

**J-TERM TRAVELING SEMINAR  
THEATRE ALIVE - STUDIES IN THEATRE, DRAMA & PERFORMANCE  
United Kingdom**

LIT/THE 385

3 CREDITS (45 CONTACT HOURS)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Gretchen Smith. [gesmith@smu.edu](mailto:gesmith@smu.edu) / [gretchen.smith@iau.edu](mailto:gretchen.smith@iau.edu)

*(This is a tentative schedule based on the current and/or previous year's offerings in London. If the program runs, the plays and readings, the performances, and the overall schedule will be updated to reflect the available offerings at that time. The museums and historical sites and activities included probably will not change other than the dates and times in the final schedule: each of them offers a unique and specific insight into the subject matter of the program.)*

**Important Notice:** This is a **traveling** seminar which means that you will be on foot, on the road, in the air, and only rarely in a classroom. Your learning experience will occur in the cities, locations, and cultural sites visited. You will be in both large cities and potentially deeply rural locations. You will also be in an international environment with customs, laws, security matters, health and well-being issues and lifestyles very different from your experience at home or your university. In sum, it will be a unique learning experience for you. For all these reasons, we expect students to follow the seminar leaders' advice and recommendations and to be prepared for the traveling seminar leaders to modify the itinerary if deemed necessary and to communicate any changes to you as soon as they are known. IAU reserves the right to modify the itinerary due to issues related to global security, country- and industry-related strikes, inflated travel costs, and health and well-being issues that are specific to regions in which the seminars are scheduled to take place.

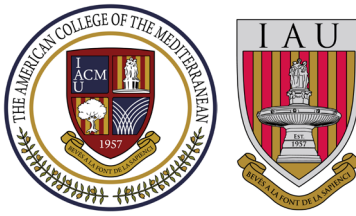
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## I. ACADEMIC & PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This seminar course examines the complex relationship between London (a major urban center) and the art, industry, and practice of performance and drama. Additionally, this course focuses on class and gender, and the ways in which theatre engages with and represents these systems. London is a diverse and historic city, which makes it a brilliant site for this course. Not only will we be reading plays, we will also be using field work (museums and galleries, backstage tours, live performance, historic sites) to add relevance and cultural context to our in-class discussions about theatre. Developing an understanding of the way theatre, ballet, and visual art provide narratives and events that support the status quo *or* actively questions, disrupts, or overturns the narratives of dominance is central to an understanding of the cultural necessity for the free voice of arts to a society or culture.

## II. CONTACT HOURS

This course carries 3 credits or 45 contact hours. Students complete readings prior to the program and finalize their assignments after departure, which extends the academics of the component past the on-site components. Lectures and site-visits are conducted 7-days per week throughout the J-Term.



### III. LEARNING OUTCOMES

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#### **Creativity & Aesthetics/Analysis: *Assignment – Reviews, exercises, and exams***

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the conventions of a particular art form in a specified context through production and/or analysis of that form.
2. Students will identify the conventions of a particular artistic form.
3. Students will analyze the formal elements of an artistic form within a specified context.

#### **Writing: *Assignment – Review 1 & 2***

1. Students will present ideas in clear, well-organized writing that meets the assignment’s genre and the needs of its audience.
2. Students will use critical reasoning skills relevant to the assignment’s purpose.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the stylistic conventions, and where applicable, citation style and formatting appropriate to the course or assignment.

#### **Human Diversity: *Assignment – Paper #3 and Exam***

1. Students will identify the ways in which race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, ability/disability, sexual orientation, nationality, and /or immigration status are socially constructed.
2. Students will explain how social and cultural systems develop out of adaptation to environmental and historical contexts.
3. Students will analyze how discriminatory attitudes, practices, and systems can create barriers for some and opportunities for others.

### IV. PRIMARY TEXTBOOKS/READINGS

Tentative reading list, subject to change based on theatre offerings.

#### Context:

THEATRE & THE NATION/Holdsworth<sup>1</sup>

THEATRE & FEMINISM/Solga

“The Spectator as Tourist”/Kennedy (Teams)

#### Plays (2022-2023):

*HENRY V*, *OTHELLO* (Shakespeare), *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST* (Wilde), Play #4 TBA

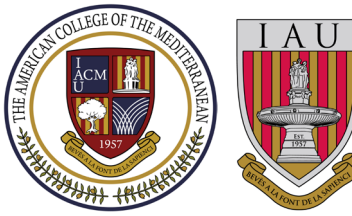
#### Articles and Chapters:

“Transvestism and the ‘body beneath’”/Stallybrass (Teams)

*The professor’s suggestion is that students will have read Theatre & Nation, Theatre & Feminism, and the first assigned play prior to arriving in London; in all cases for all readings, discussion questions will*

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<sup>1</sup> All three of the THEATRE &... books are pocket-sized and approximately 80 pages. In other words, you can read any one of them in 1-2 sittings. Read and prepare the questions prior to your arrival!



*be provided via Microsoft Teams for in-class focus on topics of performance, context, and issues of gender and class examination. Discussion questions will also encompass outings (like the British Museum) in order to give students context regarding what they will or have seen in connection with the readings and in-class meetings.*

## V. EVALUATION, GRADING & ASSIGNMENTS

### Assignments

Graded Assignments:	Exercises (3 @ 10% each – 30%)
	Papers (3 @ 15% each - 45%)
	Participation (10%)
	Final Exam (15%)

#### **Exercises – 3 @ 10% each or 30% of overall grade**

These three exercises can be found on Microsoft Teams, and we will discuss each one in class in depth. They are intended to add depth and context to our readings on the plays and playhouse. Due dates with in the syllabus schedule.

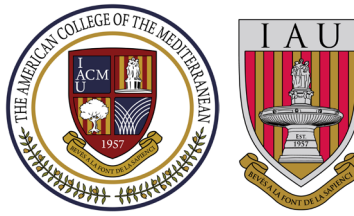
- **Exercise 1 – Being a Tourist.** Choosing from among several of our first-week experiences and our in-class discussion of our readings, complete this exercise sheet, detailing your reactions/reflections and analyzing your own status as a tourist. Goal: demonstrate your understanding of the performance of “tourism” within a different culture.
- **Exercise 2 – Brick Lane.** Our class will walk Brick Lane, an East End street and end with dinner in a curry house. Brick Lane is a literal crossroad for diverse cultures, and a historical site for immigrant populations from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present. This exercise asks you to observe and document how diverse groups and history leave their imprint on urban spaces.
- **Exercise 3 – Backstage Tours & Theatre Galleries.** This will include our visits to 2 backstage tours and the V&A Theatre galleries, as sites demonstrating the art & industry of theatre within London/UK.

In each case, you will create a visual essay on PowerPoint or similar platform, using photographs, captions, and videos. Each exercise will provide specific details and allow individual creativity. One of these will be a group exercise.

#### **Papers – 3 @ 15% each or 45% of the overall grade**

These three paper assignments can be found on Microsoft Teams, and we will discuss each one in class in depth. Papers #1 and 2 can be revised (based on professor’s feedback) and resubmitted. Both style and content will be evaluated for the overall grade (see Microsoft Teams and the general rubric).

- **Paper 1 – Review, play at Shakespeare’s Globe.** Write a thoughtful and well-organized review of the performance we see at the Globe Theatre, London.
- **Paper 2 – Review, play at National or Royal Shakespeare Company.** Write a thoughtful and well-organized review of the performance we see at the National Theatre/London or RSC/Stratford. We’ll focus on Shakespeare.



- **Paper 3 – Letter Home.** Write a thoughtful essay in the form of a letter home, written to a friend or relative comparing two sites we’ve seen, articulating your awareness of yourself as a tourist as well as the issues of class and gender within those sites. Use class discussion, exercises, and readings to support your descriptions of these sites.

**Participation – 10%**

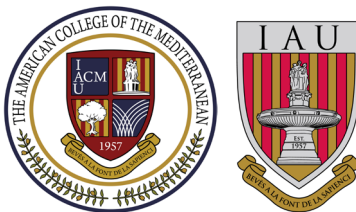
Students are expected to be prepared for class every day and to demonstrate a deeper and broader knowledge of theatre and performance, as well as the impact of gender and class on both, as the class progresses. For many readings, including plays, discussion questions and images (playhouses, actors, historical maps) will be provided as supplementary material; they will also be used in class discussion. My goal is that the course will have a steadily increasing amount of critical discussion throughout the semester and provide students greater opportunity to demonstrate their increased knowledge and critical ability.

**Final Exam – 15%**

An in-class written exam, including specific questions related to issues of gender and class in performance, theatre arts, and representation (Human Diversity). Students will write three articulate, well-developed essays focusing on the subjects, themes, and materials of the course. *Given time constraints, this may be a take-home exam, submitted after the end of the course.*

**Grading Scale:**

Note ACM-IAU	US
A	95-100%
A-	90-94%
B+	89%-88%
B	84-87%
B-	80-83%
C+	79%-78%
C	74-77%
C-	70-73%
D+	69%-68%
D	64-67%
D-	60-63%
F	59%-0%

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are required to attend class **every day**, as scheduled. Because our time is focused, students are also expected to arrive at the classroom 5 minutes before class starts; three late arrivals will trigger the drop of a full letter grade on their final grade for the course.

**Note: other necessary/required policies will be included in the final syllabus, in the format/language of that date.**

**Plagiarism:**

Submitting material that in part or in whole is not entirely one's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source is prohibited and grounds for failure.

**Accommodations:**

It is IAU's goal to provide reasonable accommodations for students with a documented disability. If students need accommodations to fully participate in this class, they must complete the IAU Wellness & Accommodations Questionnaire in their online application portal and forward all requested supporting documentation.

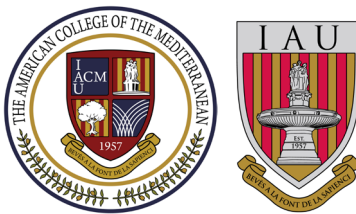
**Basic Expectations:**

Although many professors don't articulate their expectations of students, I like to start the class by being transparent.

- Prepare the reading materials under discussion and bring them to class (see Schedule). Have them open and ready to work – in other words, show up ready for the day's discussions.
- Discussion with different opinions based on different life experiences is welcome: however, the discussion is always about the work and not personalities. I anticipate disagreement, and I look forward to your encounters with new ideas, questions, confusion, and excitement. In all cases, respect will be demonstrated for classmates, discussion material, and the professor.
- All students are expected to participate vocally in each discussion, and to "be present" during all class meetings. If a student is ill, notify the professor prior to class meeting and wait for confirmation of excused absence.
- Given issues of the covid pandemic, all students are expected to behave intelligently regarding their own (and their classmates' and professor's) safety and health.
- Kindness and grace are expected at all times for all students and professor. Those who cause damage to others' personal or physical well-being should be reported to the professor, and if said damage continues, students causing the damage will be sent home immediately.

**VI. OTHER INFORMATION****General Travel Advisory:**

This trip is a serious one, both academically and culturally. Students are expected to be prepared for intellectual, linguistic, social, and travel challenges. We are traveling as a team, and each member must be prepared, punctual, cautious, and professional. With those important caveats, the trip promises to be an incredible experience, including fun and adventure. That said, be always aware of your surroundings, keeping your valuables close to you. Do not leave smartphones, cameras, etc. unattended. Travel as lightly as possible. Report any suspicious behavior to program supervisors.



**Pre-Departure:**

Leading up to departure, be sure to check your email and Teams diligently so we can get in touch with you should there be any adjustments to the program. We will set up a WhatsApp group to communicate during the trip.

**VII. CONTENT**

**Class Schedule**

**What is this course about?**

This course is about the relationships between theatre (art, industry, communication), a nation (United Kingdom/Britain), and a city (London). For example: theatre performs the myth and history of a nation for/to its people (audiences). Plays incorporate the values and attitudes of the nation’s people and sometimes question, sometimes confirm the validity of those values and attitudes. We will be reading several plays and articles, as well as seeing plays and visiting artistic and historic sites to expand our knowledge of the above.

**Each play and its readings focus on gender and class as signs of identity, and embedded value systems. Each play questions the role of authority. Each play pits the individual against the community.**

We will also examine ourselves as “tourists” both in Oxford and London. We will analyze historical sites, museums, and theme parks as performance. We can start to consider American comedy, history, and society from this viewpoint and come full circle to understanding our own national values.

**This class focuses on lively in-class discussion, text analysis, and on-site experience.**

***\*This course’s readings and assignments are built upon 2022-23 theatre offerings in London and Stratford-upon-Avon. If the program is scheduled for later dates, the readings and theatre visits will reflect those changes.***

Microsoft Teams is where Module/Readings, Rubrics, or Assignments will be available. Grades for individual assignments will be posted there, as well, including for Participation.

**Tentative daily itinerary (subject to change):**

<b>FRANCE</b>	
December 28	Arrival in London
December 29-January 4	London
January 5-6	Stratford-upon-Avon
January 7-8	Oxford
January 9-13	London
January 14	Departure