

THEA 302: Conventions of Drama and Theatre

Trimester 1 2016

29 February to 29 June 2016

30 Points



Sean Maher in *Much Ado About Nothing* (2012 film by Joss Whedon). Image source: *Village Voice*

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 29 February to 5 June 2016

Easter break: 24 to 30 March 2016

Mid-trimester break: 25 April to 1 May 2016

Last assessment item due: 30 May 2016

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Seminars

Tuesday	12noon – 3pm	FT77 305
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Thursday 12noon – 3pm FT77 101 (Studio 77)

Rehearsals

TBC – Will be scheduled in consultation with students. You must be available on weekends and during the mid-trimester break period. We will ensure at least one regular day off per week.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator: Stella Reid stella.reid@vuw.ac.nz 463 6824 FT83 311

Office Hours: By appointment

Programme Administrator: Cathy McCullagh cathy.mccullagh@vuw.ac.nz 463 5359 FT83 202

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be posted on Blackboard and/or communicated by email. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, you **MUST** set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

PRESCRIPTION

A critical and practical study of a particular historical period, national drama, or theatrical genre, and of the transformation of dramatic script into public theatrical performance.

COURSE CONTENT

2016: Shakespearean dramaturgy and performance practices. The course will culminate in public performances in Studio 77 in week 11 (16-21 May), of the play *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare. In conceptualising the production, we will research the world of the play, and explore creative possibilities in all aspects of the production. With special emphasis on Shakespeare, we will investigate Early Modern dramaturgy and stagecraft. Considerable time will be devoted to the study of relevant performance techniques including verse and text work, stage combat, dance and music, and acting with architecture and audiences. We will employ these approaches to train as a company (physically, vocally, imaginatively, visually) towards performance.

In preparation for the production, we will have evening rehearsals, some weekend workshops, and rehearsals during the mid-trimester break (25 April -1 May). See Course Programme for key dates.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. develop and practice creative skills in theatrical performance, including design and technical skills;
2. conduct independent research and communicate findings to a group;

3. investigate the practices, dramaturgy, conventions, and significance of Early Modern English theatre (particularly Shakespearean), and put this knowledge to use in scholarly and creative contexts;
4. identify verse structures, rhetorical figures and tropes, and other conventions of Shakespearean language, and utilise these in script analysis and performance;
5. develop autonomy and creative agency by participating in and taking responsibility for the creation and performance of a new creative work, and by giving feedback on peer work;
6. develop oral, somatic, and written communication skills by working collaboratively, articulating and sharing ideas, and documenting and reflecting on contributions to the creative process.

TEACHING FORMAT

THEA 302 consists of seminars, rehearsals, workshops, and performances. Students are expected to prepare appropriately and contribute actively to every session. This course is very practical and demands consistent commitment and collaboration. It is essential that you **be on time** for all classes and rehearsals. Please wear loose, comfortable clothes which won't restrict your movement.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. Complete all assignments, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work). Assignment 1 is necessary to demonstrate achievements of CLO 2, Assignment 2 is necessary to demonstrate achievements of CLO 5, and Assignments 3 & 4 are necessary to demonstrate achievements of CLOs 1, 5, and 6.
2. Attend 100% of rehearsals for which you are called, as such participation is essential for the collective experience of all students, as well as being necessary to complete requirements for Assessment 4 (Production Work) and to demonstrate the achievements of CLOs 1,3,4,5, 6. Exceptions will be made in extenuating circumstances. Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of these mandatory course requirements because of exceptional personal circumstances should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30 point course is 300 hours over the trimester or 20 hours per teaching week. It is always difficult, however, to specify precisely the workload of courses which have a high practical and creative content. The expected workload for a 30 point course is 300 hours spread evenly over the 13 week trimester and breaks plus study week, or 20 hours per teaching week. This means you should expect to spend an average of about 14 hours per week (apart from class time) in reading, preparation, thinking, writing and rehearsal. A substantial portion of this will be scheduled rehearsal time, and your research and

writing time will need to take place in addition to that. We will try to balance the requirements of the course, but inevitably these hours will be substantially increased during the later phase of rehearsal and the performance period in April and May. YOU SHOULD THEREFORE TAKE SPECIAL CARE TO MANAGE YOUR WORKLOAD IN THIS COURSE WITH YOUR OTHER COURSEWORK AND COMMITMENTS. Also, a standard of professionalism includes **attending to your health and general wellbeing** by getting enough sleep and nutrition to function effectively, especially as performance looms.

Please prioritise your time carefully around all courses, particularly during production. Do not use the workload of this course as reason for requesting extensions in other courses, particularly papers outside the Theatre Programme.

In practical production work, it is vitally important that students support each other in a collective and collaborative spirit. Please **always** be on time to classes and rehearsals, and **always** take full responsibility for tasks allotted to you, or for which you volunteer.

NO THEATRE WORK OUTSIDE OF YOUR THEATRE COURSES SHOULD BE TAKEN ON WITHOUT DISCUSSION WITH THE COURSE CO-ORDINATOR BEFOREHAND.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
1 Research presentation on a topic pertinent to the world of the play – using the <i>pecha kucha</i> format. Students will develop a 7-minute oral/visual presentation on a topic to be chosen in class, and moderate a Q & A/discussion session on their topic. Complete criteria and assessment procedures will be circulated in class and on Blackboard.	20%	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	As assigned in class (Weeks 3&4)
2 Evaluation of Peer Review: Students will complete evaluations of three of their peer’s presentations. No part of your grade for the presentation is determined by your peers, rather your feedback on your peers’ work is the item for assessment. Complete criteria and assessment procedures will be circulated in class and on Blackboard (approx. 1 page per assessment).	10%	3,5,6	1 APRIL, 5PM
3 Production Journal: The journal will be comprised of short entries (250-300 words each, 10%) reflecting on workshops and one assigned paraphrase of script (approx. 6 pages, 10%) on topics assigned in class and via Blackboard. Detailed criteria and assessment procedures will be circulated in class and on	20%	1,2,3,4,5, 6	As assigned in class and course prog.

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	Blackboard.			
4	Production Work: Students will contribute in one or more creative roles to the development and performance of <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> . Work will be assessed based on the quality of contributions to the creative environment. Students will contribute to a physical and virtual “Dreamboard” which collects and documents our research and is a receptacle for the proposal and discussion of creative ideas. You will also document your contributions to the production as part of the Production Journal (above). More specific criteria will be discussed and set in class.	50%	1,2,3,4,5, 6	Checked daily, awarded at the end of the trimester. Critique Due: 30 MAY, 5PM

Assessment for this course is internal. Group work: Obviously, this course consists largely of group work. All assessment, however, is individual. Marking Criteria: Detailed marking criteria and rubrics will be discussed in class and distributed on Blackboard.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin the online plagiarism prevention tool.

All assignments and feedback will be submitted and returned electronically.

Electronic assignments are submitted as a MS Word file through Blackboard. How to name your file and step-by-step instructions can be found on Blackboard in the “Assignments and Turnitin” section.

Your marked assignment will be found on Blackboard in the same section.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Friday 10 June 2016.**

Penalties

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT AND/OR ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

We will be attending a screening of a Royal Shakespeare Company production. Please plan for these expenses and budget for ticket prices (estimated at \$20 each).

SET TEXTS

You will need to purchase a copy of the script at the first lecture on Tuesday 1 March. The cost is \$10. Please bring the exact amount in cash. A good scholarly edition of the text is also highly recommended. Please see me if you need assistance in choosing one. Additional readings will be posted on the course Blackboard site. Please bring the script to ALL classes and rehearsals.

RECOMMENDED READING

Books:

Block, Giles. *Speaking the Speech: An Actor's Guide to Shakespeare*. London: Nick Hern, 2013.

Crystal, David and Ben Crystal. *Shakespeare's Words*. London: Penguin, 2004.

Edelstein, Barry. *Thinking Shakespeare*. New York: Spark, 2007.

Gurr, Andrew. *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*. Cambridge: CUP, 1992.

Rodenburg, Patsy. *Speaking Shakespeare*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.

Web and Databases:

Oxford English Dictionary Online (available via VUW Library Databases)

<http://www.shakespeareswords.com/> (online edition of Crystal)

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

In response to student feedback on a previous version of this course (taught as THEA 301), more time will be spent with the teacher grounding the students in Shakespearean dramaturgy.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

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WK Date	Tuesday Class	Thursday Class	Assignments/Notes	Other (wkend/evening)
Wk 1 1,3 MARCH	Introduction: Collaboration, Building a Company, and the Text in academic performance	Introduction: The Text in Action. Verse and Language Workshop; Read-through of <i>Much Ado</i>	Dreamboard begins Paraphrase Assigned	None
Wk 2 8,10 MARCH	<i>Much Ado</i> Reading, Paraphrase and Framing Workshop	Verse and Language Workshop	Research Presentation Topics DUE: 8 MARCH (dates assigned)	Evenings: Audition Workshops TBA
Wk 3 15,17 MARCH	Research Presentations	Verse and Language Workshop		Rehearsals TBA
Wk 4 22 MARCH	Research Presentations (cont.), Workshop	NO CLASS (EASTER)		Rehearsals TBA
Wk 5 31 MARCH	NO CLASS (EASTER)	Workshop	Peer Review DUE: FRIDAY 1 APRIL, 5PM	Rehearsals TBA
Wk 6 5, 7 APRIL	Workshop	Workshop		Rehearsals TBA
Wk 7 12,14 APRIL	Workshop	Workshop		Rehearsals TBA
Wk 8 19, 21 APRIL	Workshop	Workshop		Rehearsals TBA
MID TRI BREAK (25-29)	Rehearsal	Rehearsal		Rehearsals M-F 9am-5pm TBC

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APRIL)				
Wk 9 3, 5 MAY	Rehearsal	Rehearsal		M-F Evening + S or S rehearsals
Wk 10 10,12 MAY	TECH WEEK (Studio 77)	TECH WEEK (Studio 77)		M-F Evening + S or S rehearsals and PACK-IN ALL CALLED
Wk 11 17,19 MAY	OPENING NIGHT	NO CLASS (evening performance)		Dress rehearsal Monday 16 May Performances 17- 21 May, 7PM
Wk 12 24, 26 MAY	Production De-brief + Reflection	Workshop		
Wk 13 31 MAY 2 JUNE	Workshop	Course Wrap-Up	Critique DUE (as part of journal): MONDAY 30 May, 5PM	