History of the American Musical
Course Syllabus
THR 471W
Spring 2008

Sam Houston State University
Department of Theatre and Dance
THR 232.01
MWF 11:00 a.m.-11:50 a.m.
AB4307
Text: Musical! A Grand Tour by Denny Martin Flinn

Instructor – Dr. Laura Avery
Office – Smith-Kirkley, Room G21
MWF 11:00 a.m.-11:50 a.m.
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an examination of the history and development of the structures of the American musical. It is designed to familiarize the student with the genre of musical theatre, highlighting its evolution as an American stage tradition.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Students will be given a list of topics for each area of study covered in class. Students will be asked to prepare a brief informational sketch about each topic. This information should be kept in a notebook. The information will appear on class quizzes and in performance presentations.

2. Class time will allow for viewing of and listening to recorded footage of historical performances. Students will be expected to record the names of the performers and performances in a notebook. The information will appear on class quizzes.

3. Students will be asked to attend the SHSU production of Full Monty, one off campus professional musical theatre production and one additional musical theatre production. Students will be asked to write a 3-5 page response for each production viewed. Late papers will not be accepted. Papers should be typed and double-spaced; Times New Roman or Arial font size 12, with one-inch margins and MLA formatting.

4. Students will be given the opportunity to present a final 15-minute lecture performance on a topic selected from a list of topics prepared by Dr. Avery. Students will be required to write a paper to accompany to the performance. The paper should be 10 pages in length. Late papers will not be accepted. Papers should be typed and double-spaced; Times New Roman or Arial font size 12, with one-inch margins and MLA formatting. The presentation should include moments of lecture and performance. Group presentation is permitted.

5. Students’ success in the class is based on daily preparation and participation. If you don’t attend, you can’t contribute and your grade will suffer.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

If you are absent from more than three (3) classes, your final grade will be reduced by two (2) points for each absence. Tardiness is unacceptable. If you are tardy three (3) times, that equals one absence. Excessive tardiness will result in a reduction of your final grade.
RULES OF CONDUCT:

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus impedes the mission of the university. Please turn off or mute your cellular phone and/or pager before class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, talking among each other at inappropriate times, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy. Please talk to me prior to class if you would like to bring a visitor to class.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy   University policy states that if any student must be absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day, they must notify their instructor by the 12th calendar day after the first day of the semester.

Americans with Disabilities Act   SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk to me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center by calling (936) 294-1720.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

| Topic information list - worth 10/each | 180 |
| Assignments- worth 15 /each | 135 |
| Response papers- worth 20/each | 60 |
| Final Project- worth 55 (paper 30/presentation 25) | 55 |
| Class Participation | 20 |
| **Total** | **450** |
Spring 2008
Course Calendar
History of the American Musical

January
16 W. Syllabus/Intro. Video
18 F. NO CLASS
21 M. Martin Luther King Day  NO CLASS
23 W. Part I:  Chapter 1
25 F. **DUE:** presentation of Greek collages
28 M. Chapter 2 and our own “newspaper” play
30 W. Presentation of Newspaper Plays

February
1 F. Chapter 3
   **DUE:** a 1-2 page paper discussing Queen Elizabeth and musical theatre: What’s the link?
4 M. Renaissance Dance
6 W. Commedia Dell’arte
   **DUE:** a 1-2 page paper discussing Molière’s impact on musical theatre
8 F. Chapter 4/ *Beggar’s Opera*
11 M. Finish *Beggar’s Opera*
13 W. Chapter 5/ *H.M.S. Pinafore*
15 F. Finish *H.M.S. Pinafore*
18 M. Part 2: Chapters 6 and 7/ *Black Crook*
   **DUE:** a 1-2 page paper discussing operettas influence on musical theatre
20 W. Chapter 8/ *Ziegfeld Video*
22 F. Irving Berlin and Fanny Brice Video and Berlin Songs
   **DUE:** a 2-3 page paper on Ziegfeld’s impact on musical theatre as it relates to revues
25 M. Chapter 9/ *Cohan Video and George M! Songs*
27 W. Busby Berkeley/ *For Me and My Gal* film
   **DUE:** a 2-3 page paper on Cohan and Vaudeville’s influence on musical theatre
29 F. Chapter 11/ *Show Boat Video*

March
3 M. *Show Boat* film
5 W. Chapter 10/ Jerome Kern Video
   **DUE:** a 1-2 page paper on *Show Boat’s* significance
7 F. NO CLASS
10 M. Spring Break
12 W. Spring Break
14 F. Spring Break
17 M. Video “Syncopated City” (60-minute video)
19 W. Chapter 12/ *Porgy and Bess* Video
21 F. Good Friday NO CLASS
24 M. *Porgy and Bess* film
   **DUE:** a 1-2 page paper on *Porgy and Bess*’ significance
26 W. Rodgers & Hart Video and Songs
28 F. Cole Porter/ *Delovely*
31 M. Chapter 13/ “Oh, What a Beautiful Morning” Video (60-minute Video)

April
2 W. *On the Town*, Rodgers & Hammerstein, *Kiss Me Kate, Guys and Dolls, My Fair Lady Video*
   **DUE:** Off Campus Performance Papers
4 F. Chapter 14/ *West Side Story* Video
7 M. Chapters 15-18/ 1960-1980 Video
9 W. Chapter 26/ Sondheim Video and Performances
11 F. Chapters 19 and 20/ “Putting it Together” (60-minute video)
14 M. Tony Performances
16 W. Chapters 22, 23, and 24/ Partnering exercise
18 F. DUE: Partnering Presentations
21 M. Chapter 16
23 W. Chapter 25 and Finale Ultimo
25 F. Final Presentations Begin
28 M. Final Presentations Continue
   DUE: Full Monty Paper
30 W. Final Presentations Continue

May
2 F. Final Presentations Continue
5 M. Final Presentations Continue
7 W. Final Presentations Conclude

Final TBA