

# Music 105-The American Musical

Spring 2017

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Office hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Class meeting times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00-10:20 AM; #132 Music B (Fulkerson Recital Hall)

**Course Overview:** This course will be a journey through 100+ years of American History through the lens of one of its most endearing and enduring art forms, the Musical. We'll examine this winning singing/dancing/acting combination that has delighted audiences for generations while also exploring how issues of race, socio-economic status, religion, gender and sexual orientation were addressed (or noticeably absent) within the art form.

## Course Goals:

- To become familiar with the scope and nature of Musical Theater in America, from its early roots through the present day
- To study the stories, music, dance and other important components of some of the most influential musicals
- To become familiar with vocabulary specific to the genre of Musical Theater
- To examine the treatment of the issues of race, socio-economic status, religion, gender and sexual orientation within the genre

## Learning Objectives:

- To speak and write effectively about the American Musical, using the tools of both critical analysis and personal preference
- To identify correctly specific important shows, composers, lyricists, songs and characters as presented during the course of the semester
- To gain, through comprehensive study, a greater appreciation of the genre of the American Musical

## Required Texts:

*Broadway: The American Musical*, 10th edition (2010)  
by Michael Kantor and Laurence Maslon

This is the companion book to the PBS series of the same name (2004). We will watch the 6-part series in class as an introduction and overview to each historical era we will examine.

You may share a book with one other person enrolled in the class this semester. (Students sharing a book will be asked to identify their partner, and both must share equally in the responsibility for ensuring the book comes to every class session.) Books may be purchased online (around \$20-25 used) or directly from the instructor while supplies last. Books must be obtained no later than **Tuesday, Jan. 31**.

## Grading:

30% Attendance (including punctuality) and Participation in all class discussions & activities (Note: this portion of the grade includes attitude and overall deportment as well as daily preparation.)

30% Tests (2 total, worth 15% each)

20% Paper (6-8 Pages plus a "facts" sheet for each musical included; due toward the end of the semester as indicated on class schedule; details will be distributed in class 4 weeks prior to due date)

20% Final exam at time specified in HSU calendar; comprehensive and “open-note,” primarily in essay format

\*Opportunity for Extra Credit: Each member of the class may attend a full-length performance of a live musical before the end of the semester and add 10 points to any one written assignment (tests, paper or final exam). In order to receive extra credit, students must: attend the entire performance, save ticket stub and program, and answer the instructor’s questions (verbal-not written).

Attendance policy:

After the first day of class, Jan. 17, you are allowed 3 unexcused absences with no grading penalty.

Each additional unexcused absence will lower the grade for Attendance and Participation by 20%.

Note: Students missing 7 or more classes without a serious, compelling **and excused** reason cannot receive higher than a “D” in the course-no exceptions! An excused absence is one that meets all of the following criteria: a serious and compelling medical reason with written documentation **or** HSU sponsored event with documentation (such as a class field trip or out-of-town conference with another instructor), **and** advance notification to the instructor of **this course** of the absence. Missing class because you are slightly “under the weather” and e-mailing your instructor afterward does **not count** as an excused absence. Leaving early for Spring break does **not count** as an excused absence. Plan ahead and choose your days to be absent carefully.

Classroom expectations:

- Students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared to participate fully in all class activities
- Students arriving late will be counted absent at the following rate: 3 late arrivals = 1 absence
- All present (students and instructor) agree to treat every individual with respect at all times.
- When discussing, listening to, or viewing sensitive material that may cause strong emotional reactions, students may reserve the right to be excused temporarily (without any penalty) during the class session to breathe and regain balance.

Instructor Diversity Statement:

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and I welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

### Area C Goals

The Arts and Humanities seeks to integrate intellect, imagination, sensibility and receptivity in reflection upon human experience. Courses in Area C should assist and inspire students to cultivate and refine their affective and cognitive responses so they can consciously recognize and embody their experiences and their expressions of human existence. Through studying and responding to the great works of human imagination, and through experiencing individual aesthetic and creative processes, students can gain balance through integration of their intellectual, emotional, and creative responses, thereby, enhancing their understanding and appreciation of human life.

### Area C Objectives

All courses shall accomplish the following in a discipline-specific manner.

1. To understand human experience through the development of the ability to recognize and test relationships between particular instances and facts, and general principles and concepts.
2. To develop and/or increase one’s subjective responses to humanistic and/or artistic

works, including analysis of disciplinary standards of judgment (contemporary and/or historically) in humanistic and artistic areas.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: 1/17 & 1/19 Introduction & Overview; (Announcement: *Oklahoma* opens at NCRT in Eureka 1/19); Episode #1: "Give My Regards to Broadway" (1893-1927); *Showboat*

Week 2: 1/24 & 1/26 Episode #2 "Syncopated City" (1919-1933); *The Jazz Singer*; minstrel shows and cultural appropriation; Irving Berlin

Week 3: 1/31 & 2/2 Episode #3 "I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'" (1930-1942); *Anything Goes*; *Porgy and Bess*; *The Cradle Will Rock*; *Pal Joey*; *This is the Army*

Week 4: 2/7 & 2/9 Episode #4 "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'" (1943-1960); *Oklahoma*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; *South Pacific*; *Guys and Dolls*

Week 5: 2/14 & 2/16 *The King and I*; *My Fair Lady*; *The Sound of Music*; *Oliver!*

Week 6: 2/21 & 2/23 **Test #1 on Tuesday**; Episode #5 "Tradition" (1957-1979); *West Side Story*

Week 7: 2/28 & 3/2 *Fiddler on the Roof*; *Hair*; *Pippin*; *Grease*

Week 8: 3/7 & 3/9 *The Wiz*; *A Chorus Line*; *Chicago*; *Cabaret*; *Sweeney Todd*

*Spring Break (Go somewhere sunny and warm!)*

Week 9: 3/21 & 3/23 Episode #6: "Putting it Together" (1980-present); *Cats*; *La Cage aux Folles*; *Les Misérables*

Week 10: 3/28 & 3/30 Paper details distributed on Tuesday; *The Phantom of the Opera*; *Miss Saigon*

Week 11: 4/4 & 4/6 *Floyd Collins*; *Rent*; **Test #2 on Thursday**

Week 12: 4/11 & 4/13 *The Producers*; *Urinetown*; *Hairspray*; Disney

Week 13: 4/18 & 4/20 (No Class meeting on Tuesday 4/18; Elisabeth traveling); *In the Heights*; Other amazing Musicals I had to leave out (too numerous to list here!)

Week 14: 4/25 & 4/27 *Avenue Q*; *The Book of Mormon*; **Papers due on Thursday by 5:00 PM**

Week 15: 5/2 & 5/4 *Hamilton the Musical*; Wrap-up; Review for **final**