

# **THEA 365-02: Special Topics in Theatre** *Musical Theatre History and Literature*

*Spring 2012*

CRN 22692 - MWF 9:00-9:50 am

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## **TEXTS**

Jones, John Bush. *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre.*

Kenrick, John. *Musical Theatre: A History.*

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Tell me and I will forget.  
Show me and I will remember.  
Involve me and I will understand.  
*-attributed to Confucius.*

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Only connect.  
*- E.M. Forster*

## COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Surveying the art form known as musical theatre from its multiple origins through contemporary trends, we will use music, film, librettos and scores, and local productions to gain a broader understanding and appreciation of this performance genre. While we will look at the development of the musical as an art form (Kenrick), we will also explore musicals “as a way of illuminating broader social and cultural themes of the times (Bush)”. Open to the general student, the course serves as an elective for the major/minor in Theatre.

## COURSE POLICIES

### ATTENDANCE

- You are allowed **three absences** without penalty, regardless of the reasons for the absences. Each subsequent absence will reduce your final grade by 1/3 of a letter.
- Three instances of tardiness (arriving after roll call and class has begun) will count as one absence.
- Missing the final project performance at the end of the semester automatically reduces your final grade by a full letter.

### GRADING

If you

- Attend, are prepared **and** participate in all classes
- Attend **all** required performances
- Have **all** projects and writing assignments completed on time

you will be doing **satisfactory** work for this course.

If you

- Accomplish **ALL** the above
- Make an honest commitment to challenge yourself
- Exhibit active engagement with the subject matter

you will be doing **good** work for this course.

As published in the current college catalogue:

"In official recording of academic work, the following symbols are employed:  
A, excellent; B, good; C, satisfactory; D, passing; ...F, failure...." (p. 74)

### COURSEWORK

**Class Participation:** Worth up to 25% of your final grade, participation is an essential part of this course. Class discussions, exercises, general attitude, general involvement, initiative and attendance contribute to the class participation grade.

**Quizzes:** There will be ten unannounced quizzes throughout the semester, covering the readings scheduled for the particular class session. Combined, quizzes contribute to 20% of your final grade.

**Show Essays:** You are required to write two 5-page critical essays on selected musicals, one of which must be seen in person (there are six musicals being produced in Memphis this semester – a list will be provided). The other musical may be viewed as a film or recording, or you may read the libretto and listen to the cast recording. Specific due dates are variable in consideration of the due date of the Composer/Librettist Biography below. Guidelines

for essays will be provided and further discussed in class. Shows critiqued may become components of your final research paper. Each essay is worth 10% of your final grade.

**Composer/Librettist Biography:** You will write one 5-page biography on a composer and/or librettist. The subject will be determined in consultation with the instructor, and the due date determined in consideration of the due dates of the Show Essays above. The biography of the composer and/or librettist may become a component of your final research paper. The biography is worth 10% of your final grade.

**Final Research Paper:** Your final 15-page paper is to be researched on a topic determined with the instructor. Examples of possible topics will be discussed in class. There are five deadlines as laid out in the syllabus: topic submission, bibliography, outline, “first” draft, and final draft. This final draft is due at the beginning of the final exam period for the course as noted in the syllabus. Additional parameters will be provided during the course of the semester. The final research paper comprises 25% of your final grade.

***A word about Plagiarism:***

Article VI—SECTION 3 (of the Student Constitution):

Also defined as cheating, plagiarism is the act of using another person’s words or ideas without documenting them properly (footnotes, bibliography, etc.). This includes, without limitation: using information from any sources (including the class textbook(s), other books, journals, newspapers, magazines, etc.) without proper reference, getting ideas or words from a classmate’s paper, failure to properly punctuate direct quotes, and obtaining a paper from someone else. Ignorance is not an excuse for these violations. It is the student’s responsibility to consult the professor, an Honor Council member, or writing handbooks for the procedure for properly acknowledging sources.

**RECAP OF GRADING**

<b>COMPONENT</b>	<b>% of FINAL GRADE</b>
Class Participation	25
Quizzes (10)	20
Show Essays (2)	20
Composer/Librettist Biography (1)	10
Final Research Paper	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

# THEA 365-02: Musical Theatre History

DAY	DATE	ACTIVITY AND ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE
Wednesday	January 18	<u>Introduction</u> to the course and to each other  <u>Musicals in Memphis:</u> <b><i>The Club</i></b> January 6 - January 29, 2012 POTS @ The Works
Friday	20	<u>Antecedents</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick: "Introduction", pp. 11-17</li> </ul> <u>Musicals in Memphis:</u> <b><i>next to normal</i></b> January 20 - February 12, 2012 Playhouse on the Square
Monday	23	<u>Antecedents</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 1: "Ancient Times to 1850", pp. 18-34</li> </ul>
Wednesday	25	<u>Discussion of Show Essays, Composer/Librettist Bibliography, and Final Research Papers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and selection of topics.</li> </ul>
Friday	27	<u>Discussion of Show Essays, Composer/Librettist Bibliography, and Final Research Papers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and selection of topics.</li> </ul>
Monday	30	<u>1840-1900</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 2: "Continental Operetta", pp. 35-49</li> <li><b>Due date for <i>The Club</i> show essays.</b></li> </ul>
Wednesday	February 1	<u>1640-1880</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 3: "American Explorations", pp. 50-74</li> <li>Final Research Paper Topics due.</li> </ul>
Friday	3	<u>1880-1900</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones: "Introduction", pp. 1-11</li> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 4: "Gilbert and Sullivan", pp. 75-94</li> </ul>
Monday	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 1: "Patriotism, Xenophobia, and WWI", pp. 12-51</li> </ul>
Wednesday	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 5: "The Birth of Musical Comedy", pp. 95-110</li> </ul>
Friday	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 6: "A New Century", pp. 111-133</li> </ul>
Monday	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 7: "American Ascendance", pp. 134-155</li> <li><b>Due date for <i>next to normal</i> show essays.</b></li> </ul>
Wednesday	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 2: "The Musicals of the Roaring Twenties", pp. 52-78</li> <li><b>Due date for show essays or biographies.</b></li> </ul>
Friday	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 8: "Al Jolson", pp. 156-167</li> </ul>
Monday	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 9: "The Jazz Age", pp. 168-206</li> <li>Final Research Paper Bibliographies due.</li> </ul>
Wednesday	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>Showboat</i></b></li> </ul>
Friday	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 3: "Coping with Depression", pp. 79-122</li> </ul>
Monday	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 10: "Depression Era Miracles", pp. 207-237</li> </ul>
Wednesday	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 4: "WWII and the Rodgers and Hammerstein Years", pp. 123-160</li> </ul>

Friday	<b>March 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 11: "A New Beginning", pp. 238-264</li> </ul> <p><u>Musicals in Memphis:</u> <i>Spring Awakening</i> March 2 - March 25, 2012 The Circuit Playhouse</p>
Monday	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 5: "From Isolation to Idealism in the Cold War Years", pp. 161-201</li> </ul>
Wednesday	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 12: "Broadway Takes Stage", pp. 265-297</li> <li><b>Due date for show essays or biographies.</b></li> </ul>
Friday	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 6: "Black and Jewish Musicals since the 1960s", pp. 202-234</li> <li>Final Research Paper Outlines due.</li> </ul> <p><u>Musicals in Memphis:</u> <i>Chicago</i> March 9-April 1, 2012 Theatre Memphis</p>
Monday	12	***** <b>SPRING BREAK</b> *****
Wednesday	14	***** <b>SPRING BREAK</b> *****
Friday	16	***** <b>SPRING BREAK</b> *****
Monday	19	<p><u>Final Research Paper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work day</li> </ul> <p><u>Musicals in Memphis:</u> <i>La Cage aux Folles</i> March 20-25, 2012 The Orpheum Theatre</p>
Wednesday	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 7: "Issue-Driven Musicals of the Turbulent Years", pp. 235-268</li> </ul>
Friday	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 13: "Rock Rolls In", pp. 298-317</li> </ul>
Monday	26	<p><u>Final Research Paper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work day</li> <li><b>Due date for <i>Spring Awakening</i> show essays.</b></li> <li><b>Due date for <i>La Cage aux Folles</i> show essays.</b></li> </ul>
Wednesday	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 8: "Fragmented Society, Fragmented Musicals", pp. 269-304</li> </ul>
Friday	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 14: "New Directions", pp. 318-341</li> </ul>
Monday	<b>April 2</b>	<p><u>Final Research Paper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work day</li> <li><b>Due date for <i>Chicago</i> show essays.</b></li> </ul>
Wednesday	4	<p><u>Final Research Paper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"First" Drafts due. 3 hard copies needed: instructor, peer reader, self.</li> </ul>
Friday	6	***** <b>EASTER BREAK</b> *****
Monday	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 9: "'A Recycled Culture', Nostalgia, and Spectacle", pp. 305-330</li> </ul>
Wednesday	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 15: "Spectacles and Boardrooms", pp. 342-369</li> <li><b>Due date for show essays or biographies.</b></li> </ul>
Friday	13	<p><u>Final Research Paper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work day</li> </ul>
Monday	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jones, Ch. 10: "New Voices, New Perspectives", pp. 331-358</li> </ul>
Wednesday	18	<p><u>Final Research Paper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work day</li> </ul>
Friday	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenrick, Ch. 16: "Musical Comedy Returns", pp. 370-382</li> </ul>

Monday	23	<u>Final Research Paper</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work day</li> </ul> <u>Musicals in Memphis:</u> <i>The Addams Family</i> April 24-29, 2012 The Orpheum Theatre
Wednesday	25	<u>Wrap-Up Discussion</u>
Friday	27	*****AWARDS CONVOCATION/URCAS*****
<b>Monday</b>	<b>30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Due date for <i>The Addams Family</i> show essays.</b></li> </ul>

Final Research Papers  
due  
Tuesday, May 1, 2012  
5:30pm