THEATRE

Courses

THEA 5000. Theatre History I. (4 Credits)
We will seek a perspective on the developments in the theatre from Ancient Greece, Japan, and India, and through the Elizabethans using major plays as our focus. We will explore their context—when, where, and why they were written—the lives of the playwrights, and the culture and the politics of their society.

THEA 5100. Theatre History II. (4 Credits)
The course explores the major developments in Theatre from 1879 to the present using major plays of Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov, Wedekind, Stein, Brecht, O'Neill, Artaud, Genet, Beckett, Soyinka, Mishima, Kennedy, Hansberry, Churchill, Parks, and the movements of performance art and Butoh. We explore their context (when, where and why they were written), the lives of the playwrights, and the culture and the politics of their society. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 5700. Playwriting Workshop. (4 Credits)
The primary goals of the course are to hone basic craft and to create an environment that will guide the writers’ exploration of their individual voices. We concentrate on four major issues: storytelling, character, structure, and the poetic voice. The course is taught from overlapping perspectives of traditional and alternative techniques. Exercises are rooted in storytelling techniques and character development. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 5750. Playwriting Strategies. (4 Credits)
This course offers a series of workshop classes that focus on writing strategies, generating new work, and giving writers unique tools for confronting and overcoming obstacles and challenges the playwright faces. The playwrights will be introduced to readings and interviews by and about other playwrights on generative writing process, the act of rewriting, and new forms of creating a stage event. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 5800. TV Comedy Writing. (4 Credits)
This course will focus on the art of creating, pitching, and selling a comedy series. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 5810. TV Dramatic Writing. (4 Credits)
This course will focus on the art of creating, pitching, and selling a dramatic series. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 6400. Design for Playwrights. (4 Credits)
Playwrights write texts to be performed in actual space, so the playwright who begins from imagining the place where action occurs is activating the essential core of the dramatic imagination. Playwrights must understand how to collaborate with designers, and benefit enormously from inviting a designer into the creative process early. It advances the playwright’s craft to learn the designer’s craft of line, shape, drawing, model making and findings way to embody thematic ideas in concrete visual images and environments. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 6430. Adaptation. (4 Credits)
Introduction to the craft of adaptation for the stage and screen. Emphasis will be placed on learning to recognize and evaluate the kinds of source material that invite adaptation, and subsequently how to effectively translate elements from that material to craft powerful stories. Class discussion, lectures, readings, and guest seminars will examine source material that includes short stories, novels, biographies, and true stories developed from journalistic sources as well as examples of its successful adaptation. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 6500. Shakespeare. (4 Credits)
An exploration of Shakespeare’s plays from a playwright’s perspective on craft. How does Shakespeare achieve what he does? What techniques does he employ to generate his vast range of characters and meanings?

THEA 6770. Screenwriting. (4 Credits)
This course focuses on analyzing and writing screenplays for film and television. Class time is devoted to exercises, lectures, and assignments that focus on creating, improving plots and premise, developing potent characters, understanding and honing structure, and sharpening dialogue. In-class activities and lectures are supplemented with guest seminars, film viewings, and screenplay readings, followed by discussion and analysis on themes of craft, including plot, character, technique, and structures.

THEA 6780. Screenwriting: Idea to Execution. (4 Credits)
Writers will explore the art, craft, and business of writing for the screen, with a focus on the “classical” principles of screenwriting. Each writer will complete the first half of a feature-length screenplay. Classes will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, screenplay analysis, writing exercises, discussion of viewed films and in-class workshopping of scripts.

THEA 6980. Contemporary Theatre. (4 Credits)
A playwright is the person who has her ear to the rail, the one who channels the zeitgeist. To that end this class will obsess on the present moment. What is happening in politics now? Literature? Science? Where in New York City theatre and global theatre are these revolutions and innovations finding expression? Writers will see never-before-produced plays, meet with the makers of new work, and use those experiences to write a play that resonates with the present moment.

Updated: 05-20-2021
THEA 6990. The Playwright Prepares. (4 Credits)
This semester focuses on preparing the second-year playwrights for submitting their plays to theatres, film and television studios, contests, and agents. Visiting designers, managing directors, film and television producers will enhance the students’ understanding of the community they are entering. Contemporary theatre issues are also discussed, particularly those related to the role of the playwright in our society. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

THEA 7000. Production. (4 Credits)
This seminar serves as a foundational course for the full-length thesis productions that spring. Contemporary theater issues are also discussed, particularly those related to the role of the playwright in our society.

THEA 8999. Independent Study. (0 to 4 Credits)