



**DRAM 1310-141CL  
Theatre Appreciation  
Fall 2021**

**M-W 9:30am – 10:50am / Learning Resource – Bldg #8, Room 131**

**Instructor Information:**

Name: Molly Vernon  
Email: [mvernon@com.edu](mailto:mvernon@com.edu)  
Phone: 713.894.3158

**Student hours and location:** By scheduled appointment only.

**Required Textbook:** There is no required textbook for this course. (NETFLIX, Amazon Prime, HULU, and YouTube are handy.)

**Course Description:** A general survey of the major fields of theatre arts for students who have a limited experience or knowledge. The course emphasizes a mixture of hands-on experience and history.

This course is a study and application of the various activities and methods of theatrical practice. It includes discussions, assignments, projects, and lectures designed to analyze and evaluate all aspects of the theatre experience: scripts, design, acting, directing, staging, history and criticism. Attendance at representative plays is required

**Course requirements:**

Attendance/Participation	20%	The grading scale is as follows: 90 – 100 = A 80 – 89 = B 70 – 79 = C 65 – 69 = D 64 - below = F
Play Reviews	20%	
Quizzes/Video assignments	20%	
Group Creative Project	20%	
Final Exam	20%	

**Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:** Grades will be determined based on qualitative (projects) and quantitative (papers and exams) formulas. 20% of your grade will be based on answering direct questions on an exam based on presentations and hand-outs. 20% of your grade will be based on two written reviews. 60% of your grade will be determined by completion of group and individual projects, or quizzes, which demonstrate a working knowledge of the concepts explored in the course.

**Play Review Assignment Detail:** You must see a performance of the COM Theatre productions of *Sylvia* by A.R. Gurney and *A Divine Kerfuffle* by H. Russ Brown. You may see any preview or regular performance free of charge and you are welcome to bring a guest. There is no need to make a reservation. Your name will be on a list with the Box Office. To get credit for attending you **MUST** say you are in Ashley Love's Theatre Class and sign next to your name.

*Sylvia*: Sept 9<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> – review due Sept. 29th at midnight  
*A Divine Kerfuffle*: Nov 4<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> – review due Nov. 24th at midnight  
All performances run Thursdays – Saturdays at 8:00pm and Sundays at 2:30pm.

The best reviews for this purpose are approximately three (3) typewritten, double-space pages. This is not a test of whether you have seen the production -- that is a given. It should be a discussion of what you experienced and how it affected you. The following is an **OUTLINE** of topics which should be addressed in your review. Your point of view and critical thinking skills will be the focus of your grade. I do not care what your opinions are; I care if you are clearly communicating your opinions with evidence that supports your claims (just like with a research paper).

- I. Introductory Paragraph, including play and title
- II. Dramatic Values a. Story/Plot (keep this part short) b. Theme/Idea
- III. Personal reaction (A brief paragraph stating honestly what you think about the play)
- IV. Production Values a. Scenery b. Lighting c. Costumes d. Sound (music, special effects, etc.)
- V. Evaluate the Acting (use actors' names provided in the program, not the characters' names)
- VI. Identify and Discuss Contributions of the Director
- VII. Conclusion

**Group Creative Project Assignment Detail:** The purpose of this project is that students will try their hand at collaborating creatively on a theatre production proposal and carrying out required elements depending on the roles selected. Creating theatre is a group endeavor, both from a creative and a business perspective. The class will be divided into groups and each group will be assigned a play by the instructor. The group will present a unified production pitch for their assigned text for a panel of theatre producers (other faculty and guest artists). Production roles might include, but are not limited to: dramaturgy, set designer, actor, director, head of marketing, costume designer, sound designer, etc. Additional information concerning this project and specific role requirements will be provided on a handout later in the semester.

**Content Disclosure:** Courses within COM Theatre deal with works of dramatic literature, both on the page and on the stage. Sometimes the situations, actions, and language of these works can be off-putting or offensive to some students, who might be offended on such grounds as sexual explicitness, value judgements, violence, or blasphemy. As the course is devoted to the principle of free expression, artistic and otherwise, and it is not the course's practice to censor these works on any of these grounds, students who might feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should withdraw at the start of the term and seek another course or speak with the instructor immediately.

**Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra-Credit Policy:** Quizzes and video assignments automatically lose half a letter grade for each day the assignment is late. Make-up assignments are not permitted outside of emergency situations. Students may earn extra credit for ushering productions and

fulfilling all required ushering policies and responsibilities. For every *two* usher shifts, I will replace your lowest quiz/video assignment/performance grade with an A, with a maximum of 6 shifts possible. If COVID impacts your ability to usher, please see the instructor for an alternative assignment prior to Nov. 1st. This extra credit may not overlap with theatre major responsibilities or obligations.

**Attendance Policy:** Timeliness and presence are crucial to excellence in the performing arts. Each student is allowed **two (2)** absences before your final grade is affected. For each absence beyond these allotted absences, your final grade will be reduced by ½ a letter grade with each subsequent absence. In addition to absences, three tardies or early exits will equal one absence. Please arrive on time. If you do not feel well, do not come to class. If you have extenuating circumstances that affect your ability to follow these policies, you need to speak with the instructor BEFORE being late or absent. If you are impacted by COVID, communicate with your instructor as soon as you are able, and modifications/accommodations will be worked out.

**Communicating with your instructor:** ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via Blackboard or other LMS)

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Analyze theatre through written responses to play texts and/or live performance.	Communication, Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility	Play reviews, exams and experiential project-based assignments
2. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of theatre history and dramatic works.	Communication, Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility	Quizzes, exams and experiential project-based assignments
3. Describe the collaborative nature of theatre arts.	Communication, Teamwork and Critical Thinking	Quizzes, exams and experiential project-based assignments
4. Demonstrate the relationship of the arts to everyday life as well as broader historical and social contexts.	Communication, Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility	Quizzes, exams and experiential project-based assignments

**Civility in the Classroom:** Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Higher Education is challenging, and new to many of you. We are also in an unprecedented time, and many of you are facing difficult circumstances. We will discuss subjective works of art and the contexts in which they are created. Differences of opinion are welcomed and encouraged, but respect towards everyone in the classroom at all times is the expectation.

In the case of a violation of this policy, the instructor will talk with the student about the inappropriate behavior immediately and will follow-up after class or with a scheduled meeting. In the case of a second incident, the instructor will refer the student to the department head who will schedule a meeting with the student. At this meeting or any subsequent meeting, the

chairperson will inform the student that repeated deviations from expected classroom behavior will result in removal from the class. If a third incident occurs, the instructor will ask the student to leave the class. If the student refuses, the Campus Police will be called to remove the student. The student will be immediately dropped from the class and reported to the student Office of Student Conduct.

**A Word about BOUNDARIES:** At COM Theatre we strive to champion a professional atmosphere of non-judgmental inclusion, open communication, and enthusiastic consent so that all involved can feel free to be a pro-active participant in their own artistic growth. It is crucial that you gain an ever-evolving awareness of your own personal boundaries, so that you may teach those boundaries to us – in order to assure the personal comfort and safety of yourself, your partners and the ensemble. Please feel free to inform instructors of any physical or emotional limitations that may hinder your performance of any techniques/material presented in class so that they may be appropriately adapted.

In performance-oriented classroom or production situations, it may sometimes be necessary during the use of techniques and exercises for the Instructor/Director to interact physically with students or for students to interact physically with one another. This is part of the learning process, and any contact is intended to be professional and clinical in nature. If at any time a student is uncomfortable with the idea or the practice of that physical contact, the student will be given an opportunity to voice their concern and the need for adaptation will immediately be respected without fear of reprisal, reprimand, or dismissal.

**Student Concerns:** If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact H. Russ Brown, Director of Theatre, at 409-933-8544 or [hrussbrown@com.edu](mailto:hrussbrown@com.edu).

### **Children in the Classroom:**

I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. Please know that your parenthood status is also protected by Title IX. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance. Thank you for the diversity you bring to our classroom.

### **Course Outline:**

*This outline is subject to change during the semester. Students will be notified immediately of any changes and will be given the appropriate time and accommodations in the event of those changes.*

- Week 1 Introduction to theatre, audience & experience, and theatre etiquette  
Assignment: Watch *Cabaret* on BB
- Week 2 Theatre History Survey and Global practices  
Quiz #1 due Wednesday by midnight on BB
- Week 3 Theatre Spaces and play structure \*Monday of Week 3 is Labor Day - HOLIDAY  
Quiz #2 due Wednesday by midnight on BB

- Week 4 “Broadway Idiot”  
Quiz #3 due Wednesday by midnight on BB
- Week 5 Acting and Improv
- Week 6 The Director  
Quiz #4 due Wednesday by midnight on BB
- Week 7 Playwriting and Theatre genres  
Review for *Sylvia* due Wednesday by midnight on BB  
Jigsaw assignment and Quiz #5 due Wednesday by midnight on BB
- Week 8 Scenery and Midterm evaluations
- Week 9 Costumes and makeup  
Quiz #6 due Wednesday by midnight on BB
- Week 10 Lighting and Idea Boards/Collage Renderings  
Exploring Theatre Video assignment due Wednesday by midnight on BB  
Idea Board/Collage Rendering due Wednesday by the end of class
- Week 11 Musical Theatre and Applied Theatre  
Quiz #7 due Wednesday by midnight on BB
- Week 12 Applied Theatre Continued and in-class group creative projects  
Applied Theatre Performance due in class Wednesday
- Week 13 In-class group creative projects
- Week 14 Group creative projects
- Week 15 Final Group Project Presentations and Stage Combat  
Final peer evaluations and presentation materials due at presentation  
Wednesday, wear movement clothes and tennis/closed-toe shoes you can move in
- Week 16 Stage Combat and Final Exam  
Quiz #8 is your stage combat performance

## Institutional Policies and Guidelines

**Grade Appeal Process:** Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook. <[https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf). *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor’s professional judgment of the quality of the student’s work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.* [https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf)

**Academic Success & Support Services:** College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

**ADA Statement:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Holly Bankston at 409-933-8520 or [hbankston@com.edu](mailto:hbankston@com.edu). The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

**Counseling Statement:** Any student needing counseling services is requested to please contact Holly Bankston in the student success center at 409-933-8520 or [hbankston@com.edu](mailto:hbankston@com.edu). Counseling services are available on campus in the student center for free and students can also email [counseling@com.edu](mailto:counseling@com.edu) to set up their appointment. Appointments are strongly encouraged; however, some concerns may be addressed on a walk-in basis.

**Textbook Purchasing Statement:** A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw for the fall session is November 19th.

**F<sub>N</sub> Grading:** The F<sub>N</sub> grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The F<sub>N</sub> grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the F<sub>N</sub> grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an F<sub>N</sub> grade.

**Early Alert Program:** The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

**COVID-19 Statement:** All students, faculty, and staff are expected to familiarize themselves with materials and information contained on the College of the Mainland’s Coronavirus Information site at [www.com.edu/coronavirus](http://www.com.edu/coronavirus). In compliance with [Governor Abbott's May 18 Executive Order](#), face coverings/masks will no longer be required on COM campus. Protocols and college signage are being updated. We will no longer enforce any COM protocol that requires face coverings. We continue to encourage all members of the COM community to distance when possible, use hygiene measures, and get vaccinated to protect against COVID-19. Please visit [com.edu/coronavirus](http://com.edu/coronavirus) for future updates.