+	88- 89%	528-539	D+	68-69%	408-419
B	83- 87%	498-527	D	63-67%	378-407
B-	80- 82%	480-497	D-	60-62%	360-377
C+	78- 79%	468-479	F	0-59%	001-359

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To discover the origins of theatre and its value through history.
- To discover how the theatre has changed through time and place.
- To examine how theatre reveals culture.
- To discover important works of dramatic literature through the ages.
- To contribute to the student's development in research and writing.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Emporia State University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students need to contact the Director of Disability Services and the professor as early in the semester as possible to ensure that classroom and academic accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. All communication between students, the Office of Disability Services, and the professor will be strictly confidential.

Faculty-Initiated Student Withdrawal Procedure.

Students should be aware that your instructor follows the university's policy of faculty-initiated student withdrawal. It reads as follows: "If a student's absences from class or disruptive behavior become detrimental to the student's progress or that of other students in the class, the faculty member shall attempt to contact the student in writing about withdrawing from the class and shall seek the aid of the office of Vice President of Student Affairs to help insure contacting the Student. The Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs shall provide the student information about the existing appeals procedures. Upon receiving a written report from the faculty member, the Vice President of Student Affairs may initiate a student withdrawal from the class. None of the above implies or states that faculty members are required to initiate the student withdrawals for excessive absence. **[Policy and Procedures Manual 43.11]**

COURSE CALENDAR

August	W 15	COURSE INTRODUCTION	Review syllabus.
	F 17	The Origins of Theatre.	Brockett, chapter one.
	M 20	Brockett, Chapter two.	Theatre of Ancient Greece.
	W 22	The Greek Theatre	
	F 24	The Greek Theatre	
	M 27	The Greek Theatre	
	W 29	The Greek Theatre	
	F 31	Chapter three.	Hellenistic and Roman Theatre.

September M 03 LABOR DAY. No classes.
 W 05 The Roman Theatre
 F 07 The Roman Theatre
 M 10 The Roman Theatre
 W 12 The Roman Theatre
 F 14 Classical play outlines due. Review for first exam.
 M 17 First exam – Classical Theatre
 W 19 Chapter four. Cross-Currents of Theatre
 F 21 Asian Theatre
 M 24 Byzantine Theatre
 W 26 Liturgical Drama
 F 28 Liturgical Drama

OCTOBER M 01 Liturgical Drama. FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE
 W 03 Chapter five. European Theatre in the Late Middle Ages.
 F 05 Staging medieval drama
 M 08 Secular dramatic forms
 W 10 The morality play
 F 12 The end of medieval drama
 M 15 Medieval play outlines due. Review for second exam.
 W 17 NO CLASS – Homecoming matinee
 F 19 Second Exam – Medieval Theatre
 M 22 Chapter six. English Theatre to 1642
 W 24 England's Golden Age
 F 26 NO CLASS, Fall break.
 M 29 The public theatres and the theatre at court
 W 31 The Theatre at Court

NOVEMBER F 02 The Italian Ideal
 M 05 Chapter seven. The Theatre of Spain to 1700
 W 07 Spanish Theatre
 F 09 VETERANS DAY (No classes.)
 M 12 Chapter eight. Italian Theatre to 1700
 W 14 Italian Theatre
 F 16 Chapter nine. French Theatre to 1700
 M 19 French Theatre
 W 21 THANKSGIVING BREAK
 F 23 THANKSGIVING BREAK
 M 26 Final play outlines due. Review for third exam.
 W 28 Third Exam – The Golden Age
 F 30 Chapter eleven. English Theatre to 1800

DECEMBER M 03 The Restoration. RESEARCH PAPER DUE TODAY.
 W 05 The Restoration
 F 07 The Restoration

M 10 FINAL EXAM, 10:10 a.m.

COURSE POLICIES

All assignments are due on the day they are assigned at class time.

Late assignments will not be graded. But you must turn them in to pass.

All written assignments must be typed.

You may e-mail certain assignments.

If you arrive late to class, you will be considered absent.

Early departure from any class will also count as an absence.

Bring your book, something to write with and note paper to each class.

Participation in school plays/activities will not excuse you from classwork.

We will follow ESU's Dishonesty Policy found online at:
<http://www.emporia.edu/acadaff/dishonesty.htm>

RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

Your paper must be **typed** and **double-spaced**. You will be graded on content and form, so proofread for spelling, syntax and grammar. Use Turabian or the MLA Handbook as a guide to organization and documentation.

FIRST DRAFT (Due October 1)

You must turn in a draft complete with title, thesis statement, outline and bibliography. It should be between 2 and 4 pages. It should provide an introduction which states your thesis. The outline will show your investigation of the topic including evidence and documentation. Conclude with a summary of your findings.

Select a topic that you find interesting. Be specific and write only on that topic. Don't select a thesis statement that is overly broad. The **thesis statement** should be a concise, declarative sentence. For example: "Theatre-goers in Shakespeare's day had a more active role in the performance than modern audiences." Try to avoid the trite (and too obvious) "In this paper I will show..."

FINAL DRAFT (Due December 3)

You must turn in a complete, carefully-written and thoroughly proofed final version of your paper. It should be a minimum of five pages in length (excluding title page and bibliography.) It must be **typed** and **double-spaced**. It must follow Turabian or MLA guidelines for organization and notes. It is due at the beginning of the class period. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED** for grading, but, you must still turn one in to receive credit. This version of the paper will be graded and returned to you at the final exam period.

PLAY OUTLINE ASSIGNMENT. (See example below.) Each of you will provide a play outline for one of our recommended reading. You will make multiple copies so that each call member can have a copy. Follow this format:

TITLE OF PLAY (Date), Author, Translation (if needed)

CAST LIST OF MAJOR CHARACTERS. Name, relationship to other characters

HISTORICAL NOTE. A brief statement concerning this play's place in dramatic history. (For example: The first extant play by Aeschylus –OR– Considered by critics to be the best example of its genre –OR– The basis for Shakespeare's play _____, etc.)

PLOT SYNOPSIS. A summary of the action

OTHER NOTES ABOUT THE PLAY. "This play was (thrilling, boring, dull, important, etc.) *because...* (provide a justification for you opinion.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY. For any other source you may have consulted in preparing your reading outline.

Alcestis by Euripides, Written 438 BC
Translated by Richard Aldington

APOLLO, the god of light, leader of the Muses and Oracular god to Delphi.

DEATH

CHORUS OF OLD MEN

A WOMAN SERVANT

ALCESTIS, the Queen, wife of ADMETUS

ADMETUS, King of Thessaly

EUMELUS, their child

HERACLES, son of Zeus and Alcmena, known for his great strength

PHERES, father of ADMETUS

ABOUT THE PLAY. **Alcestis** is one of the earliest surviving works of the Greek playwright Euripides. The play was probably first produced at the City Dionysia in the year 438 BC. It is sometimes characterized as a satyr play and sometimes as a melodrama.

PREVIOUS ACTION. Long before the start of the play, King Admetos was granted the privilege of living past the allotted time of his death. Apollo got The Fates drunk and persuaded them to do so. This unusual bargain was struck after Apollo was exiled from Olympus for nine years and spent the time in the service of the Thessalian king, a man renowned for his hospitality and by whom Apollo was treated well. The gift, however, came with a price: Admetus must find someone to take his place when Death comes to claim him. The time of Admetos' death comes, and he still has not found a willing replacement. His father, Pheres, is unwilling to step in and thinks it is ludicrous that he should be asked to give up the life he enjoys so much as part of this strange deal. Finally, his devoted wife Alcestis agrees to be taken in his stead because she wishes not to leave her children fatherless or be bereft of her lover, and at the start of the play, she is close to death.

SYNOPSIS. Alcestis, on her death-bed, requests that in return for her sacrifice, Admetus never again marry, nor forget her or place a resentful stepmother in charge of their children. Admetos agrees to this, and also promises to lead a life of solemnity in her honor, abstaining from the merrymaking that was an integral part of his household. Alcestis then dies. Just afterwards, Admetus' old friend Heracles arrives at the palace, having no idea of the sorrow that has befallen the place. Hospitality is considered a great virtue, in fact it remains the main motivation for the characters throughout the play. It would be against all manners to turn a guest away, so the king decides not to burden him with the sad news and instructs the servants to make Heracles welcome and keep their mouths shut. Heracles gets drunk and begins irritating the servants, who loved their queen and are bitter at not being allowed to mourn her properly. Finally, one of the servants snaps at the guest and tells him what has happened. Heracles is terribly embarrassed at his blunder and his bad behavior, and he decides to ambush and confront Death when the funeral sacrifices are made at Alcestis' tomb. When he returns, he brings with him a veiled woman whom he tells Admetus he has brought for his host as a new wife. After much discussion he finally forces Admetos to reluctantly take her by the hand, but when he lifts the veil, he finds that it appears to be, in fact, Alcestis, back from the dead. Heracles has battled Death and forced him to give her up. She cannot speak for three days after which she will be purified and fully restored to life.

COMMENTARY. Some of the decisions by the characters raise some questions. Hospitality was considered a great virtue among the Greeks, which is why Admetos cannot send Heracles away from his house. In turn as a reward Heracles returns Alcestis to him. Why did Admetos consent to sacrifice his wife at all? It seems an offer he should never have accepted. Perhaps he couldn't refuse the favor that Apollo had given him.

SOURCES: <http://classics.mit.edu/Euripides/alcestis.html>
<http://www.stageagent.com>
Hamilton, Edith. MYTHOLOGY. Back Bay Books, 1998.