

THFM/ENGL-2703-001 (3 credit hours)

**PLAY ANALYSIS**

Winter, 2016  
MWF 9:30-10:20 am  
Room ~~4M33~~ **4M37**

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Office Hours: W, F 10:30-11:20  
and by appointment.

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The fundamental challenge any play or theatre text presents to performers, directors, designers and stage managers is how to read it in a way that is useful for a staged production. Our main focus will be one way of reading plays as first developed by Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko at the Moscow Art Theatre. It was further elaborated on by their students (especially Maria Knebel), and by important figures in North American Theatre such as Clurman and Kazan. As well as by contemporary, cutting edge British theatre makers like Bella Merlin and Katie Mitchell.

Play Analysis is part of an artistic process; it calls for intuitive responses, contemplation, and analytical skills. Play analysis is only the first step in preparation for a production of a play. Subsequent steps depend on the job a particular artist in the production team needs to fulfill, as a performer, a director, a designer, etc.

The following categories will be explored in this class: given circumstances/setting; structure/story development/main events; character constellations/themes; bits and objectives; super objectives; realization/stage metaphor.

(Given the description above, students taking Play Analysis as ENGL majors should take note that the main goals of this course concern discovering performance values in the plays studied and only in tangential ways what might traditionally be termed their literary values or cultural contexts).

**TEXTS**

Chekhov: *The Essential Plays*. Translated by Michael Henry Heim. The Modern Library. Required.

**GRADING**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Test 1 (Monday, Feb. 8).....              | 30%         |
| Test 2 (Friday, Mar. 11).....             | 35%         |
| Group portfolio* (Tuesday, April 5) ..... | 35%         |
|   | -----       |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>                        | <b>100%</b> |

\* Please note that the last assignment is a group project that focuses on *The Cherry Orchard*. Groups will be created by random selection. This assignment requires that all members of a group contribute equally to the final result. If a member of a group has not "pulled his/her weight," that member will be given a reduced mark for this assignment. Otherwise all members of a group will receive the same mark for this project. During time set aside for the group project attendance will be taken.

**CONVERSION SCALE**

For the calculation of the final grade the following conversion table will be used:

|    |            |     |      |    |            |     |     |
|----|------------|-----|------|----|------------|-----|-----|
| A+ | 90 – 100%  | GPA | 4.5  | C+ | 65 – 69.9% | GPA | 2.5 |
| A  | 85 – 89.9% | GPA | 4.25 | C  | 60 – 64.9% | GPA | 2.0 |
| A- | 80 – 84.9% | GPA | 4.0  | D  | 50 – 59.9% | GPA | 1.0 |
| B+ | 75 – 79.9% | GPA | 3.5  | F  | below 50%  | GPA | 0   |
| B  | 70 – 74.9% | GPA | 3.0  |    |            |     |     |

Work not submitted will be graded as 0%.

**DEFINITIONS OF GRADING DESCRIPTIONS**

**A+ Exceptional.** Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill **AND** great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

**A Superior.** Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill **OR** great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

**A- Excellent.** Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

**B+ Very Good.** Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

**B Good.** Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

**C+ Competent.** Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

**C Fairly Competent.** Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

**D Barely Passing.** Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

**F Failing.**

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (subject to change)**

Jan. 6: Introduction

Jan 8.- Feb 5: Classes will focus on *The Seagull*.

**Feb. 8:** Test 1. Open book. In-class test. Hand-written.

Feb. 10- Mar. 9: Classes will focus on *Uncle Vanya* and *Three Sisters*.

**Feb.15 through 19 Reading Week. No classes**

Mar.1: Final Withdrawal Date

**Mar. 11:** Test 2. Open book. In-class test. Hand written.

Mar. 11 – April 4: Group work on *The Cherry Orchard*

**April 5\*\*:** Analysis of *The Cherry Orchard* is due. This should be handed in typed.

\*\* Tuesday April 5 is the Make-Up day for the class missed on Friday, Mar. 25 (Good Friday). This day operates on a Friday schedule.

## **"THE REAL THING" LECTURE SERIES**

The Department of Theatre and Film is presenting a series of six lectures which will be held on Wednesdays (except where noted) during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15. Please note the Winter dates in your diary **NOW**: Jan 13, Feb 10, Mar 9. This series will feature speakers from a range of areas in the performing arts: technical, performance, design, management, film, directing, playwriting, etc. These speakers will specifically address issues related to "the business of the business."

Attendance for potential Theatre Honours/majors and for Film majors is optional but highly recommended.

## **BUILDING SECURITY**

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (home to the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 am and 5:30 pm weekdays only. Students are permitted to be in the building between 8:00 am and 10:00 pm seven days per week (except statutory holidays when the University is closed) **BUT PLEASE NOTE**: outside of regular building hours, it is **MANDATORY** that everyone in the building **EITHER** carry an access card **OR** have a booking confirmation form in their possession (hard copy or electronic). **ALL EVENING STUDENTS in the building for classes MUST have an access card.** If a Security Guard checks and you do not have proper accreditation, **you may be evicted.**

These rules are in place to protect our students and our equipment; please respect them.

## **ELECTRONIC COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDA**

Students must check our website at <http://theatre.uwinnipeg.ca/tbooking.htm> and read the menu items called *Fire Safety Instructions in the Asper Centre for Theatre and Film*, *Access Card/Building Use Policy* **AND** *Room Booking Instructions*. The link to the electronic *Online Room Booking Form* is also found at this location. Please read and note all instructions carefully.

## **GENERAL NOTES**

This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.

Archival records such as videotapes, sound recordings, and photographs may be made or taken during class or lab times. The University uses such materials primarily for archival, promotional, and teaching purposes. Promotional use may include display at open houses or conferences, or use in advertising, publicity, or brochures. In reading and accepting the terms in this course outline, students acknowledge consent for such use by the University. Should a student not wish to convey such consent, s/he should withdraw from this course immediately.

Cellular phones **MUST** be turned off during classes and examinations; texting is **NOT** permitted in class.

Any student attending a test or final examination may be required to present proof of identity; photo identification is preferred.

It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or computer disk copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.

Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 204-786-9771 or <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility> to discuss appropriate options. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.

Students are strongly advised to read the section of the *University of Winnipeg Calendar* (found on-line at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/new-faculty-handbook/appeals-and-academic-misconduct.html>) for information on Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals.

Students facing a charge of academic or non-academic misconduct may choose to contact the University of Winnipeg Student's Association (UWSA) where a student advocate will be available to answer any questions about the process, help with building a case, and ensure students have access to support. For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit our website at <http://www.theuwsa.ca/academic-advocacy> or call 204-786-9780.

We ask that you please be respectful of the needs of classmates and instructors/professors by avoiding the use of unnecessary scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to scented products can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities. Please consider using unscented necessary products and avoiding unnecessary products that are scented (e.g. perfume).

Students who plan to conduct research interviews, focus groups, surveys, or any other method of collecting data from any person, even a family member, must obtain the approval of the appropriate ethics committee before commencing data collection. Exceptions are research activities in class as a learning exercise. See <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/research/human-ethics.html> for submission requirements and deadlines.

All students, faculty and staff have the right to participate, learn and work in an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. The UW Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy may be found online at [www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect).

Students may choose not to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religion, but they must notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance. Instructors will then provide opportunity for students to make up work examinations without penalty. A list of religious holidays can be found at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf>

**TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016** is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin on January 5 and end in April 5, 2016 (Winter 2016 Term).

### **STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Theatre is a communal art form in which a number of interdependent artists and crafts people co-operate to create a work of art. This fact is necessarily transferred to the learning situation, and is reflected in many of the Department's courses. Consequently, it is the Department's policy that students are required to: complete homework such as reading, line-learning, script analysis, prop lists, design drawings, etc.; attend classes; attend rehearsals both within and outside of class times; and, in short, to exhibit commitment towards the inevitably shared endeavours of our field of study.

Any student failing to fulfil these requirements is harmful to the progress of dedicated students and may, after due warning, be asked to withdraw from any individual Departmental course.

### **COURSE CONTENT NOTE**

#### All Theatre and Film Classes

Dramatic Literature depicts a wide variety of human action, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. The Department of Theatre and Film will not undertake to censor the subject matter of dramatic works.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of content and style in drama/film are urged to discuss these concerns with the course instructor.

### Performance-Related Classes

Much of an actor's work is based upon actual experiences of life which become translated into fictional circumstances. Because of this, the teaching of acting may involve encouraging the student to examine personal and even intimate areas of life to help him or her access life experiences appropriate to the demands of the work.

Dramatic literature depicts a wide range of human actions, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. Acting students must learn to simulate life truthfully in interaction with other students in the safety of the acting class and the rehearsal hall through exercises, discussions, and directions which address rather than avoid truthful, particularized, personalized action.

Performance classes often require strenuous physical activity. Classes may also involve physical interaction between students as part of class exercises or character development and occasional physical contact by instructors for purposes such as the demonstration of a technique or to make a posture correction. Students are responsible for wearing clothing appropriate to these activities.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of actions and subject matter involved in drama are urged to discuss these concerns with their course instructor.