Art of the Theatre  
ENGL 232  
Spring, 2009  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:35-3:45pm, Arena Theatre  

INSTRUCTOR:  
Christopher Shorr  
Email: cshorr@moravian.edu  
Office: Arena Theatre  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 1-2PM and by appointment  
(Please call ahead if you plan to see instructor during office hours. Office hours are subject to change—check posting on office door for updates)  
Phone: (610) 861-1489  

TEXTS:  

COURSE OBJECTIVES:  
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the art of theatre (despite the confusing course title). Since the focus is on theatre as an artform, rather than theatre as literature, we will look at various components that go into the production of a script for live performance. By the end of the course, each student should have an (introductory) understanding of:  
1. Script analysis;  
2. Theatre history;  
3. Playwriting;  
4. Acting;  
5. Design;  
6. Directing.
**CAUTIONS:**

1. It is essential that you attend all classes. Students are expected to participate in class activities and contribute to class discussions of topics. Less than active participation may have a negative effect on your grade. More than one absence may have a negative effect on your grade.

2. All work must be presented or turned in on time. Missed work may only be made up under special circumstances at the discretion of the instructor.

3. Lest there be confusion…. Excellent work will count as an “A.” Above Average work will count as a “B.” Average work will count as a “C.” Less than average work will count as a “D.” A poorly done assignment will count as an “F”.

4. Students are expected to work hard and think creatively. The more time and opportunity you have to work on a skill and/or assignment, the greater the expectation for excellence.

5. All work turned in must be typed or printed from a printer.

6. All students must be prepared to present work and in attendance the first day of the classes designated for an assignment—additional days are just for spill-over. (In other words, don’t plan on skipping the first day of Design Presentations to buy yourself an extra day to work on your model!)

7. Students should expect to spend six to eight hours per week outside of class preparing for this class. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encourage to contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**BLACKBOARD:** [http://blackboard.moravian.edu](http://blackboard.moravian.edu)

*You MUST enroll in this class on Blackboard. The access code is: eng232*

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

Refer to the statement on academic honesty at Moravian College in the current Student Handbook (online at: [www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic2.htm](http://www.moravian.edu/studentLife/handbook/academic2.htm))

Copies are available in the Academic Dean’s file (acdean) on the Public (P:) Drive of the Moravian Intranet. Keep copies of all written work submitted to the instructor, as well as notes, drafts and materials used in preparing assignments. If in doubt about appropriate collaboration, proper documentation and other honesty issues, ask the instructor.

**FINAL GRADES WILL BE DETERMINED AS FOLLOWS:**

- 25% 5 Play Analyses/Creative Projects (combined)
- 20% Acting Assignment
- 20% Design Assignment
- 5% Performance Responses
- 10% Active Participation/Improvement/Commitment
- 10% Quizzes
- 10% Final Exam

*The criteria for grades include clarity of purpose, organization, quality of material, expression and mechanics. Grades may be monitored on Blackboard, but keep in mind that those grades are ONLY a running total of graded assignments and that your final grade includes absences, participation, and other components not included in the Blackboard running total.*
QUIZZES:
There will be a very brief quiz at the beginning of many classes. Quizzes will cover material from previous class sessions and/or assigned readings. Be sure to have read the assigned chapters.

MONOLOGUES:
One of the big challenges of theatre performance is to overcome your nervousness about standing up and speaking in front of an audience. From time to time, students will be called upon to deliver a short (between thirty seconds and one minute long) monologue. (This is not the graded “acting assignment.” Doing this is OPTIONAL, and a student may always decline the opportunity. Delivering a monologue successfully (taking it seriously and maintaining poise) counts as extra credit against poor quiz grades.

PLAY ANALYSES:
For each of the five plays assigned, students will write a brief (2-3 page, 12pt, 1” margins, double spaced) analysis using the tools for reading plays provided in David Ball’s “Backwards & Forwards,” answering a series questions, and focusing on the aspects listed on the syllabus for that play. Although information about these plays is readily available in the library and on the Internet, do not use research for these assignments. Do the thinking for yourself. You need to be able to defend your ideas and choices, and will be asked to do so in class.

CREATIVE PROJECT OPTION:
Although each student must complete the first two play analyses, once a student receives grades of “B” or above on two analyses, the student may propose a creative project to complete in lieu of each remaining analysis. Students may work in groups on creative projects. Examples of creative projects include: musical composition; performance of a scene; writing a scene in the style of the playwright; the presentation of a “production concept.”

ACTING ASSIGNMENT:
Pick a one-minute monologue from one of the five assigned plays. Turn in: a brief character analysis; a textual analysis which breaks the monologue into “beats” and identifies the character’s overall objective and moment-to-moment motivations (“wants”); and perform the monologue in class incorporating instructor feedback/coaching.

DESIGN ASSIGNMENT:
Design set or costumes for one of the five assigned plays. Turn in: a two-page description of your “design concept” with research and rationale; and a model/rendering(detailed, color) of the set or collage(swatches, photos, clippings)/rendering(detailed, color) of the (principal) costumes; present the design to the class and answer questions.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSES:
Attend performances of “Growing Up Naked” (2/19/09-2/22/09), Oedipus (4/02/09-4/05/09), and the Student-Direct One-Acts (4/23/09-4/26/09) and write a brief (1-2 page) reaction paper to each play that describes your emotional response to the performance and describes what you would have done differently if you had been the director.
# CLASS SCHEDULE

1. **Tuesday, January 20**  
   *Course overview: Theatre & Art*

2. **Thursday, January 22**  
   *What’s in a play?*  
   Reading Due: Ball Part 1

3. **Tuesday, January 27**  
   *Reading and understanding a script*  
   Reading Due: Ball Part 2

4. **Thursday, January 29**  
   *Reading and understanding a script*  
   Reading Due: Ball Part 3

5. **Tuesday, February 3**  
   *Theatre Literacy*  
   Reading Due: Downs 1,2,3&4

6. **Thursday, February 5**  
   *History—Theatre’s Beginnings*  
   Reading: Due Downs 10

7. **Tuesday, February 10**  
   *Guest Lecture*

8. **Thursday, February 12**  
   *Reading Due: Oedipus*  
   **Play Analysis Due: Oedipus**

9. **Tuesday, February 17**  
   *Reading Due: Downs 5*

10. **Thursday, February 19**  
    *History—Revival in Europe*  
    Reading Due: Downs 11

11. **Tuesday, February 24**  
    *Reading Due: Duchess of Malfi*  
    **Play Analysis Due: Duchess of Malfi**

12. **Thursday, February 26**  
    *Playwriting*  
    Reading Due: Downs 6

**NO CLASS Tuesday, March 3 or Thursday March 5 (SPRING RECESS)**  
*Enjoy the break!*

13. **Tuesday, March 10**  
    *Acting*  
    Reading Due: Downs 12
CLASS SCHEDULE (cont’d)

14 Thursday, March 12  
**Acting**

15 Tuesday, March 17  
**History—Modern Theatre**  
*Reading Due: Downs 12*

16 Thursday, March 19  
*Reading Due: Waiting for Godot*  
*Play Analysis Due: Waiting for Godot—Political Context*

17 Tuesday, March 24  
**Acting Assignments Due**

18 Thursday, March 26  
**Acting Assignments Due**

19 Tuesday, March 31  
**Acting Assignments Due**

20 Thursday, April 2  
**Design**  
*Reading Due: Downs 9*

21 Tuesday, April 7  
**Design**

22 Thursday, April 9  
*Reading Due: Fences*  
*Play Analysis Due: Fences—Historical Context*

23 Tuesday, April 14  
**Directing**  
*Reading Due: Downs 8*

24 Thursday, April 16  
**The Musical**  
*Reading Due: Downs 13*

25 Tuesday, April 21  
*Reading Due: Sweeney Todd*  
*Play Analysis Due: Sweeney Todd—Changing Artform*

26 Thursday, April 23  
**Design Project Presentations Due**

27 Tuesday, April 28  
**Design Project Presentations Due**

28 Thursday, April 30  
**Design Project Presentations Due**