Syllabus for Introduction to Theatre, Fall 2019

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My pronouns are He, Him, His, Himself

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Email: deckersj@uwm.edu

Office Hours: M&W, 10:30-12:00

What will I learn? To develop a personal understanding and appreciation for theatre as an art form by viewing, reading and discussing selected plays through your personal point of view.

How will I know I am learning? You will recognize learning when you…

▪ Express personal perspectives in response to performances.
▪ Apply critical perspectives in compassionate and mindful ways as a response to performances.
▪ Examine a variety of cultural viewpoints in written response to theatre.
▪ Develop your aesthetic perspectives as a response to theatre.
▪ Utilize critical thinking to develop criteria for evaluating performance.
▪ Participate in a collaborative process: the audience experience, and a group research project.

How much time should I schedule for this course?

2 class meetings per week= 2.5 wk. X 15 wks. = 30 hours
Readings, small assignments or show clips = 1 hour wk= 15-20 hours
Specific shows outside of class time= 3-6 hours
Writing drafts of essays= 10-13 hours
Serious revision, editing and proofreading of essays=4-6
Final Presentation= 5-8                      Total Time Estimate= 67-83 hours
**Will we see some shows?** Yes!

*The Moors*, 7:30 on November 7, 8 and 9, UWM at Waukesha

Other live options may come up throughout the semester, and through links online to recorded productions.

**Do I need to attend every class?** Yes. Timely attendance is a necessity in this course.

**What if I get sick?** You are allowed to miss 4 class meetings for any reason without facing a grade penalty. In this course, there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. Upon each absence in excess of 4, your overall final class grade may be lowered by 5 percentage points. Two late arrivals or early departures constitute an absence. *Total absences including late arrivals and early departures in excess of six (6), may result in failure to pass the course.*

**But what if I have an emergency and can’t make it?** Occasionally, there is a REAL emergency. Therefore, it is smart to bank your allowable absences (save them for real emergencies).

**What is a REAL emergency?** Real and unplanned events that pertain to your personal (or your family’s) safety, death, acute illness or other “Acts of God” (like blizzards or tornados).

**What do I do if I have a real emergency?** Let Steve know as soon as is practicable. Leave a voice mail on 262.521.5209. Then, email Steve (deckersj@uwm.edu) as soon as is safe and possible and explain the details of your emergency and make arrangements to get caught up and back on track.

**What if the weather is really bad?** We all must travel to meet for this class and must make smart decisions that do not put ourselves at risk. Official campus class cancellation decisions are made several hours in advance and are announced via email and on the website. Steve will notify us via email in the event that he must cancel due to events beyond his control.

**Will I get in trouble if I miss class because of an emergency?** You will not be penalized for a problem outside of your control. When the emergency is over you will work with Steve and come up with a sensible alternative (plan B).
What is Plan B? Ask Steve. Together you will come up with a humane and compassionate solution.

Is a transportation problem a real emergency? No. Transportation problems are NOT real emergencies. They may feel that way but they are not.

But, what if I am late because my transportation was faulty? If you encounter a transportation related problem please arrive to class as soon as possible - being late is better than not showing up at all. Or contact Steve if you must miss the whole class meeting.

OK, what isn’t a real emergency?

- Missing the bus or any similar transportation problem.
- You are/were in a show, concert, production, or similar event.
- You forgot or misread the calendar and syllabus.
- You “didn’t realize that the assignment was due.”
- Friends/family needed to socialize, needed a ride, etc.
- Computers or other technologies broke or became lost; and/or you had no access to the Internet; and/or there was no possible way for you to find a computer or Internet connection anywhere; and/or your mobile data plan didn’t work.
- You were on a vacation, took time off, or went on a trip.
- You had a hangover.
- Your dog/cat/pet was ill.
- Your roommate’s dog/cat/pet was ill.
- Your boss, director, or supervisor scheduled you for lots more hours than originally planned.

Do I need to bring a book or anything to class?

There is not a dedicated textbook for this course. There will be occasional handouts to read. Everyone will need to access online course materials found on the Canvas site. Handouts missed or lost in class will also be posted on the site. You will also post key written essays here and be able to access your grades in order to track your progress here. You must be able to post written work to the Canvas site when asked to do so for specified assignments. There are also some videos of performances you will access though this online learning resource.

I also suggest a dedicated class notebook to track your ideas as they come up in class so that you can access your good ideas later.
How do I succeed (get an A grade)? You will succeed if you do all the work in an exemplary fashion, read and follow the directions, study and view all materials, explore, actively participate, attend all classes, follow the code of conduct, have fun, and submit your work within the established deadlines.

What if I don’t do all of the assignments? All students are expected to complete all the assignments. At the end of the semester if you are missing assignments you will get an INC grade, which, will default to an F grade after 10 weeks.

How do grades work in this class? There are 700 total points in the course. Grades are evaluated using the following % based on a denominator of 700 points. To track your progress, simply add up the points earned, and divide that sum by the total points that were possible. Then move the decimal point two places to the right, then round up for your personal %.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 to 93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>92-85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>84-78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>77-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>68% and below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>see below</td>
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I = Incomplete grade is given when any assignment has not been completed that is well past the due date. Students must turn in and complete all of the assignments with all of the required elements of the assignment. Incomplete final grades default to an F at the start of the next semester. If you receive an INC you will be allowed to redo or complete make-up work before the INC defaults to an F—but not after the final default occurs.

Class Assignments

1st Essay = Fences (100 pts.)
2nd Essay = Kinky Boots (150 pts.)
3rd Essay = The Moors (200 pts.)
Dramaturgy Presentation = (150 points)
Participation = 100
Below is a rubric for the 1st Essay. Specific directions, guidelines and practice will follow in the course. This rubric for the 1st Essay is also a guide for the 2nd and 3rd essay, the only difference is that the point value increases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics, on time, original thinking</td>
<td>Considerations of mechanics and grammar. Clarity of ideas expressed in complete sentences. Submitted on time. Submission is original and not borrowed or copied</td>
<td>A=10  C=5  F=0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty and Respect</td>
<td>Student expresses beliefs and viewpoints clearly and deals with disagreements respectfully</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 1</td>
<td>Clear, reflective, addresses all points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 2</td>
<td>Clear, reflective, addresses all points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 3</td>
<td>Clear, reflective, addresses all points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 4</td>
<td>Clear, reflective, addresses all points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 5</td>
<td>Clear, reflective, addresses all points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 6</td>
<td>Clear, reflective, addresses all points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 7</td>
<td>Clear, reflective, addresses all points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph 8</td>
<td>Information is included, questions are answered</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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**How do I get graded for participation?** Class discussion and group activities are meant to be an incentive to attend regularly and are an easy way to earn points and better understand course material. Here are some overall good practices that students employ in to earn participation points each day.

- Arrive on time prepared for class.
- Remaining actively engaged during class meetings.
- Jot down key ideas and discoveries that relate to upcoming written assignments
- Willingly share ideas and thoughts to add depth to the overall content conversation.
- Ask relevant questions while also listening thoughtfully to the opinions of others.
- Stay on task in small groups and provide thoughtfully considered responses.
- Interact compassionately and appropriately with peers.
- Have fun!

**How did I get that grade?**

A = Exceptional Work (Outstanding) Inspired work, imaginative and thorough solutions to problems, work shows continuous and exceptional growth above the average of the class,
demonstrates an understanding of the basic ideas and methods taught through exceptional application in projects, timely preparation and submission of class work, constant and constructive classroom participation in critiques and/or discussion as appropriate to the class and the subject, deeply considered point of view expressed articulately using evidence, regular attendance of class.

**B = Above Average Work** Good workable solutions to problems, shows some insights into problem solving, shows continuous and above average growth, shows understanding of basic methods taught through skillful application in projects, regular classroom participation in critiques and/or discussions as appropriate to class, regular attendance of class.

**C = Average Work** Appropriate solutions to problems, shows some growth, shows general understanding of basic ideas and methods taught through application in projects, most class work is prepared and submitted in a timely manner, participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions as appropriate to class and subjects, regular/inconsistent attendance.

**D = Below Average Work (Marginally acceptable)** Inconsistent solutions to problems, shows little growth, shows inconsistent understanding of basic ideas and methods taught and applied to projects, class work is often not prepared and submitted in a timely manner, rarely participates in classroom critiques and/or discussion, inconsistent attendance.

**F = Unacceptable Work (Failed to meet the requirements)** Incomplete or no solutions to problems, shows little or no growth, shows little or no understanding of basic ideas and methods taught, application of these ideas is often missing or inconsistently presented in class work, class work is not prepared and/or submitted on time or not at all, participates rarely or not at all in classroom critiques and/or discussions, poor attendance.

**Class Rules**

1. Assignment due dates are announced well in advance and are fair and reasonable for all students. Assignments which are not submitted on time face a grade penalty up to a half letter grade per day it is late. An Incomplete grade (I) is given when any assignment has not been completed that is well past the due date. Students must turn in and complete all of the assignments with all of the required elements of the assignment. Incomplete final grades default to an F at the start of the next semester. If you receive an INC you will be allowed to redo or complete make-up work before the INC defaults to an F—but not after the final default occurs.
2. Each student is required to attend and write a critique of one live theatre production this semester. This production is *The Moors* on campus and the admission is free to any enrolled UWM at Waukesha student. Please plan on attending the 7:30 performance on Nov. 7, 8 or 9.

3. This course will utilize the Canvas course management system. Course syllabus, assignments, announcements, and other course materials are available to you on this site. Students will also submit the assigned graded essays on this site.

4. This class is meant to be an exploration of theatre in our lives today and we will explore different genres, styles, a variety of theatrical language, and societal issues. You may experience ideas, beliefs, and language that is different than yours. Sharing and offering your personal viewpoint is important and should be made within the context of critically examining works of dramatic literature, production practices, and performances with kindness and compassion.

5. If you are interested in theatre beyond this classroom experience please join the UW Milwaukee at Waukesha Theatre group page on Facebook for audition information, updates and other event happenings!

**Weekly Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #1-September 4</th>
<th>In class topic/Activities</th>
<th>Outside of class work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meet and greet, class policies, why study theatre?</td>
<td>An email to Steve: Hello, two things I would like to learn about, I have reviewed the syllabus and understand the course expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #2-September 9</td>
<td>Theatre terms, first look at critique questions, examples</td>
<td>Read about August Wilson and his work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #3-September 16</td>
<td>Watch <em>Fences</em> scenes in class</td>
<td>Read assigned scenes on Canvas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #4-September 23</td>
<td>clockwork gear discuss <em>Fences</em></td>
<td>Begin draft response of Essay #1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In class topic/Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #5 September 30</th>
<th>Wrap up <em>Fences</em>, introduce musical theatre, introduce Kinky boots</th>
<th>Fences Essay #1 due September 8 @ noon to Canvas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week #6-October 7</td>
<td>Watch <em>Kinky Boots</em>, guided discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #7-October 14</td>
<td>Watch <em>Kinky Boots</em>, guided discussion</td>
<td>Begin draft response of Essay #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #8-October 21</td>
<td>Watch and discuss <em>Kinky Boots</em></td>
<td>Revise draft Essay #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #9-October 28</td>
<td>Wrap up <em>Kinky Boots</em>, clockwork gear</td>
<td><em>Kinky Boots</em> (<em>Essay #2</em>) is due_________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #10-November 4</td>
<td>Overview and Introduction of <em>The Moors</em></td>
<td>Attend <em>The Moors</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week #11-November 11</td>
<td>Discuss <em>The Moors</em></td>
<td><em>The Moors critique is due by end of day 11-17-2019.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #12-November 18</td>
<td>Introduce final presentation project, topic selection</td>
<td>Research presentation</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 4</th>
<th>In class topic/Activities</th>
<th>Outside of class work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week #13-November 25</td>
<td>Time to work in class with your partner</td>
<td>Research presentation, communicate with partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #14-December 2</td>
<td>Check in with Steve on final presentation project</td>
<td>Bring draft materials to class for review and time with partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week #15-December 9</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Final Exam** The final presentation serves as the final examination for this course and is likely to occur on the last regularly scheduled class period. The official final exam period is held in reserve for all of us in case of an unexpected event such as inclement weather or illness. This date is Monday, **December 16 from 10:00 A.M until noon.**
You are required to attend and write an essay after viewing the campus theatre production.

**The Moors**

**November 7, 8, 9 @ 7:30 pm, UWM at Waukesha, Lunt-Fontanne Theatre**

Tickets are free to UW-Waukesha students with ID.

General admission tickets are $12 adults, $10 for student and Senior Citizens

**All critiques must be submitted to the Canvas dropbox.**

**The critique is due before noon, SUNDAY, November 17, 2019!**

Students involved as actors or production crew will still write a paper, but it will be more specific in regards to their contributions on the production. The due date will remain the same. This slight variation of the assignment will be discussed with the individuals that are involved with the show as needed with the instructor. Specific instructions will be discussed later in the course.
Other official policies of the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee to keep in mind.

1. Students with learning accomodations should coordinate with ARC. [http://uwm.edu/arc/](http://uwm.edu/arc/)
2. Religious observances. [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_1.5_ACCOMMODA_OUS_BELIEFS.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_1.5_ACCOMMODA_OUS_BELIEFS.pdf)
3. Students called to active military duty. [http://uwm.edu/active-duty-military/](http://uwm.edu/active-duty-military/)
4. Discriminatory conduct. [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimina_duct_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimina_duct_Policy.pdf)
5. Title IX/Sexual Violence, which include sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, and/or stalking in all educational programs and education-related areas. ([titlex@uwm.edu](mailto:titlex@uwm.edu)). For more information, please visit: [https://uwm.edu/sexual-assault/](https://uwm.edu/sexual-assault/).
6. Academic misconduct. Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. [http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/](http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/)
7. Complaint procedures. Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs.
   https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimination_Policy.pdf
8. Grade appeal procedures.
   https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_28_Grade_Appeal_by_Students.pdf
10. UWM prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco on all campus property.
    https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_49_Smoke_Tobacco_Free_Policy.pdf

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**Final Presentation**

*Why:* To engage in theatre research and understand the context, background, and authenticity of the production. This will help us all contextualize our audience experience.

*What:* To wrap up this course you will present and research ONE production with a partner(s). You will introduce a production and provide some information to your class peers by a) researching information about the playwright & the major themes that are woven into the play; b) share portions of key reviews and information from when the play first premiered or major revivals and c) the details, issues, and historical context of the play’s content. Together, your group becomes the resident scholarly experts on this show. The presentation should be 8-10 minutes in length.

*How:* Depending on your role (see above), conduct background research on the play and the production. Be prepared to present this information to the rest of the class. You also need to create a 1-page synopsis of the project including a self-evaluation of your contribution to the group project, works cited, and the quality of the collaborative work of the group, and anything else you would like to share about the process. Post this in the Canvas dropbox due by__________________.