

English 389R WR Comedy and Theories of Comedy

Theater Studies 389R WR

Guidelines

Fall 2006
Emory College

Clark Lemons: Callaway S 103
Office Hrs: 12:45-1:30 T/Th

Objectives:

1. to gain an understanding and appreciation of the role of comedy in the imagination and in society
2. to explore the place of comedy in literary studies and the classic comic genres.
2. to develop a basic understanding of some important comic theories from Plato to the present
3. to improve one's ability to a) discuss, and b) write about comedy, particularly the comedy of the theater.

Methods:

- Introductory remarks by the instructor, particularly on the contexts of works and the development of significant questions about comedy
- Extensive class discussion of texts
- Frequent brief, factual quizzes
- Papers: two short analyses of a work on the syllabus and one longer analysis of several works incorporating some of the theory we've studied
- A Final Exam in essay format
- Theater trips
- Student-teacher conferences during office hours and by appointment at other times

Texts:

Candide and Related Texts, Voltaire. Hackett
Eight Great Comedies, ed. Sylvan Barnet Mentor
Lysistrata, Aristophanes. Dover Thrift
Four Great Restoration Comedies, by Wycherley and others. Dover
Three, Flannery O'Connor. Signet Classic
True West, Sam Shepard. Samuel French, Inc.
The Goat or Who is Sylvia, Edward Albee. Dramatists Play Service, Inc
The Misanthrope, Moliere. Broadway Play Publishing, Inc.

Requirements:

1. Since the course involves active class participation, I expect you to be in class every day, **on time**. Each absence will result in one point off the final grade per absence. However, you may miss two classes without penalty. These cuts should be used for illnesses and/or whatever is important to you. You do not need to get permission for these cuts, nor tell me when or why you take them. Participation in class depends on your own personal style, but it should include: active listening, responding to the instructor's and other students' comments, proposing interpretations, and answering questions. Some discussion may happen on the learnlink class conference.
2. The final exam, covering readings and our discussions of them, will consist of an in-class essay, graded for writing ability and content.

3. Quizzes are brief, factual and frequent. Since quizzes are directly related to the material to be discussed that day, **missed quizzes cannot be made up**; and a 0 is recorded if a quiz is not taken. The quizzes cover the reading assignments and the introductions to them, if any. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped so that taking your two cuts is not a grade penalty. **Tardiness means you will miss** the quiz given at the beginning of class.

4. Three papers. The first two will be short, informal reflection papers on one of the works we've read and discussed so far in the class. The final paper, 10 pages long, will be a comparative analysis of comic works on the syllabus that you find interesting supported by theoretical analysis

5. Presentations: one class group presentation on one work or series of related works from the syllabus or on something relevant to theories of comedy. Check with me before you choose a topic.

6. Keep track of your grades. I do not do averages until after the final exam is graded.

Grading Scale:

Papers-30% Quizzes-20% Final Exam-20% Participation-10% Presentation-10%

Schedule of Assignments

(subject to change)

Aug	31	Introduction to the course
Sept	5	Lysistrata Plato/Aristotle (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Sept	7	Langer (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Sept	12	The Clouds (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Sept	14	Mandragola (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Sept	19	Second Shepherds' Play (handout); Heywood & L.G. (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Sept	21	<u>Paper #1 Due.</u> Twelfth Night (Act I); (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Sept	26	Twelfth Night (Acts II-IV)
Sept	28	TBA
Oct	3	The Misanthrope (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Oct	5	Goldsmith "A Comparison of Laughing and Sentimental Comedy" (handout)
Oct	12	Restoration Comedy (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Oct	17	Restoration Comedy (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Oct	19	Candide
Oct	24	Candide
Oct	26	<u>Paper #2 Due.</u> Frye (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Nov	2	18 th Century Drama
Nov	7	Chesterton; The Importance of Being Ernest (both in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Nov	9	Dobree (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Nov	14	The Conversion of the Jews (handout)
Nov	16	O' Connor's Wiseblood
Nov	21	Langer (in <u>Eight Great</u>)
Nov	28	True West
Nov	30	Group/Individual Presentations
Dec	5	Group/Individual Presentations
Dec	7	The Goat or Who is Sylvia?
Dec	12	<u>Paper #3 Due.</u> Review
Dec	14-20	See Final Exam schedule