



## Theatre in Britain: From the Globe to the West End

### Faculty Contact Information

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Office Hour information:**

### Course Information

#### Course Description

This course uses current London productions to introduce elements of theatre production including place, space, audience and actors, and directorial interpretation. Topics discussed include the structure of the theatre sector in the UK; historical contexts and movements; political and ethical questions (e.g. the issue of public subsidy for the arts); and core principles of dramatic writing. The course discusses important writers and, where appropriate, the wider movements of which they are a part. It also discusses plays visited during the course and some fundamental aspects of dramaturgy. This is complemented by a closer scrutiny of texts seen as representative of British theatre's journey towards its contemporary condition.

#### Course Goals

To contextualise contemporary British theatre within a survey of theatre theory and practice through both objective and subjective approaches. Students develop an ability to write critical prose and to differentiate between the author's contribution to the experience of theatre and that of directors and actors as well as understanding the contribution of an audience to a performance.

#### Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will:

1. Summarise the network of relationships that constitute contemporary British Theatre and contrast key distinctions between The West End, subsidised theatre, and fringe.
2. Critique theatrical performances with an appreciation of technical terminology and theoretical perspectives.
3. Interpret the aesthetic, academic, and political debates in contemporary British theatre.
4. Explain the creative and practical processes that go into making a piece of theatre.

### Course Assignments, Grading, and Assessment

| Assignment                         | Percentage | Grading Requirements         |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|
| Attendance and Participation       | 20%        |                              |
| British Theatre History Assignment | 20%        | Please see rubric on MyStudy |

|                       |     |                              |
|-----------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| <b>Play Review</b>    | 15% | Please see rubric on MyStudy |
| <b>Research Paper</b> | 25% | Please see rubric on MyStudy |
| <b>Final Exam</b>     | 20% |                              |

## Brief Assessment Overview

### Assessment 1: British Theatre History Assignment

#### Due:

Students will choose a period or event in history that has had a significant impact on British theatre. The period or event should be one where the social and political context can be seen as a driving force in British theatre's journey towards its contemporary condition. You should pick a notable production that corresponds with this time period and make a short film (5–7 mins), podcast (5–7 mins) or write a 1000-word paper analysing the impact on and significance for contemporary British theatre.

### Assessment 2: Theatre Review

#### Due:

(Note: A long review in the *Evening Standard* is 380 words and in *The Guardian* 400 words)

The play review will be based either on a play you have seen as part of this course or since you have arrived in London. This review should be written for the academically minded reader, such as *The Guardian*. In addition to the review, you should include information about the theatre or theatre company which created the production, such as history, style, other productions, and the creative process of the show.

### Assessment 3: Research Paper

#### Due:

Each student will select a contemporary British play (from 1945 until present) that embodies one of the main types of theatre discussed in the course: the West End musical or play, NT or subsidised theatre commissioned work, 'In yer face' or experimental theatre, or a fringe production. Students should discuss the themes of the play, specifically in relationship to larger issues within a British social context, such as post-colonialism, feminism, race relations, religious or cultural identity, the politics of class, urban youth, LGBT rights, freedom of press, human rights, environment and sustainability, etc.

The introduction should provide a 'hook' to draw in the reader and include a thesis statement about what will be argued in the paper. The body paragraphs should include the history of the play and playwright, along with the background of the first (and subsequent) productions of the play. Additionally, the genre of the piece and where it fits within other plays of its type should be discussed. This could include how it was received, by reviewers and the public, when it was first performed and perhaps how it is viewed now. Finally, the major themes of the play should be analysed, looking at what the play says about modern Britain. The paper should end with a conclusion, wrapping up the main ideas of the paper.

### Assessment 4: Final Exam

#### Date:

The final exam will last 2 hours. These will be a combination of short answer and essay style questions. This will include topics from the lectures and class discussions as well as questions directly from the productions.

## Grading

| Grade   | Knowledge & Content   | Methodology & Structure,<br>Language & Style   | Understanding, Reflection & Critique  | Integrative thinking & demonstration of experiential learning   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>A</b> (93- 100%)<br><b>A-</b> (90-92%)                     | Interesting topic handled with intelligence, originality, and depth; wealth of supporting material, smoothly integrated into the text; tone is evident and maintained throughout; no factual inaccuracies       | Material is unified and well focused; organization is clear, logical and purposeful throughout the essay; well-chosen examples. Uses sophisticated sentences effectively; usually chooses words aptly; observes conventions of written English and manuscript format; makes few minor or technical errors  | Well-chosen examples; persuasive reasoning used to develop and support thesis consistently: uses quotations and citations effectively; causal connections between ideas are evident                   | Gives full insight into the nature of an event, experience, or artifact; achieves complete integration of knowledge from diverse disciplines to interpret an issue. Shows clear understanding of cultural impact through appropriate examples |
| <b>B+</b> (87-89%)<br><b>B</b> (83-86%)<br><b>B-</b> (80-82%) | Content is above average; worthwhile topic; satisfactory depth of development; supporting details for the thesis and topic sentences are specific, concrete, and plentiful; has only minor factual inaccuracies | Material is unified and well focused; pattern of organization is clear, logical, and well executed; makes an effort to organize paragraphs topically. Some mechanical difficulties or stylistic problems; may make occasional problematic word choices or awkward syntax errors; a few spelling or punctuation errors or cliché; usually presents quotations effectively | Pursues thesis consistently: develops a main argument with clear major points and appropriate textual evidence and supporting detail; makes an effort to organize paragraphs topically                | Gives some insights into the nature of an event, experience, or artifact; achieves partial integration of knowledge from diverse disciplines to interpret an issue; some understanding of cultural impact through appropriate examples        |
| <b>C+</b> (77-79%)<br><b>C</b> (73-76%)<br><b>C-</b> (70-72%) | Worthwhile topic; supporting material for thesis and topic sentences is general and abstract rather than specific and concrete; most information is correct   | Organization is clear, logical, and coherent; some ideas unsupported; fails to integrate quotations appropriately. More frequent wordiness; several unclear or awkward sentences; imprecise use of words or over-reliance on passive voice; one or two major grammatical errors  | Only partially develops the argument; shallow analysis; some ideas and generalizations undeveloped or unsupported; makes limited use of textual evidence; fails to integrate quotations appropriately | Able to explain to a limited extent, the quality of a performance, event, or artifact; gives few insights into event, experience; discusses few qualities of an experience; a limited understanding of cultural impact with few examples      |

|                   |   |   |  |   |
|-------------------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>D (60-69%)</b> | Trivial subject; very few supporting details for the thesis and topic sentences; has some correct & incorrect information                           | Not logically organized; digresses from one topic to another; no clear organizational pattern. Some major grammatical or proofreading errors (subject-verb agreement; sentence fragments); language marred by clichés | Frequently only narrates; digresses from one topic to another without developing ideas or terms; makes insufficient or awkward use of textual evidence | Little integration of experience and narrative; limited insight of issues and insufficient understanding of cultural impact |
| <b>F (0-59%)</b>  | Consists of unsupported generalities and/or the repetition of commonplace ideas; lacks originality and insight; information is inaccurate or absent | Does not follow the instructions; rambling, disorganized and incoherent. Numerous grammatical errors  | Little or no development; may list incorrect facts or misinformation; uses no quotations or fails to cite sources or plagiarizes                       | Little or no integration experience and narrative; lack of insight and fails to understand cultural impact                  |

### Policies specific to this course

- **Co-curricular Activities and Field Trips:** Field trips for your FIE courses have been planned to help students achieve the learning objectives of the course and are required. They take place during class time unless otherwise notes. Details about required visits appear on the class by class schedule below. Please note that any make up for missed co-curricular activities are at the personal expense of the student.
- **Late submission of work:** Written work may be submitted later than the due date only with express permission from the faculty. Credit is not given for work received late, except in exceptional circumstances of personal illness or similar (which must be made known to FIE at the time). Documentation of exceptional circumstances from a third party, such as a doctor's note, may be required. Any extensions made beyond the last class meeting must be committed to writing and include information on the exceptional circumstances that require the extension, the nature of work yet to be submitted, and the date by which the work will be received. If said work is not received by the agreed extension date, barring further exceptional circumstances, the work will not be given credit.
- **Late arrivals to class or site visit:** Please arrive on time. Lateness, particularly on days with co-curricular visits, results in missed course material. Faculty may use their discretion to mark a student as 'Absent' if they feel the student has arrived too late or left too early to be considered 'Present' for that session.
- **Trigger Warnings:** Some topics covered in class may expose students to past traumas and evoke a negative reaction. Sensitive topics can vary, such as sexual violence, death, racism, or xenophobia. I want this to be an inclusive space where every student feels comfortable; therefore, I will provide content warnings before lectures for sensitive subject matters. Content warnings are meant to give students a forewarning so they can prepare for their emotional safety. It is important to note that anything in the environment could be a trigger for someone's trauma, such as smell, sound, or texture; it is impossible to account for all possible triggers, and ask for grace as I do my best as an educator to warn students of potentially distressing content during lectures, assignments and/or discussions.

## Attendance and Participation

- Regular attendance is essential in order to pass a course. A class constitutes lectures, student presentations, discussions, seminars, co-curricular activities, tests, and examinations. In addition, under UK Home Office regulations class attendance is mandatory.
- Class attendance and participation is formally recorded and incorporated into a student's final grade.
- In addition to physical presence in class, a student's participation in a class is evaluated on the mastery of assigned course readings as reflected in a consistent, valid contribution to class discussions, in-class exercises, and in asking questions that enrich the on-going discourse. Consistency and validity in participation is expected in every class. Limited participation will have a negative impact on a student's participation score.
- When unexpected events cause students to miss a class, it is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the faculty member to notify them in advance, or as soon as is reasonably possible.
- Absence from class does not relieve a student of responsibility for assignments. Students bear the ultimate responsibility for all missed class material and assessment.
- If a student misses 25% or more of a course, then they may be awarded a failure for the course and/or not permitted to finish the course.
- [See the full attendance policy here](#)

## Required Readings

Smtih, A. (2014). *London Theatre Report*. Society of London Theatre/National Theatre.

Available for free download from

<https://www.londontheatre1.com/londontheatrereportv7.pdf>

*Additional texts for this course change according to what is being performed.*

Students will be given weekly readings in class as handouts. Additionally, students will be expected to buy a contemporary play of their choice which will form the basis of their final paper.

## Additional Resources and Readings

Billington, M. (2009). *State of the Nation: British Theatre since 1945*. Faber and Faber.

## MyStudy@FIE

MyStudy@FIE is FIE's virtual learning environment based on the open-source platform Moodle. Students are required to access MyStudy@FIE for course information, readings, link to resources, assignment submissions and communication with faculty.

## FIE's Values in the Curriculum

A unique aspect to FIE's curriculum is our courses reflect an engagement with values of 1) knowledge and inclusivity, 2) ethics and human rights, 3) social and cultural engagement, and 4) sustainability. For information about each of these values and how each of FIE's courses aligns with them, please see [Our Values](#).

## Topics

- Introduction – What is theatre?
- The legacy of Shakespeare
- Theatre histories
- The structure of the British theatre landscape
- The role of the reviewer
- Theatrical language

## Possible co-curricular activities

- Attending evening theatre performances each week across a variety of types, including subsidized, West End, and fringe.
- Backstage theatre tours such as the National Theatre and the Globe Theatre
- Visiting relevant museums and exhibitions, such as the Theatre & Performance collection at the V&A

## Academic Integrity

By enrolling at FIE, you have joined an academic community and you are expected and required to act honestly regarding the work you submit for assessment in your courses. Academic integrity is closely related to the concept of good academic practice.

Any attempts to Cheat; Fabricate; Plagiarise; Collaborate without Authorisation; Participate in Academically Dishonest Activities; and/or Facilitate Academic Dishonesty will be viewed as a breach of this regulation.

[Please see FIE's Academic Integrity Policy in full.](#)

Most students do not have any problems understanding the rules and expectations about acting honestly at university. If you have any questions you must talk to your faculty or a member of FIE's Academic Team.

## Writing and Language Support

FIE's Writing Support Tutors are available to assist students of all levels of expertise with all phases of the writing process. Available year-round and to all students. To book an appointment or for more information visit [www.fie.org.uk/wst](http://www.fie.org.uk/wst).

Please note that FIE allows the use of a foreign language/English dictionary in exam situations for students where English is not their primary language UNLESS the use of the dictionary would

give the student a significant advantage (e.g. where the exam is aimed at getting the students to define terms that might be found in the dictionary).

### Accommodations for Students

Students who wish to use academic accommodations at FIE can register to do so via FIE's Administration Team, by providing the appropriate supporting documentation. Students who have approved FIE academic accommodations should discuss them directly with their faculty member(s) within or around the first few class sessions, or via email. Exams are facilitated by FIE faculty and students should give 2 weeks' notice to faculty members if use of approved exam accommodations is required. The Administration team can assist students and faculty with liaison and facilitation as needed.

### Additional Policies and Resources

#### Mental Health and Stress Management Support

FIE's qualified and accredited counselor is Dr Deborah Hill, who offers appointments via video call and over the phone. The first three appointments are free of charge and ongoing sessions can be arranged directly with Dr Hill. To make an appointment with Dr Hill, simply email [studentlife@fie.org.uk](mailto:studentlife@fie.org.uk).

If you have a counselor from back home that you are seeing, we strongly encourage you to maintain contact with them throughout your time studying abroad with FIE.

#### Diversity and Inclusivity

FIE regards its housing and classroom facilities as safe spaces to live, study, and work with students, faculty, and staff who are understanding, supportive, and trustworthy. Inappropriate, derogatory comments and/or actions, harassment, bullying, victimisation and discrimination are not tolerated. Any such behaviour will be investigated and dealt with appropriately. Students must be respectful of diverse opinions and of all class members regardless of personal attribute and use inclusive language in written and oral work.