

# THEA 401/501 DRAMA AND THEORY

**Full year 2009**  
(Monday 2 March – Friday 16 October 2009)

*[There is an] art to translating into the language of knowledge the  
forward thrusts of creation.*

-- Etienne Gilson

## STAFF

### Course co-ordinator

Course co-ordinator is Matt Wagner (Room 310, 77 Fairlie Terrace; Tel: 463 6712. email: [Matthew.Wagner@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Matthew.Wagner@vuw.ac.nz)). Matt's office hours will be posted on his door.

## CLASS TIMES AND ROOMS

Full year, alternate weeks (weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 of each trimester). The seminar is Wednesdays from 3.10 – 6.00pm, in Room 305, 77FT.

Please note that cell phones are to be turned **off** during classes.

## COURSE CONTENT

The course will bring a selection of historical and contemporary critical perspectives to bear on a representative range of classical and contemporary dramatic texts. Topics covered will include pre-20th century dramatic theory (with focus on Classical Dramaturgy and Elizabethan Dramaturgy), and an in depth examination of more recent theoretical approaches, including phenomenological, psychoanalytical, feminist, postcolonial, and contemporary performance theories.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To develop an appreciation of various critical approaches to the art, experience, and social place of theatre and drama.
2. To be able to analyse live performance and dramatic texts from a variety of critical approaches.
3. To develop an awareness of the implications of these critical approaches to contemporary theatrical practice.
4. To develop skills in close reading of plays in a critical context.
5. To develop research skills and clear critical writing about theoretical and dramaturgical issues of drama and theatre.

## EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The university anticipates that you should be able to devote at least 12 hours per week to a full-year paper in a 4–paper graduate programme. Therefore you should probably expect to spend, on average, about 9 to 10 hours per week (apart from class time and screenings) in reading, preparation, thinking and essay writing. At Honours & Masters level it is expected that students will attend every seminar; if you are going to miss a seminar, please contact the course co-ordinator in advance if possible.

### Class preparation and presentations

All students should prepare for each class by reading the relevant play and critical readings set for that session. Note any problems in understanding either the dramaturgy of the play or the theoretical argument and consider the significance of associated reading. **Every student should bring at least one pertinent question and reasoned opinion to contribute to each of these discussions.** Contribution to discussions will not be formally assessed, but may be taken into account when the final grade is being considered. In addition, each student will be asked to give a short seminar presentation for assessment on a selected topic. The presentations will be expected to raise key issues for class discussion, and presenters should be prepared to take a lead role in facilitating that discussion.

## READINGS

### Set Texts

- THEA 401/501 Reader – Available at Student Notes
- THEA 401/501 Plays – available from THEA Admin
- Mark Fortier. Theory/Theatre: An Introduction. 2nd edition. (London: Routledge, 2002)

**The Following Plays Will Be Ordered at Vic Books, but you are welcome to use any edition of these plays.**

- LePage, Robert et.al. Seven Streams of the River Ota
- Genet, Jean The Balcony
- Hwang, David M. Butterfly
- Shakespeare A Midsummer Night's Dream
- Shakespeare Hamlet
- Stoppard, Tom Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

## ASSESSMENT

All assessment is internal.

- Seminar Presentation (approx. 30 mins) and handout (max. 4 sides of A4) 25%
- Essay 1 2,500 words (due Mon 15 June, 12pm) 35%
- Essay 2 3,000 words (due Fri 25 Sept, 5pm) 40%

Further details, including marking criteria, will be given out in class

### **Relationship Between Assessment and Objectives**

All assessment has the twofold objective of assessing students' progress in the course and of providing feedback to assist students to achieve the course objectives.

Note: For THEA 401, 'grades gained in individual papers are always subordinate to the overall assessment made by the full group of examiners for the Honours programme as a whole' (*Graduate Programme in English, Film and Theatre 2001*).

### **PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS**

If you wish to ask for an extension (e.g., because of pressure of work) please do so well before the due date. Extension requests on the day the assignment is due will not normally be accepted.

Requests for extensions must be made in writing, by filling out the extension form (available on your course Blackboard site) and getting your Course Co-ordinator to sign it. Only Course Co-ordinators may grant extension, not tutors. The signed Extension form must be attached to the assignment when it is submitted, plus any relevant documentation. If circumstances prevent you from accessing the extension form, you must attach an email from the Course Co-ordinator, which confirms that an extension has been granted, to your assignment. In real emergencies we can of course be flexible, but the most important thing is for you to somehow let us know as soon as possible.

Extensions will not be granted beyond **21 October**, except under exceptional circumstances. The University does not permit the School to accept work after the last day of the examination period, **13 November**.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical reasons with certificate), or a previously agreed extension, work handed in late will normally lose half a grade (2.5%) for each weekday or part-weekday late, starting from the hour the work is due. Comments on late work will be minimal. Work submitted late without an extension will not normally be accepted if it is more than two weeks after the due date. Note: if you fail to hand in work by this two-week deadline, you will normally be considered as having failed to meet a mandatory requirement and therefore fail the course.

Aegrotat provisions may apply if you are unable to submit your final project for unavoidable reasons. The Aegrotat procedures are listed in Victoria University Calendar available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx>

In such a case you should also contact the course co-ordinator. There is a university policy on reasonable accommodation with respect to assessment procedures for students with disabilities (see Calendar as above).

### **MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to pass the course, completion and submission of all assignments is required, as well as an overall passing grade; in addition, you must attend at least 10 of the 12 seminars.

### **PRESENTATION OF WORK**

See detailed assignment documents for presentation details. Referencing of sources should be in accordance with the 'Referencing for Theatre' document available on Blackboard.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such MATERIAL.

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

### COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information or changes will be sent by email in the first instance, so it is **essential** that students get an email address and check it regularly. Information may also be announced in class or posted on the course notice board at 77FT level 3.

### GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

A copy of the General University Statutes and Policies can be found on Blackboard or on the homepage as above.

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies  
THEATRE PROGRAMME, THEA 401/501 COURSE OUTLINE

**THEA 401/501 CLASS TIMETABLE 2009**

<b>CLASS WED 3:10 – 6:00PM</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>
1. 11 Mar	Intro/Classical Dramaturgy	
2. 25 March	Theory-Philosophy-Theatre	
3. 8 April	Phenomenology	
<i>Mid-term Break</i>		
4. 6 May	Semiotics and Structuralism	
5. 20 May	Psychoanalytic Theory	
6. 4 June	Theories of Actor Training	<b>Essay 1 due</b> <b>Weds 15 June, 5pm</b>
<b>MID YEAR BREAK</b>		
7. 22 July	Poststructuralism/Deconstruction	
8. 5 August	Cultural Materialism/Marxist Theory	
9. 19 August	Feminisms and Gender Theory	
<i>Mid-term Break</i>		
10. 16 September	Postcolonial Theory	<b>Essay 2 due</b> <b>Mon 25 Sept, 5pm</b>
11. 30 September	Postmodernism	
12. 14 October	Performance Theory	