

**Raritan Valley Community College  
Academic Course Outline**

**THEA-107 HISTORY OF THEATER: CLASSICAL**

**I. Basic Course Information**

A. Course Number and Title: THEA-107 History of the Theatre: Classical

B. New or Modified Course: Modified

C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Spring Year: 2016

**D. Effective Term: Fall 2016**

E. Sponsoring Department: Visual & Performing Arts

F. Semester Credit Hours: 3

G: Weekly Contact Hours: Lecture: 3

Laboratory: 0

Out of class student work per week: 6

H. Prerequisites: None

I. Laboratory Fees: None

J. VAPA Chair: Dennis Russo, Co-Chair, Performing Arts,  
(908) 526-1200 x8391, drusso@raritanval.edu

**II. Catalog Description**

This course is a survey of theatre, beginning with pre-Greek ritual and extending through the seventeenth century. The course will address the historic, stylistic and cultural perspectives in the traditions of the Western theatre as a performance art communicating ideas, emotions, and experiences. Students may be required to attend a live performance.

**III. Statement of Course Need**

A. Theatre History is a core requirement in most theatre programs. The majority of four year schools require theatre majors to complete two semesters of theatre history.

B. This course generally transfers as an equivalent Theatre History course, or as a General Education course in the Humanities/Appreciation of the Arts.

#### IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. Free elective
- B. This course serves as a General Education course in the Humanities/Appreciation of the Arts.
- C. This course meets a program requirement for the Theatre Arts, A.A. in Liberal Arts.
- D. To see course transferability: a) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, [www.njtransfer.org](http://www.njtransfer.org); b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

#### V. Outline of Course Content

- A. Myth, ritual and theatre
- B. The Greek stage:  
The class will read and discuss plays such as: *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus, *Oedipus the King* (Sophocles), *Iphigeneia* (Euripedes) and *The Frogs* (Aristophanes).
- C. The Roman stage:  
The class will read and discuss a play such as: *The Menaechmi* (Plautus).
- D. The Medieval stage:  
The class will read and discuss a play such as *Everyman* (anonymous).
- E. A brief introduction to the theatre of Japan, China, and India
- F. The theatre of the Italian Renaissance and Commedia Dell'arte.
- G. The English Renaissance and Shakespeare:  
The class will read and discuss plays such as: *Doctor Faustus* (Christopher Marlowe), *Volpone* (Ben Johnson) and a number of tragedies and comedies by William Shakespeare.
- H. Moliere and Classical France:  
The class will read and discuss a play such as *The Misanthrope* (Moliere).
- I. The Restoration stage

#### VI. General Education and Course Learning Outcomes

##### A. General Education Learning Outcomes:

##### **At the completion of the course, students will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate both orally and in writing a comprehensive knowledge and critical aesthetic appreciation of the historical, stylistic and cultural development of the traditions and significance of the Western Theatre experience. (GE-NJ 1, 6, 7, \*)
2. Use general and/or discipline specific information sources to better identify, determine and apply research or information need. (GE-NJ IL)

## **B. Course Learning Outcomes:**

**At the completion of the course, students will be able to:**

1. Compare and contrast specific significant plays and playwrights throughout the historic periods studied.
2. Classify and evaluate the stylistic characteristics involved in the evolution of theatre styles and genres.
3. Relate historical information to the aesthetic evaluation of contemporary theatre.

(\* embedded critical thinking)

## **C. Assessment Instruments**

1. Selected readings/written assignments (research and/or evaluations)
2. Discussions/critiques
3. Research project/student oral presentation (required)

The primary formats, modes, and methods for teaching and learning are:

- A. Lecture/discussion
- B. Small-group work
- C. Student oral presentations
- D. Reading and written assignments

## **VII. Grade Determinants**

- A. Examinations
- B. Classroom participation (and attendance) in all projects, discussions and critiques (required)
- C. Completion of all written assignments (required)
- D. Research project/oral presentation (required)

## **VIII. Texts and Materials**

**Text:** (such as) *Living Theatre: A History* by Wilson and Goldfarb.

**Anthology of plays:** (such as) *The Longman Anthology of Drama*.

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

## **IX. Resources**

- A. Classroom equipped with media/projection systems.
- B. Library of video and DVD performances
- C. Library of plays/scripts