



MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Course Syllabus: **WOMEN AND THEATRE**  
College of Fine Arts THEA 1113 Section 201  
Spring 2024, Online Asynchronous

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Instructor: Brandi Perkins Office: Online Only  
Office hours: By appointment. Cell Phone: (940) 782-6950  
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**REQUIRED TEXTS (all available on D2L):**

1. *Overtures* (1913) by Alice Gerstenberg
2. *The Children's Hour* (1934) by Lillian Hellman
3. *Goodbye, My Fancy* (1948) by Fay Kanin
4. *Trouble in Mind* (1955) by Alice Childress
5. *Rites* (1969) by Maureen Duffy
6. *Fefu and Her Friends* (1977) by Maria Irene Fornes
7. *Boy Gets Girl* (2000) by Rebecca Gilman
8. *The Clean House* (2004) by Sarah Ruhl
9. *Fun Home* (2013) with music by Jeanine Tesori and book and lyrics by Lisa Kron
10. Additional readings on D2L.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Women and Theatre is a rigorous, academic study of the ways women create theatre. The course uses an historical lens to understand how women have been instrumental in the development of American theatre, how women work in theatre today, and students will look to how they will participate in the theatre of tomorrow. Course readings focus on dramatic literature, theory, and criticism. Students read plays by and about women, engage with the criticism of the dramatic literature, and frame the dialogue through feminist theories of the theatre. This course is part of the Women's Studies program.

**COURSE GOALS:**

- Read plays, interviews, theory, and articles regarding women in the history of American Theatre.
- Build on the students' ability to analyze plays, read plays with a feminist perspective, communicate ideas about the plays, and write effectively.
- To learn to avoid facile generalizations and attend to the particular in a global world.

**COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

Review the following standards for all work turned in for evaluation:

- Be mindful of due dates. Assignments will only be accepted late if you have made proper arrangements with the instructor BEFORE the due date.

- This class is online, but not self-paced. Please check in every week. Reach out to the instructor immediately if you find time management to be an issue.

**CONDUCT STATEMENT:**

Behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instruction will result in the instructor's removing the disruptive student(s) from the class, either temporarily or permanently (instructor drop), and receive a final lower grade, up to an F. In addition, and depending on the nature of the behavior or conduct, the student(s) may be subject to further disciplinary actions as per MSU policies. This includes language in email and discussion boards.

**PREPARATION FOR CLASS:**

It is important that you manage your time wisely in this course. You will be primarily responsible for reading and completing assignments on your own time. If you should find that you are falling behind, reach out the instructor immediately.

**CELL PHONES AND OTHER RECORDING DEVICES:**

The copying or distribution in any manner of any videos created for this class is prohibited. That includes instructional videos made by the instructor and those made by other students in the class. Use of any class materials outside of this class must be part of a reasonable accommodation under ADA, or by obtained written consent by the instructor.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Because this class is entirely online, it is essential that you make time to do the work on your own. Time management will be very important. Missing assignments will be considered an absence. Late assignments will be considered a tardy. **After two (2) absences (missing assignments), your FINAL GRADE will be lowered FIFTY (50) points. With each subsequent absence, your FINAL GRADE will continue to be lowered TEN (10) points.** If at any time excessive absenteeism (over five [5] absences total), is adversely affecting the work of others or your own work, you will be advised to drop the course. If you have an unexpected issue, please reach out to the instructor immediately.

Be prepared for discussion, be willing to engage the material with your own questions and maintain a respectful interest in differing opinions. If you are feeling shy about speaking up in discussion boards or chats, send the instructor an email with your questions or speculations.

**TARDINESS POLICY:**

Please note: two (2) tardies (late assignments) equal an absence.

**MAKE UP WORK/EXAMS:**

Make up work is only allowed with permission from the instructor given BEFORE the due date.

**DESIRE2LEARN (D2L):**

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please reach out to IT or contact your instructor.

**STUDENT HANDBOOK: Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

**SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs

and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

**COLLEGE POLICIES:**

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Concealed Carry in Laboratories:

Participation in laboratory classes (acting, voice, movement) often requires students to wear yoga, movement, or period style clothes/costumes. These types of garments may be thin or form fitting which may make concealed carry of a firearm difficult if not impossible. In addition, students are often required to make physical contact with other students while learning exercises, choreography and/or physical positioning within special technique work. This required physical contact may also make concealment of a firearm difficult. While concealed carry is not prohibited in laboratory style class, students are reminded that intentional display of a firearm may result in criminal and/or civil penalties and unintentional display of a firearm is a violation of university policies and may result in disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion from the program and university. Students should factor the above in their decision as to whether or not to conceal carry in any theatre laboratory class.

**SAFE ZONE STATEMENT:**

The professor considers this classroom (or whatever space this class is meeting) to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor’s expectation that ALL students consider the classroom/meeting location a safe environment.

**NOTICE:**

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor. You will be notified of any changes as they occur.

**AGREEMENT/CONTRACT:**

By staying enrolled in this class, you are indicating you understand and accept the terms of this syllabus.

**CONTACTING YOUR INSTRUCTOR:** Your instructor has an MSU Texas e-mail address. Please reach out via email first. In case of emergency, a cell phone number has been provided at the top of this document. Please be discretionary in the use of this method of communication.

**GRADING:**

Your final grade will be broken down in the following way:

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment.

Assignments	Points
Discussion Boards/Journals	200
Midterm and Final (Play Responses)	300
Research Project	500
Total Points	1,000

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900 to 1,000
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Journals:** Students will be responsible for critical writing on the plays and theoretical materials in this class. Writing must be completed by the due date (which is usually the Sunday after it is assigned); however, additional writings may allow for longer preparation. These entries are reflections, responses, and questions about the material and discussions rather than a “personal journal.” It is not a simple log of the assignments and discussions. You will need to go beyond writing summaries of the reading to demonstrate understanding and your ability to think critically. Be sure to focus on the life and influence of the female playwright, how she writes about women, and the place of women in the society that is being written about.  
1-1.5 page paper using one-inch margins, double-spaced in 12-point type Times New Roman or equivalent. (Handwritten papers will not be accepted.)

**Mid-Term and Final Exam:** You will choose two plays this semester about which you will write a more in-depth Play Response.

**This is in addition to the journal entry due about each of these plays.**

**Play Response:** A 2-3 page paper using one-inch margins, double-spaced in 12-point type Times New Roman or equivalent. (Handwritten papers will not be accepted.)

In the initial paragraph, describe your overall response to the play.

Did it have an impact on you?

How did it impact you?

(For example: Did it make you think about an interesting or new idea?

Did it remind you of something personal? Was it artistically interesting?

Did it entertain you? Make you laugh or cry? Why?

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU TO GIVE ME A PLOT SUMMARY OF THE PRODUCTION.**

Your THESIS statement is the LAST sentence of the FIRST or SECOND paragraph. It is the all-encompassing sentence; it is what your paper is truly about.

(For example: “The Miser and all its theatrical elements gave me a greater appreciation for Molière and the female characters.”)

The rest of your paper needs to support your thesis statement. In this case, you are approaching the ways in which the play keeps a woman’s point of view in mind (or what you imagine that to be). Are the roles in the play offered to women substantial? How do the female characters in the production influence the production? Do they at all? How did you feel about the text itself? How are the women portrayed in the play?

\*\*\*All papers are expected to conform to the citation style of your choosing (MLA, Chicago, APA) and attention must be paid to spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and logical paragraph construction and flow. All papers will be checked for AI.

**Women and Theatre Project:** This is a semester-long exploration of a female theatre practitioner or group of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A full description of the project will be made available early in the semester.

**COURSE CALENDAR:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Sunday, January 28	<p><b>Video</b> from your instructor with introduction and explanation of the late start of the class, a brief overview of expectations and assignments for the first week.</p> <p><b>Questions</b> about the course may be sent by email beginning Monday, January 29.</p>	<p><b>Due February 4 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Read <i>Overtures</i>.</b> Complete <b>Journal #1</b> You will need to research the playwright and the time in which she is writing. Be sure to follow the guidelines for journal entries above.</p> <p><b>Find an article</b> about gender bias. Post a link in the discussion board and cite the article. State whether you agree or disagree with your article and why. Tell us one insight you gained from your article. <b>BE MINDFUL OF WHAT HAS BEEN POSTED. EACH PERSON MUST POST A UNIQUE ARTICLE.</b> (no less than 250 words)</p> <p><b>CHECK YOUR LINK TO MAKE SURE OTHERS CAN ACCESS IT WITHOUT A PAYWALL</b></p> <p><b>Due February 11 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class. State whether you agree or disagree with their take on the article (use <b>RESPECTFUL</b> language and address <b>ONLY</b> the information in the article, <b>NOT PERSONAL OPINIONS!</b>) (no less than 100 words)</p>

<p>Sunday, February 4</p>	<p><b>Journal #1 (<i>Overtones</i>)</b>          posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article</b> posted by 11:59pm</p>	<p><b>Due February 11 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class. Same instructions as before.</p> <p><b>Read <i>Children's Hour</i>.</b>          Complete <b>Journal #2</b>          Same instructions as before.</p>
<p>Sunday, February 11</p>	<p><b>Journal #2 (<i>Children's Hour</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article Responses</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b><i>Overtones</i> journal responses posted by instructor</b></p>	<p><b>Due February 18 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Find an article</b> about gender in theatre. Same instructions as before.</p> <p><b>Read <i>Goodbye, Mr. Fancy</i>.</b> Complete <b>Journal #3.</b></p> <p><b>Due February 25 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class.</p>
<p>Sunday, February 18</p>	<p><b>Journal #3 (<i>Goodbye, Mr. Fancy</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b><i>The Children's Hour</i> journal responses posted by instructor</b></p>	<p><b>Due February 25 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class.</p> <p><b>Read <i>Trouble in Mind</i>.</b>          Complete <b>Journal #4.</b></p>

<p>Sunday, February 25</p>	<p><b>Journal #4 (<i>Trouble in Mind</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article Responses</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b><i>Goodbye, Mr. Fancy</i> journal responses</b> posted by instructor</p>	<p><b>Due March 3 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Midterm</b>  <b>Write</b> a Play Response for one of the 4 plays we have read in class.          Be sure to follow the guidelines above.</p>
<p>Sunday, March 3</p>	<p><b>Midterm Due</b></p> <p><b><i>Trouble in Mind</i> journal responses</b> posted by instructor</p>	<p><b>Due March 17 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Find an article</b> about sexuality (gender attraction) in theatre.</p> <p><b>Read <i>Rites</i>.</b> Complete <b>Journal #5.</b></p> <p><b>Due March 24 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class.</p>
<p>Sunday, March 10</p>	<p><b>Spring Break</b></p>	<p>If you haven't chosen your <b>research topic</b> by now, you might want to start thinking about it!!</p>
<p>Sunday, March 17</p>	<p><b>Journal #5 (<i>Rites</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article</b> posted by 11:59pm</p>	<p><b>Due March 24 by 11:59pm:</b>  <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class.</p>

		<p><b>Read <i>Fefu and Her Friends</i>. Complete Journal #6.</b></p> <p><b>Research Project</b> Topic. (No more than 2 people may have the same topic.)</p>
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Sunday, March 24	<p><b>Journal #6 (<i>Fefu and Her Friends</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article Responses</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Submit</b> Research Project Topic by 11:59pm.</p> <p><b>Rites journal responses posted by instructor</b></p>	<p><b>Due April 7 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Find an article</b> about race and gender in theatre.</p> <p><b>Read <i>Boy Gets Girl</i>. Complete Journal #7.</b></p> <p><b>Research Project</b> outline.</p> <p><b>Due April 14 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class.</p>
Sunday, March 31	<b>Holiday Break</b>	
Sunday, April 7	<p><b>Journal #7 (<i>Boy Gets Girl</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Submit</b> Research Project outline.</p> <p><b><i>Fefu and Her Friends</i> journal responses posted by instructor</b></p>	<p><b>Due April 14 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Respond</b> to 2 articles posted by others in the class.</p> <p><b>Read <i>The Clean House</i>. Complete Journal #8.</b></p> <p><b>Due April 28 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Research project.</b></p>



<p>Sunday, April 14</p>	<p><b>Journal #8 (<i>The Clean House</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Article Responses</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b>Research Project Outline responses</b> posted by instructor.</p> <p><b><i>Boy Gets Girl</i> journal responses</b> posted by instructor</p>	<p><b>Due April 21 by 11:59pm:</b> Read <i>Fun Home</i>. Complete <b>Journal #9</b>.</p> <p><b>Due April 28 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Research project.</b></p> <p><b>Due May 8 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Final</b></p>
<p>Sunday, April 21</p>	<p><b>Journal #9 (<i>Fun Home</i>)</b> posted by 11:59pm</p> <p><b><i>The Clean House</i> journal responses</b> posted by instructor</p>	<p><b>Due April 28 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Research project.</b></p> <p><b>Due May 8 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Final</b></p>
<p>Sunday, April 28</p>	<p><b>Research Project</b> posted by 11:59pm.</p> <p><b><i>Fun Home</i> journal responses</b> posted by instructor</p>	<p><b>Due May 8 by 11:59pm:</b> <b>Final</b></p>
<p>Wednesday, May 8</p>	<p><b>Final</b> posted by 11:59pm.</p>	<p><b>Thank you for all your hard work this semester!</b></p> <p><b>Best wishes!!</b></p>