

Script Analysis

Syllabus

This course is for actors, designers, directors, and theatre technicians who want to develop skills in the reading of dramatic texts for theatre production. We will examine how basic dramatic structures and specific theatrical approaches invite choices for theatre makers. Students will learn how to make production decisions informed by careful and insightful readings of the script.

As the author of our textbook, Will Dunne, reminds us, “Analysis is the process of a breaking down any whole into its parts to learn what they are, what they do, and how they relate to one another.” In this class you will learn to take a play and break it down into its parts in order to successfully realize that play on the stage.

TEXTBOOKS

Required

Dunne, Will. *The Architecture of Story*. Chicago, U of Chicago Press, 2016

Ruhl, Sarah. *The Clean House – Acting Edition*. New York, Samuel French, 2007

Additional plays selected by the student from guidelines provided.

Additional links to supplemental readings will be provided.

Optional

Parks, Suzan-Lori. *Topdog/Underdog – Acting Edition*. New York, Dramatists, 2004

Shanley, John Patrick. *Doubt: A Parable – Acting Edition*. New York, Dramatists, 2007

Ball, David. *Backwards & Forwards*. Carbondale, SIU Press, 1983.

COURSE GOALS & STRUCTURE

- To become familiar with the basic compositional elements of dramatic texts
- To understand how these elements function to create an engaging play
- To use script analysis techniques to apply to theatre production

This course begins with an introductory module and concludes with a major project. The bulk of the course consists of four modules each containing 2-4 lessons. The Introductory Module must be completed before these four modules can be accessed. Modules I - IV can be accessed and completed in any order but must be completed before the Major Project can begin.

I - Framework Analysis

II - Analysis of Elements

III - Contextual Analysis

IV - Action Analysis