

Theatre Department Writing Plan

GOALS: All Theatre majors, upon completion of degree requirements should be able to

- write a substantive critique/ review that describes and evaluates a live theatre performance
- write a plot summary of a play
- write a critical essay using outside sources and research
- understand and use the specific language of theatre practice in writing including technical and design vocabulary, and/or terminology of intentions and objectives
- write a resume
- write an effective cover and follow up letter

In addition, depending on the area of concentration, a student should be able to

For design/tech concentrates

- write a project proposal
- write project/process descriptions and instructions
- write a design statement that articulates the point of view, summary of research, and creative approach to a theatrical collaboration

For acting/directing or tech/design concentrates with emphasis on stage managing

- write rehearsal reports

For acting/directing concentrates with emphasis on directing

- write a directing statement that articulates the point of view, summary of research and creative approach to a theatrical collaboration

For acting/directing concentrates with emphasis on acting

- write specific character analysis using language of intentions and objectives

Objectives: Since many of the Theatre courses are centered on performance and experiential work, the department emphasizes journal writing (as an important step in writing to articulate experience, reaction and observation) and response/critique papers as well as more traditional essays using outside sources and research. Students will have the opportunity to reflect upon their writing and revise as part of the process.

Behavior: Writing experiences that provide students with target skills and knowledge include writing critical reviews of live performances, self-evaluation and journal writing, summarizing and reporting original research, writing rehearsal reports, technical writing (including design notation, and project descriptions and instructions), summarizing and evaluating historical research, creative and critical essay writing, writing cover letters and composing resumes.

Conditions: Specific contexts and resources that contribute to the successful writing experience will include reading samples of performance criticism and reviews, design and directorial statements, articles, essays and papers which incorporate outside information including primary and secondary sources. Style books and specific instructions for writing assignments will also be used where appropriate.

Criteria: In order to assure student progress in developing writing skills in the discipline, students take five courses (in addition to ENG 102 or Waiver) that have a substantial writing element.

1: An introductory writing course in the area of the major:

THT 110: INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATRE, is a course which introduces writing critical response papers based on the experience of a live theatre event. Two papers are required. Journal writing is also included. Through the use of Teaching Assistants, small group discussion/reading sessions are held. The opportunity to write a summary response paper, if student engages in actual production work for credit, is included. Writing accounts for 25% of grading.

2. An intermediate level writing course in which writing to learn in the area of specialization is emphasized. Selected from courses within the major. These courses are generally small sized classes (15-20) which offer a great deal

of student/teacher interaction. They are generally performance or experiential classes which emphasize the development of skills by doing. However, in the context of journal writing (which involves self-evaluation, observation and description of performances seen as well as writing to articulate the technical language of performance and the stage) writing is integrated into the course experience. These courses will also include one or more of the following: critical review papers, project proposal papers, self-evaluation essays, writing that incorporates outside research, and summary reports. The writing experience accounts for approximately 25% of the course grade. Courses may be chosen from:

THT 120: STAGE CRAFT
THT 121: STAGE ELECTRONICS AND MECHANICS
THT 130: THE ACTOR'S SELF
THT 180: VOICE AND DICTION
THE 181: BODILY MOVEMENT FOR THE THEATRE
THT 222: INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE DESIGN
THT 310: BASIC STAGE LIGHTING
THT 322: BASIC SCENE DESIGN
THT 333: STAGE MANAGEMENT
THT 334: DRAMATURGY
THT 324: THE BUSINESS OF SHOW BUSINESS
THT 341: PRINCIPLES OF DIRECTING
THT 351: COSTUME DESIGN
THT 440: ADVANCED DIRECTING
INT 111: ORAL INTERPRETATION OF LITERATURE
INT 120: STORYTELLING

3. An advanced level (seminar) writing course. This course offers an intensive writing experience in the area of the major through several writing assignments, including critical and creative essay writing using outside sources and research, critical response papers and journal writing. The small group instruction format allows for extensive instructor feedback to student writing. At least one assignment will involve rewriting. The evaluation of writing assignments is a major component of grading. Courses include:

THT 251: COSTUME HISTORY
THT 364: WESTERN THEATRE
THT 365: THEATRE OF INDIA, CHINA AND JAPAN
THT 308: WOMEN AND THE THEATRE
THT 359: COSTUMES AND CULTURE
THT 471: ELIZABETHAN THEATRE
THT 472: THE THEATRE OF TRAGEDY
THT 473: THE THEATRE OF COMEDY

4. Two writing courses (300 level or above) selected (under advisement) from courses in Art, Music, English or History departments. Courses include, but are not limited to ENG 319, ENG 340, ENG 342, ENG 350, ENG 366, ART 353, HIS 312, HIS 314, HIS 315, HIS 317, HIS 328, MUS 315, MUS 316, MUS 317, MUS 329, MUS 307.

Special circumstances:

a. If a transfer came in with the equivalent of THT 110: INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE, we might require of that student that s/he take two intermediate courses (which most likely would happen in the major anyway), and three advanced level seminar courses to fulfill the five course requirement.

b. Our plan is flexible enough for students double majoring in other departments. A major is required to take THT 110, and the intermediate level requirement spans a range of courses a student would be taking anyway. Of the three additional writing requirements, one is required in theatre and two from approved lists in other departments.

c. The undeclared student would pick up the first two writing requirements as components of the major. Again, there is flexibility in that of the three additional courses, one is in Theatre and two are chosen from other departments (allowing for cross over with other General Education requirements).