

# THE 5910 Research Methods

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University of Central Florida

Fall 2016; Tuesdays-Thursdays 12:30-1:20; PAC M-263

**“There is an intellectual component to every artistic passion, just as there is the fire of creation in every intellectual pursuit.” –Author Unknown**

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Office hours:

Tuesday/Thursday 1:30-4:00

and by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Theatre 5910 is a graduate *seminar* in theatre research and writing. The course will encourage students to explore various types and modes of theatre research, to develop a plan of research toward their final project for the course, to generate a production vision that comes out of such research, and to examine their writing closely for the clarity and efficiency of style, structure, and argument. The course will also prepare graduate students for the challenges of the thesis project. During course meetings, students will be sharing their research, presenting oral reports, and discussing short writing assignments. All handouts must be uploaded or emailed a day before they are due for all members of the class. Class discussions will also treat journals and theatre organizations that might be particularly helpful in students' research as well as the development of their professional career.

Matters of research and discussion may include the following: theatre historiography; interdisciplinary research; visual sources; primary sources; secondary sources; and the applicability of research to theatrical production. Other topics may be added or substituted according to students' interests.

Coursework will culminate in a final project, consisting of students' research findings, production vision, and annotated bibliography.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

**To** demystify research and find the relevance of research methods/skills to each of our interest areas

**To** develop writing and research skills necessary for success in graduate school and the professional world, including the navigation of the library and its various research tools

**To** practice applying research theories, methods, and skills in preparation for your thesis, responsible theatre practices, and other scholarly and artistic pursuits

To gain an understanding of how to publish and present your work in various settings

To: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Strunk and White. Elements of Style. Latest Edition

William Zinsser. On Writing Well. Latest Edition

Gibaldi/Achert. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Latest edition

Anton Chekhov, The Cherry Orchard

Henry Hwang, M. Butterfly

George Bernard Shaw, Pygmalion

Handouts/ other readings

*Suggested Reading:* Eds. Thomas Postlewait and Bruce A. McConachie, Interpreting the Theatrical Past: Essays in the Historiography of Performance (1989)

**Please Note:** *Theatre is fundamentally an exploration of the human condition, therefore the study of dramatic literature, research, and analysis must necessarily include a wide range of human behaviors. The discussions, scripts, and productions covered in this class may occasionally touch upon language and subject matter that some might find immoral, anti- social, or profane. Should anything we cover be outside your comfort range speak to the instructor immediately.*

**ATTENDANCE:**

Attendance is mandatory. ***There will be NO make-up presentations or reports.*** In accommodation for illness and crises, you are allowed **one** absence. After one absence, each additional absence will lower your final grade by **half of a letter grade**. Leaving class early or arriving late two times is the equivalent of one absence. This policy is not flexible and you are responsible for any missed work. **If you miss more than three classes, you cannot pass this course.** Participation in this class is mandatory and means more than just being present in class. Participation and involvement require concentration, thoughtful speaking and listening in discussions, respect for others in the group, cooperatively working in small groups, and a **commitment** to the class.

**NOTE:** This class requires high quality written work and professional standards of communication in all areas. All written assignments are to be typed/word processed in 12-point font (Times New Roman), double spaced, and formatted according to the latest edition of the MLA handbook (One inch margins please!). Assignments should be proofread and professional in appearance. Substandard assignments/written work will not receive credit.

I DO NOT accept late work and I DO NOT give incompletes. Please make every effort to stay on top of the syllabus and contact me immediately if you are falling behind or having difficulty with the course. You may rewrite papers within one week of the date you receive them back and replace your grade with the new grade.

**Plagiarism** is a serious violation with severe consequences. As always, you are required to give credit where credit is due (this includes Internet sources). You can commit plagiarism by willfully copying or stealing words or ideas, OR by failing to properly cite your sources. If you choose to plagiarize, you will fail this course and the university will be informed of any infraction.

### **DO YOU HAVE ANY PARTICULAR NEEDS?**

Please let me know if you have any reservations about this class, including, but not limited to, learning disabilities and hidden or sensory disabilities. I want to make the course as inclusive and safe as possible, and I need your help and communication to stay informed.

### ***CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:***

**As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 26. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.**

**\*\*\* Write one sentence to explain each term:  
Dramaturgy, Performance Design, Practice as  
Research, and Historiography\*\*\***

**You must use Webcourses to submit this assignment.  
(5 points--will be added as extra credit)**

### **RESEARCH EFFORTS**

**Journal (turned to me twice during the semester but no later than the last day of classes for the second submission)**

Please journal through the semester to reflect on your work and the challenges you encounter during your research process. Be as specific as possible.

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

Participation in this class is essential, both to maintain a high level of discussion and to encourage you to practice your spoken and written communication skills. You will be graded on quality as well as quantity of your participation. Each and every student must

take active responsibility for the content and quality of discussions—whether in class or online.

## **REPORTS**

1. One ten minute in-class presentations on a publication or theatre organization (such as ATHE or AATE) and **a one-page detailed handout for the class**
2. Brief weekly research assignments on various aspects of research. There will be a series of seminar reports in which the results of each student’s research will be presented, discussed, and evaluated. **They will include various dramaturgical assignments (short handout is required for each report) and written responses (in the form of online discussion) to the reading.** The dramaturgical assignments will also require sharing media sources and peer reviewing on “webcourses.” The responses to the reading will require participation in online discussions.

## **COLLABORATIVE PROJECT WITH SCENOGRAPHY STUDENTS**

Details are to be determined

## **CONFERENCE PROPOSAL**

Choose a conference particular to your area of study and print out the “Call for Papers, Workshops, Panels, Poster-board Presentations, etc.” Following the guidelines provided by your chosen organization, create a written proposal to present at the conference. Please submit the guidelines/call for papers, as well as your written proposal. While you are highly encouraged to submit your proposal for consideration, you are not required to do so.

## **BOOK REVIEW**

One 3 to 5 page critical book review in your area of expertise

It should be a recent book (2010 or later) that professionals working in your field would consult in the course of their research or teaching. Your book review should be geared towards a particular publication, both in writing style and content. You will be required to provide a draft of the book review for peer reviewing. You will peer review each other’s work in pairs. Pairs will be assigned.

## **ANNOTATED JOURNAL REVIEW**

This exercise encourages you to explore the various journals that inform your field of study. Please create a comprehensive list of various journals that can and will inform you as a scholarly theatre artist—this includes published criticism, scholarly and reflective articles, as well as historical, cultural, and other relevant sources. Include all the necessary bibliographic information for locating each journal followed by a brief reflective paragraph that summarizes the types of information and topics covered by the publication, the intended audience/readership, and your own thoughts about how this journal might inform your creative and scholarly work.

## **THESIS READER RESPONSE #1, #2**



Grade breakdown: A 93-100%; A- 90-92.9%; B+ 87-89.9%; B 83-86.9%; B- 80-82.9%;  
C+ 77-79.9%; C 73-76.9%; C- 70-72.9%; D 60-69.9%; F: <59.9%

**Total: 300 points**

### READINGS AND CLASS TOPICS

**(The schedule is subject to change based on needs of the class. Even if you are absent, you are responsible for any changes made to the schedule and any work covered in class. Assignments may be added and/or altered as we proceed through the course.)**

### READINGS AND CLASS TOPICS

*Subject to change*

<b>Class Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignments/Reading Due</b>
T 8/23	Introduction Looking Beyond the Surface “This is Not a Box”	
R 8/25	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  Description and assignment of in-class presentations on publications and organizations (handout)  Discussion of Annotated Journal Assignment	Definition of terms
T 8/30	READER- RESPONSE SESSION: <b>Postmodernism</b>  <b>Subject-position</b>  Discussion of Book Review Assignment	<b>Read a handout and write a discussion response (1):</b> “Introduction: What’s Going On Here?”
R 9/1	BOOK REVIEWS. Knowing your readership. Major principles of reviewing. Organization.  Query letters  Discussion of the Final Project	Bring 3 book reviews to class for discussion

T 9/6	<p>READER- RESPONSE SESSION:</p> <p><b>What is Theory?</b></p> <p><b>WHAT IS COLLABORATION? MEETING WITH SCENOGRAPHY STUDENTS AND INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION ABOUT COLLABORATIVE FINAL PROJECTS</b></p>	<p>Read handouts from <i>Playing with Theory in Theatre Practice</i>:</p> <p>“Approaching Theory: Scholar and Practitioner”</p> <p>“Resisting Binaries: Theory and Acting”</p> <p>Zinsser pp. 3-67</p>
R 9/8	<p>READER- RESPONSE SESSION:</p> <p><b>Historiography</b></p> <p>PRODUCTION REVIEWS Describing elements of production</p>	<p><b>Read a handout and write a discussion response (2):</b></p> <p>“Historiography and the Theatrical Event: A Primer with Twelve Cruxes”</p> <p><b>Deadline for approval of book for review</b></p> <p>Bring 3 production reviews for discussion</p>
T 9/13	<p>MLA style exercise</p>	<p>Bring MLA Handbook Bring four MLA examples to class Book review through-line</p> <p>Zinsser, pp. 194-207</p>
R 9/15	<p>CONFERENCE PROPOSALS: PAPERS, PANELS, WORKSHOPS Proposing a paper or workshop. Discussing mock proposals and presentations in class.</p>	<p>Bring one conference call for papers or workshops: ATHE, AATE, ASTR, USITT, etc.</p>
T 9/20	<p>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (presentations)</p>	<p>Bring a completed MLA assignment</p> <p>Reports: <i>Modern Drama</i>, American Society for Composers and Publishers, Society for Stage Directors and Choreographers, IFTR/FIRT</p>
R 9/22	<p>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (presentations)</p>	<p>Zinsser, pp. 233-94</p> <p>Reports: TYA/USA, AATE, ATHE, <i>TDR</i>, <i>American Theatre</i></p>

T 9/27	Class critique of drafts of book reviews: work with your writing partner	Reports: <i>Opera Quarterly</i> , <i>Dance Magazine</i> , <i>Theater</i> (Yale), <i>Theatre Journal</i> , <i>TYA Today</i> , <i>Youth Theatre Journal</i>
R 9/29	<b>Library Workshop: Details will be discussed. Date is a subject to change.</b>	
T 10/4	PLAY ANALYSIS Basic elements of play analysis	Reports: <i>Theatre Topics</i> , <i>Theatre Research International</i> , etc.  Read and analyze <i>Pygmalion</i>  <b>Book review deadline</b>
R 10/6	READER- RESPONSE SESSION: <b>DRAMATURGY</b>  PRIMARY SOURCES. Play-texts. Oral histories. Archival research. Video libraries and collections. Theatre on film and tape.	<b>Read a handout on Dramaturgy and write a discussion response (3)</b>
T10/11	PRIMARY SOURCES Reports	Dramaturgy reports due on <i>Pygmalion</i> : Visual materials: photographs, paintings, video (exploring period styles)
R 10/13	<b>Collaboration Day</b>	Your project proposal should be approved prior to this date.
T 10/18	PRIMARY SOURCES: Autobiography (or Memoirs) and Mythmaking	Handout to read: on Mythmaking  Dramaturgy reports due on <i>Pygmalion</i> : Autobiography or Memoirs
R 10/20	<b>In-class discussions/presentations of your work-in-progress (1): PRIMARY SOURCES</b>	<b>Annotated Journal Bibliography</b>  Bring your work-in-progress to class
T 10/25	SECONDARY SOURCES  CRITICAL SOURCES: Historical research. Critical histories. Production histories	Read <i>The Cherry Orchard</i>
R 10/27	PRODUCTION DRAMATURGY	Dramaturgy reports due: Historical research, critical history, production history

T 11/1	TRANSLATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS  Discuss the bilingual project <i>Life is a Dream</i>	Bring one scene from <i>The Cherry Orchard</i> in two different translations to class
R 11/3	<b>In-class discussions/presentations of your work-in-progress (2): Historical research. Critical histories. Production histories.</b>  CONFERENCE PROPOSALS: PAPERS, PANELS, WORKSHOPS (again)	Bring your work-in-progress to class  <b>Bring your panel or workshop proposal to class for a mock presentation/discussion</b>
T 11/8	READER- RESPONSE SESSION: <b>Reflection of Practice as Research</b>  THESIS GUIDELINES  ON WRITING WELL Establishing your point of view. Approaches to criticism and analysis. Approach to writing: what is the relationship with the reader; is language formal or informal; did the writer have an effective outline? Organizing material.	<b>Read a handout and write a discussion response (4):</b> <b>assigned chapters on Practice as Research</b> (in relation to the thesis process)  Read Thesis Guidelines
R 11/10	THESIS GUIDELINES  THEORY AS LENS (again)	<b>Read two thesis projects and write a one-page response to each</b>
T 11/15	READER-RESPONSE SESSION  <b>Feminist and Gender Theory</b>  <b>Semiotics</b>	<b>Write a discussion response (5) on Theory as a Lens in application to <i>M. Butterfly</i>.</b> Handout to read: Fortier: Feminist and Gender Theory; Semiotics in application to <i>M. Butterfly</i> .  <b>Project bibliography in progress due</b>
R 11/17	<b>In-class discussions/presentations of your work-in-progress (3): Theory as a Lens</b>  Discuss research and writing process  Research Cohorts	<b>Draft of each research outline due</b>  Provide copies to class or email prior to class. Read All Drafts—Come to class with Feedback
T 11/22	<b>Research Day</b>	

R 11/24	<b>No class. Thanksgiving Holiday</b>	
T 11/29	<b>Final Project Preparations (4) Research Outline (continued) Production Proposal</b>  Research cohorts	<b>Draft of each REVISED research outline due</b>  Provide copies to class or email prior to class. Read each other's drafts—Come to class with Feedback
R 12/1	Final Project Preparations (5): Production Proposal (continued)  Individual Meetings as Needed	<b>Revised production proposal due</b>
R 12/8	Final (with Advanced Scenography students) 10:00-12:50	

Disclaimer

***This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.***

*There are plays and materials that may express adult or controversial themes as well as strong language. If this presents a problem for you, please see the instructor immediately to access your chances for success in the course.*

**Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunity.**

It is the policy of the University to reasonably accommodate absences due to observed religious holidays. However, the student will be held responsible for any material covered during the absence and must inform the instructor two weeks prior the holiday.

Since theatre requires the use of mind, voice, and body, there might be situations that will require a certain amount of physical contact between you and the instructor and other students. If this presents a problem for you, please see the instructor immediately to access your chances for success in the course.