

English 389R Comedy and Theories of Comedy

Spring 2006
Oxford College

Dr. Lemons, Few 104
Office Hours: 3-4 T/Th; 2:30-3:30 M/W

Objectives:

1. to gain an understanding and appreciation of the role of comedy and of classic comic genres.
2. to develop an understanding of the development of comic theories from Plato to the present
3. to improve one's ability to a) discuss, and b) write about: novels, short stories, plays, criticism, and film

Methods:

- Introductory remarks, particularly on the contexts; and questions
- Extensive class discussion of texts
- Frequent brief, factual quizzes
- Papers: one analysis of a type of comedy with several examples from the syllabus
- A Final Exam in essay format
- One or two theater field trips to Theater Emory and/or Shakespeare Tavern
- Student-teacher conferences during office hours and by appointment

Guidelines:

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 you believe important. 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: paying attention, listening, responding to the professor's and other students' comments, proposing interpretations, and answering questions. This is not a lecture class.
2. The Mid Term & Final exams, covering readings and our discussions, will consist of in-class essay(s), graded for writing ability as well as content. The Mid Term will cover the first half of the course, the Final the second half. You will not be able to use your text book or notes during the exam.
3. Quizzes are brief, factual and frequent. *Missed quizzes cannot be made up*; and a 0 is recorded if a quiz is not taken. The quizzes cover the plays, the introductions to plays and play reviews in the texts. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped so that missing two classes is not a penalty. *Tardiness means you will miss* the quiz given at the beginning of class.
4. The paper, 8 pages long, will comparative analysis of comic works from various genres supported by theoretical (critical) analysis based on your own thinking and that of comedy experts we will read
5. Presentations: one class group presentation on one item from the syllabus
6. Keep track of your grades. I do not do averages until after the final exam is graded.

Grading Scale

Quizzes-20%	Paper-20%
Mid Term-15%	Final Exam-25%

Participation-10%

Presentation-10%