

Level: undergraduate upper division
Focus: history
System: quarter
Class size: 15-25

THTR 182M: Nineteenth-Century European Theater

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Office Hours: TT 12-1pm

Course Intro:

Welcome to Nineteenth-Century European Theater! In this course, we will be looking at some of the most influential playwrights, works, and theatrical movements to come out of Europe during the latter half of the nineteenth century (and a bit into the twentieth). In the process, we will engage with the plays both as living artworks still being staged and as windows into the concerns of past societies. By the time you finish this class, you should have a firm grasp of the major theatrical movements that have shaped modern Western theater practices, as well as being able to identify and analyze the interactions between plays and the cultural values of the society that produced them.

The format of this course is lecture-discussion, meaning that a significant portion of each class period will be dedicated to hearing what *you* have to say about the plays, playwrights, and movements in question. Please come to class having finished all the reading for each day and prepared to talk about your reactions to it. Bringing in knowledge from your own intellectual background, whether it is as a theater-maker, mathematician, biologist, historian, psychology major, or any other field, is encouraged! Coming at these plays from a variety of angles can only enhance our understanding as we examine them as a group.

Means of Assessment:

Your final grade in this course will be determined in the following manner:

1. 15% for an essay on Naturalism to be submitted on **October 28**. The essay should be approximately 1,500 words. Prompts will be distributed on October 9.
2. 25% for an essay on Symbolism to be submitted on **November 25**. The essay should be approximately 2,000 words. Prompts will be distributed on November 4.
3. 30% for the final examination. The examination will be composed of three essay questions. The first essay will be on the plays studied in class between November 18 and December 4. The second two essays will be on topics that require a comparison of two or more plays studied in the course and that encourage you to summarize much of material

in the course.

4. 30% for class attendance and participation. This category includes coming prepared to class, speaking in class discussions, and exercising courtesy in discussing the ideas of your classmates. Absences, tardies, and coming to class unprepared will all harm this portion of your grade.

You can track your grade as it progresses on Gauchospace. Additional electronic copies of this document and all essay prompts will be available on Gauchospace. Gauchospace is your friend. Please consult it before e-mailing me with questions. Also, please be aware that **I only check my e-mail once each business day**, so I caution you not to leave questions you can't find the answer to until the last minute.

If you need disability-related accommodations in this class, if you have emergency medical information you wish to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me immediately. Please see me privately after class or during office hours.

Essays:

Each student will write two essays in this class on theatrical movements in nineteenth-century Europe (Naturalism and Symbolism). Since this is an upper-division course, these essays are meant to be exercises in academic writing and should therefore adhere strictly to either MLA or Chicago formatting style. While a good paper ought to contain citations from the plays we have read in class, no outside research should be necessary in order to complete these assignments.

Essays will be graded on:

- the inclusion of a clear and original thesis statement
- the presence of clear arguments in support of the thesis statement
- appropriate use of concrete examples drawn from plays we have read in class
- a logical structure of ideas
- spelling and grammar
- proper use of MLA or Chicago Manual of Style format

Late Policy: All essays are to be submitted on Gauchospace (or e-mailed to me, in the case of Gauchospace failure) by the start of class time on the due date. Any essay that is turned in late will be docked half a letter grade (two steps) per day that it is late. All essays received AFTER the start of class time on the due date will count as one day late already.

EX 1: an essay that would have received a B+ but is one day late will receive a B-

EX 2: an essay that would have received a B but is two days late will receive a C-

This policy may be waived in the case of a real emergency (family or medical), provided that you e-mail me *in advance of the deadline* explaining the situation. Students who would like to request an extension for other reasons (technological failure, required attendance at a performance/audition/wedding/sporting event near the deadline, etc.) should come see me during office hours to discuss their particular situation and set an alternative deadline.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Students are advised to consult the campus regulations concerning plagiarism and cheating and are strongly cautioned to be entirely honest in all their work in the course. If I discover a case of plagiarism or cheating, this will lead automatically to an F grade for the course. Furthermore I will report the incident to the Office of the Dean of Students and, depending on the severity of the incident, may request a hearing.

Attendance and Participation:

Students are expected to attend class regularly and contribute to class discussions. The attendance policies are as follows:

Excused absences: Excused absences will be issued in the case of illness, accident, or extenuating circumstance (ex: a relative's wedding) provided that the absence is cleared with me *by e-mail in advance*. Excused absences *will not be issued retroactively*, nor is an absence considered excused until I e-mail back with my approval. All excuses are not created equal, so be sure to e-mail me well in advance of your absence in order to make sure that your circumstances warrant an excused absence. Excused absences will not count against your grade, but students will still be responsible for the material covered in class for the purposes of exams and/or essays (so get a classmate to take notes for you!).

Unexcused absences: Any time you miss class without an advance e-mail from me excusing the absence is considered an unexcused absence. Each unexcused absence will lower your final attendance and participation grade by one step (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.). As with excused absences, you are still responsible for all information missed while you were absent.

Tardies: Being late to class and/or leaving early three times will be considered equivalent to one unexcused absence for the purposes of final grade calculation.

Participation: All students will begin the semester with an attendance and participation grade of B-/C+. Each day that you come to class prepared and contribute to class discussions will add points to this score, and each unexcused absence or set of three tardies will subtract from it. Students who both attend and participate every day will end the semester with A+ attendance and participation grades.

Coming prepared to class: On the schedule below, each day of class is linked to a play. Before class time, please read that play and jot down:

1. Something you liked about the play
2. Something you found relevant about the play
3. Something you disliked about the play
4. Something you found outdated or irrelevant about the play

We will use these as jumping-off points for our discussion each day. If you don't have answers to one or more (because you loved the whole thing or found the whole thing irrelevant, for example), that is absolutely fine. Just come prepared to explain why in all cases. Bring the playtext with you to class (in hard copy or electronic format) as well as your short list of responses.

Required Reading:

The following books are available in the UCSB bookstore:

- Chekhov, Anton. Plays: Ivanov, The Seagull, Uncle Vanya, Three Sister, The Cherry Orchard. tr. Peter Carson. Penguin Classics (Paperback, 2002).
- Ibsen, Henrik. Four Major Plays: A Doll's House, Ghosts, Hedda Gabler, The Master Builder. tr. James McFarlane. Oxford World's Classics (Paperback, 2008).
- Pirandello Luigi. Six Characters in Search of an Author and Other Plays. tr. Mark Musa. Penguin (1995).
- Shaw, George Bernard. Heartbreak House. Dover Thrift Editions (1996).
- Shaw, George Bernard. Plays Unpleasant. Penguin (2000).
- Strindberg, August. Miss Julie and Other Plays. ed. Michael Robinson. Oxford World's Classics (Paperback, 2008).
- Synge, John Millington. The Playboy of the Western World and Other Plays. Oxford World's Classics Paperback, 1995.
- Wilde, Oscar. The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays. Oxford World's Classics (2008).

Spring Awakening, Pelleas and Melisande, Get Out of My Hair, and La Ronde are available in a course reader from the Alternative Copy Shop located inside the Student Union Building. A copy of the course reader is also on reserve at the library.

All plays are required—however, if money is tight and you would prefer to buy other translations/editions than those available at the bookstore you are welcome to do so. Be forewarned, however, that some cheaply available translations may be more archaic than the ones I have assigned above. Issues of translation are part of what we will be discussing in this course, so if you choose an alternate translation you are encouraged to bring up differences found in your version during class discussion.

Schedule:

September 30	Course Introduction
	Naturalism
October 2	Naturalism in the Theatre
7	Ibsen: <u>A Doll's House</u> (1879)
9	Ibsen: <u>Ghosts</u> (1881)
14	Strindberg: <u>The Father</u> (1887)
16	Ibsen: <u>Hedda Gabler</u> (1890)
21	Wedekind: <u>Spring Awakening</u> (1891)
23	Shaw: <u>Mrs Warren's Profession</u> (1893)

Symbolism

- 28 Symbolism in the European Theatre **ESSAY #1 DUE**
30 Maeterlinck: Pelleas and Melisande (1892)
November 4 Chekhov: The Seagull (1896)
6 Strindberg: A Dream Play (1902)
11 **HOLIDAY—NO CLASS**
13 Chekhov: The Cherry Orchard (1904)

Comedy

- 18 Feydeau: Un Fil à la patte (Get Out of My Hair) (1894)
20 Wilde: The Importance of Being Earnest (1895)
25 Schnitzler: La Ronde (1900) **ESSAY #2 DUE**
27 Synge: The Playboy of the Western World (1907)

Post-War Drama

- December 2 Shaw: Heartbreak House (1920)
4 Pirandello: Henry IV (1922)
10 (12 – 3 PM) **FINAL EXAMINATION**