



# Survey of Musical Theatre

## *Development of American Musical Theatre*

St. Catherine University  
THR 4994 / Fall 2013 / 4 credits  
M / W / F – 12:15-1:20 PM, Music Building 106

| <u>Professor</u>  | <u>Contact Info</u>   | <u>Office/Office Hrs</u>                                  |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Dr. Pamyla Stiehl | Email: <a href="mailto:pastiehl@stkate.edu">pastiehl@stkate.edu</a><br>651-690-6681 | Music Building 206<br>T / W / TH 3:30-4:30 by appointment |

### COURSE OVERVIEW:

**DESCRIPTION:** This course explores musical theatre in America and its relation to a continually changing social and cultural milieu by examining significant works in the musical canon, as well as their creators, performers, and productions. The course will follow a chronological organization to assist the student in following the development of musical theatre during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the 21<sup>st</sup>, while crucially addressing the genre's ancestry, significance, influences, and contributions in regard to race, ethnicity, religion, culture, class, and history, as well as relevant aspects of theatre/performance theory and musicology.

**GOALS:** The goal of this course is to help you better appreciate, analyze and evaluate musical theatre as an art form and practice. Viewing musical theatre videos and live productions, along with required readings, writing assignments, in-class presentations, and creative projects will provide a platform by which you should become familiar with, as well as fully engage and examine, the history, development, import, and current manifestations of this particular genre.

**OBJECTIVES:** Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to

- Identify canonical musical theatre works, as well as their creators, surrounding milieus, developments, constructs, and components;
- Apply, challenge, and expound upon your acquired musical theatre knowledge in essays and critiques;
- Research and present profiles of iconic musical theatre performers in an engaging, yet academic manner;
- Demonstrate an understanding as to the historical, cultural, and sociopolitical context of musical theatre works and argue as to how such contexts still inform the reception of the works today;
- Actively and analytically engage in the arena of live theatre by attending and critiquing musical theatre productions in the Twin Cities;
- Create your own original musical on paper as a written concept with accompanying visual or audio materials.

### TEXTS AND RESOURCES:

- Textbook = PDF version of *Backstage Pass* (unedited preliminary manuscript) on D2L (if you desire hardcopy versions of reading assignments, you will need to print the material yourself)
- Core viewing videos available through media library/reserve desk (scheduled group viewings described on following page and may be subject to change once class discusses options)

**LIVE PRODUCTION ATTENDANCE:** You are required to attend **ONE** of the following two live musical productions in the Twin Cities. Please check dates and times (all theatre websites provide travel directions, including public transportation options). *We may also discuss going to the production together as a class:*

1) **Fiddler on the Roof** at Chanhassen Dinner Theatres, **opens 9/27(open-ended run)**; Tues-Sunday (check website for dinner and show times as they vary throughout the week). Tickets range \$47-\$82 (depending on seating and dinner; "show only" tickets are available 10 days prior to performance) – reserve tickets by phone **952-934-1525 or 800-362-3515 or online at [www.chanhassentheatres.com](http://www.chanhassentheatres.com)**. *There is a box office link on D2L under "Theatre Links."*

3) **Steerage Song** premiered by Theater Latté Da (at The Lab Theatre), **running 9/25-10/20 (Previews 9/25-27)**; Weds-Sat evenings at 7:30; Sun 2:00 matinee. Price \$31-45 (except for opening night) – reserve single show tickets by phone **612-339-3003 (hours 9-5:00 Mon-Fri) and ask about student discounts**. Theatre information found at **[www.theaterlatteda.com](http://www.theaterlatteda.com)**. *There is a box office link on D2L under "Theatre Links."*

**Course Prerequisite:** It is helpful but NOT mandatory (or crucial) to have some familiarity with the performing arts, as well as theatre, music, or dance terminology.

## CORE VIEWINGS:

In addition to textbook readings, you are also required to watch video/film versions of the 13 musicals listed below. There are several different ways to watch the assigned videos:

**1. Group Viewings in Library:** *There will be scheduled group viewings of the assigned videos at the library each Saturday at 10:00 a.m. in Media Viewing Room #107. The video to be played is the one scheduled for the following week. The room is only scheduled for 3 hours so viewing needs to start at 10:00 sharp. Out of courtesy to others, all viewers must arrive on time. NOTE: It is up to you, the viewers, to retrieve the DVD from the library reserves/media desk and play it.*

**2. Media Reserves in Library:** *If you cannot make the scheduled group viewing, the DVDs / VHSs of the core videos will be available at the library reserves/media desk for you to watch individually on an in-library basis. As you may not be the only one planning to watch the video independently and there is only one copy on reserve, you will want to plan your time accordingly. (I also have MP4 file versions of some of the videos that I could loan you if it is an emergency.)*

**3. Rental, other libraries, or online sites:** Most of these videos are available as DVD rentals and can be ordered through providers such as Netflix. Some can be found for free on various sites online (for example, the 1936 *Show Boat* is available in 18 parts on YouTube.) If using this method, BE SURE TO WATCH THE CORRECT VERSION OF THE SHOW.

The following are the core video viewings you are required to watch this semester:

| <u>Format</u> | <u>Musical</u>                             | <u>Version/Description</u>  |
|---------------|--|---|
| DVD / MP4     | <i>Show Boat</i> (1927)                    | 1936 film, 110 min.   |
| DVD           | <i>Crazy for You</i> (1992)                | 1999 PBS <b>Great Performances</b> television broadcast                     |
| DVD / MP4     | <i>Oklahoma!</i> (1943)                    | 1999 version (Royal National Theatre w/Hugh Jackman)                        |
| VHS / MP4     | <i>Kiss Me, Kate</i> (1948)                | 2003 stage revival (147 min.)   |
| DVD / MP4     | <i>My Fair Lady</i> (1956)                 | major motion picture (170 min.)   |
| DVD / MP4     | <i>West Side Story</i> (1957)              | major motion picture (150 min.)   |
| VHS           | <i>Gypsy</i> (1959)                        | (Bette Midler version)  |
| DVD / MP4     | <i>Fiddler on the Roof</i> (1964)          | major motion picture (3 hours)  |
| VHS / MP4     | <i>Chicago</i> (1975)                      | 2002 movie version, directed by Rob Marshall (113 min.)                     |
| DVD           | <i>Phantom of the Opera</i> (1986)         | Filmed live version at the Royal Albert Hall (2011) – not the movie version |
| DVD           | <i>Rent</i> (1996)                         | Filmed Live on Broadway (2009) – not the movie version                      |
| DVD           | <i>Sweeney Todd</i> (1979)                 | 2007 movie version (w/Johnny Depp) OR                                       |
|               |  | the live Broadway version starring Angela Lansbury                          |
| DVD           | <i>Show Business: The Road to Broadway</i> | 2004 musical documentary  |

# COURSE REQUIREMENTS

## 1. ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION / CITIZENSHIP:

**Attendance:** Attendance will be taken every day and is 10% of your grade. Absences can be excused if formal documentation is provided (e.g., doctor's note, court notice, obituary with travel itinerary) or if I am notified as to a religious observance conflict. In addition, if a pattern of tardiness becomes apparent, I may dock your attendance grade accordingly, with one warning. If attendance is going to be a problem, please do yourself a favor and drop this class.

**Participation / Citizenry:** Participation in this seminar is crucial. Responsible participation and good citizenry includes attentive viewing of video/media material and active listening to the lecture and your classmates; while timeliness is a sign of respect and courtesy to the entire class. **Further, if you are asked questions about assigned readings and viewings and cannot respond, it will affect your participation grade.** Following is the **10-point grading rubric:**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 9-10 | Actively participated, often contributed to discussions, on time, and courteous/attentive of others |
| 8-9  | Dutifully participated, semi-regularly contributed to discussions, on time, and courteous/attentive |
| 7-8  | Seldom participated, occasionally contributed to discussions, on time, and courteous/attentive      |
| 6-7  | Participated and contributed only when absolutely required, on time, and courteous/attentive        |
| 0-6  | Failed in regards to participation, contribution, promptness, and/or courtesy/attention             |

**2. PERFORMER PRESENTATIONS:** You will be required to present a profile of a significant performer who originally starred on Broadway in one of our core-viewing musicals (or you may choose another star performer who appeared on Broadway at the same time of the production). The presentation will occur on the day we discuss the specific musical and should last **10-15 minutes**. Feel free to use media, but the presentation must also **include a 1-page "outline" handout for your audience**. The presentation (including the outline) will be graded for comprehensiveness and effectiveness at bringing the star to life. **This is not to be a Wikipedia recitation but should include original and creative research and findings!** The purpose of the presentation is to introduce the class to the iconic musical theatre performers, chronicle their careers, define their particular talents, pinpoint their historical significance, and raise interest and/or question as to their places in the musical theatre canon. Why did these performers matter? **(10-point grade scale)**

**3. SCHEDULED QUIZZES:** There will be 4 short, noncumulative quizzes (*25 questions of matching, multiple choice, and/or fill-in-the-blank*) over the lecture/discussion material (artists, works, and terms) and core viewings. I will record the top 3 quiz grades. Your lowest score will be deleted.



***No make-up quizzes! If you miss a quiz (regardless of situation), that is the one dropped.***

**4. TWO RESPONSE PAPERS:** You are also required to write a personal response to two core viewings (or a supplemental video option per the Response Paper Prompt on D2L). This paper should be **at least 3 full pages** in length and is **due on the day the core viewing is being discussed in class**. For example, if you elect to write on *My Fair Lady*, that response paper is due 10/16. Emailed papers are not accepted. **(10-point grade scale)**

**Cut-Off Date for Response Paper 1 = Wednesday 10/23**

**Cut-Off Date for Response Paper 2 = Friday 12/6**



See [Writing Assignments Toolbox on D2L](#) for details/prompt/grading rubric. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**5. LIVE PRODUCTION CRITIQUE:** You are required to write one critical essay (**3-4 pages**) – a critique of the live production *Fiddler on the Roof* or *Steerage Song*. **(10-point grade scale)**

**Live Production Critique Deadline = Monday 11/11**



See [Writing Assignments Toolbox on D2L](#) for details/prompt/grading rubric. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**6. CREATE A MUSICAL:** This creative assignment will provide the opportunity for you to envision/create your own musical on paper. You can choose to create a jukebox musical/revue, screen-to-stage musical, integrated book musical, or dansical/dance revue. Your description of this musical must be at least **2-3 full pages in length**. You must also incorporate **supplementary audio or visual materials**. We will also share these projects with one another during our final exam period. **(10-point grade scale)**

**“Create a Musical” Deadline = Thursday, 12/19 (1:30 p.m.)**



See [“Create a Musical” on D2L](#) for detailed prompt.

### Extra Credit Option

**Attendance at any additional live professional or semi-professional musical theatre production is worth 1 point added to your final grade. 3 points is the maximum** you can earn for the semester. To earn the point, you must submit a **two-page typed personal reflection** regarding the production with enough specifics to prove you attended it and its **ticket stub or program attached. Paper must reference second half of production**, as well as first. If you only address the first half in your reflection, you will not receive the extra credit.

Be forewarned that additional or alternative extra-credit requests will not be granted; in fact, I will neither consider nor respond to such requests.

*I strongly encourage you to make use of the Writing/Reading Center as you compose your papers. Tutors in the center can help you identify opportunities for improvement in your writing as well as assist you in clarifying your ideas and unique perspective on the subject. The Writing/Reading Center is located in the O'Neill Center for Academic Development in the lower level of the CDC.*

### Grading Breakdown:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Attendance   | 10% |
| Participation (10-pt. grade scale)                 | 10% |
| Performer Presentation (10-pt. grade scale)        | 10% |
| Response Paper 1 (10-pt. grade scale)              | 10% |
| Response Paper 2 (10-pt. grade scale)              | 10% |
| Live Production Critique (10-pt. grade scale)      | 15% |
| Quizzes (top 3 grades)                             | 20% |
| “Create a Musical” Assignment (10-pt. grade scale) | 15% |

## OTHER CRITICAL COURSE POLICIES

### **ACCOMODATIONS:**

St. Catherine University is committed to equal access for all and recognizes that disability is an aspect of diversity. The University's goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to the learning environment, accurate assessment of your achievement, please contact me and the Resources for Disabilities office as soon as possible. Access Consultants can be reached in the O'Neill Center at 651.690.6563 to discuss academic adjustments or accommodations.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

St. Catherine University's mission provides for excellence in education through the search for truth and justice. According to the provisions of this mission, the University expects all students and faculty to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any act of academic dishonesty threatens the value of all scholastic endeavors. The complete document on academic integrity, including the process for implementation, may be found in the LeGuide, the student guide to policies, procedure and rules at St. Catherine University. Individuals who plagiarize will immediately fail the assignment. Plagiarism may also result in failure of the class or expulsion from the University.

### **LECTURE GADGET "BAN":**

In order to ensure full class participation and to help minimize distractions, I've instated a "ban" on laptop computer use during lectures. It is crucial to the success of the course that you stay engaged during class, not clicking on a keyboard or buried in a laptop (or surfing the web or checking email . . .). Please check with me if you feel you need an exception to this rule. Rest assured, **my PowerPoint slides are posted on D2L and you will also receive reference handouts that contain chronological data for artists**. Further, you may use your laptops for in-class assignments or project work. On a similar note, it goes without saying that cell-phone use, texting, etc., is also taboo, and all such gadgets are to be left in backpacks, out of sight, for the duration of the class.

### **Course Grade Scale :**

|    |        |                          |     |
|----|--------|--------------------------|-----|
| A  | 94-100 | superior/excellent       | 4.0 |
| A- | 90-93  |                          | 3.7 |
| B+ | 87-89  |                          | 3.3 |
| B  | 83-86  | good/better than average | 3.0 |
| B- | 80-82  |                          | 2.7 |
| C+ | 77-79  |                          | 2.3 |
| C  | 73-76  | competent/average        | 2.0 |
| C- | 70-72  |                          | 1.7 |
| D+ | 67-69  |                          | 1.3 |
| D  | 63-66  |                          | 1.0 |
| D- | 60-62  | minimum passing          | 0.7 |
| F  | 0-59   | failing                  | 0.0 |

## CLASS SCHEDULE:

Remember to [check D2L](#) throughout the week for new and/or updated announcements and information. I will also be emailing you regularly with updates, reminders, and general information. Feel free to email me regularly as well with questions, concerns, or to simply touch base and/or further discuss a topic. I will do my best to answer within 24 hours.

Reading assignments are due by the start of class on the date by which they are listed.

I have a "NO LATE ASSIGNMENT" policy – no exceptions . . . I also have a "NO MAKE UP" and "NO ADDITIONAL / EXCEPTIONAL ASSIGNMENTS" policy. The syllabus, required assignments, and grading rubric/s are set in stone. The grade you earned is the grade you will receive. After-the-fact requests for extra credit, alternate/additional assignments or grading reconsiderations will not receive a response from me, as you have been duly forewarned that your grade is solely determined by the assignments and criteria set forth in this syllabus.

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| F 9/6         | Introduction<br>Musical Theatre Overview: Terms, Components, and Construct  |
| M 9/9         | Musical Theatre Overview cont.<br>Musical Theatre Antecedents <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read "Introduction/Overview" (BACKSTAGE Chap 1, pp. 1-7)</li></ul>   |
| W 9/11        | Musical Theatre Antecedents cont. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read BACKSTAGE Chap 3, pp. 29-32</li></ul>   |
| F 9/13        | Victor Herbert <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read "American Operetta and Victor Herbert" (BACKSTAGE Chap 2, pp. 25-28)</li></ul>   |
| M 9/16        | George M. Cohan <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read "George M. Cohan" (BACKSTAGE Chap 3, pp. 33-37)</li></ul>   |
| W 9/18        | Florenz Ziegfeld and Bert Williams <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read "Florenz Ziegfeld" &amp; "Bert Williams" (BACKSTAGE Chap 3, pp. 41-45 &amp; 49-52)</li></ul>   |
| F 9/20        | Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read "Jerome Kern" (BACKSTAGE Chap 3, pp. 57-61)</li><li>• Have read "Oscar Hammerstein II" (BACKSTAGE Chap 3, pp. 66-69)</li><li>• Have viewed VIDEO of <u>Show Boat</u></li></ul> |
| M 9/23        | <u>Show Boat</u> – Discuss<br>George and Ira Gershwin <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read "George &amp; Ira Gershwin" (BACKSTAGE Chap 4, pp. 88-95)</li></ul>   |
| <b>W 9/25</b> | <b>QUIZ 1</b><br>George and Ira Gershwin cont.  |
| F 9/27        | Rodgers and Hart <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have viewed VIDEO of <u>Crazy for You</u> -- Discuss</li><li>• Have read "Rodgers and Hart" (BACKSTAGE Chap 4, pp. 124-130)</li></ul>  |
| M 9/30        | Rodgers and Hart cont.<br>Rodgers and Hammerstein <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have read "Rodgers and Hammerstein" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 147-155)</li></ul>   |

- W 10/2      *Rodgers and Hammerstein cont.*
- Have read "Agnes de Mille" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 163-166)
- F 10/4      *Irving Berlin*
- Have viewed VIDEO of Oklahoma! – Discuss / Performer Presentation
  - Have read "Irving Berlin" (BACKSTAGE Chap 4, pp. 100-107)
- M 10/7      *Irving Berlin cont.*
- W 10/9      *Cole Porter*
- Have read "Cole Porter" (BACKSTAGE Chap 4, pp. 113-119)
- F 10/11      *Cole Porter cont.*
- Have viewed VIDEO of Kiss Me, Kate – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- M 10/14      *Lerner and Loewe*
- Have read "Lerner and Loewe" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 173-180)
- W 10/16      *Lerner and Loewe cont.*
- Have viewed VIDEO of My Fair Lady – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- F 10/18      QUIZ 2**
- Jerome Robbins, Leonard Bernstein, Comden and Green*
- Have read "Jerome Robbins" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 198-204)
- M 10/21      *Robbins, Bernstein, Comden and Green cont.*
- Have read "Leonard Bernstein" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 211-216)
  - Have read "Comden and Green" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 222-230)
- W 10/23      *Robbins, Bernstein, Comden and Green cont.*
- Have viewed VIDEO of West Side Story – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- \*\* Response Paper 1 Cut-Off (10/23) \*\***
- F 10/25      FALL BREAK – NO CLASS**
- M 10/28      *Frank Loesser*
- Have read "Frank Loesser" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 235-241)
- W 10/30      *Frank Loesser cont.*
- Jule Styne*
- Have read "Jule Styne" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 249-255)
- F 11/1      *Jule Styne cont.*
- Have viewed VIDEO of Gypsy – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- M 11/4      *Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick*
- Have read "Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick" (BACKSTAGE Chap 5, pp. 262-267)
- W 11/6      *TBA*
- Have viewed VIDEO of Fiddler on the Roof – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- F 11/8      *Michael Bennett*
- Have read Michael Bennett (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 313-321)
- M 11/11      *In-class viewing of Every Little Step excerpts*
- \*\* Live Production Critique Deadline (11/11) \*\***



- W 11/13      Bob Fosse
- Have read "Bob Fosse" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 299-306)
- F 11/15      Bob Fosse cont.  
John Kander and Fred Ebb
- Have viewed VIDEO of Chicago – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- M 11/18      QUIZ 3**
- John Kander and Fred Ebb cont.
- Have read "John Kander and Fred Ebb" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 287-294)
- W 11/20      Andrew Lloyd Webber
- Have read "Andrew Lloyd Webber" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 372-379)
- F 11/22      Andrew Lloyd Webber cont.
- Have read "Andrew Lloyd Webber" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 380-384)
  - Have viewed VIDEO of Phantom of the Opera – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- M 11/25      Andrew Lloyd Webber cont.  
Boublil and Schönberg
- Have read "Boublil/Schönberg and the Sung-Through, Mega Musical" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 388-393)
- W 11/27      Rock Musicals
- Have read "Featured Production: Hair" and "Dawning of the Age of the Rock Musical" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 335-342)
  - Have viewed VIDEO of Rent – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- F 10/25      THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – NO CLASS**
- M 12/2      Rock Musicals cont.  
Stephen Sondheim
- Have read "Stephen Sondheim" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 394-402)
- W 12/4      Stephen Sondheim cont.
- Have read "Stephen Sondheim" (BACKSTAGE Chap 6, pp. 402-409)
- F 12/6      Stephen Sondheim cont.
- Have viewed VIDEO of Sweeney Todd – Discuss / Performer Presentation
- \*\* Response Paper #2 Cut-Off (12/6)\*\***
- M 12/9      Disney on Broadway; Hollywood on Broadway
- Have read BACKSTAGE Chap 7., pp 437-439 & 449-451
- W 12/11      Disney on Broadway; Hollywood on Broadway cont.  
Current Musical Theatre Trends
- Have read BACKSTAGE Chap 7., pp 425-436
- F 12/13      Current Musical Theatre Trends cont.
- Have read BACKSTAGE Chap 7., pp 440-448
  - Have viewed VIDEO of Show Business: The Road to Broadway -- Discuss

**FINAL EXAM PERIOD – Thursday, 12/19 1:30-3:30 p.m.**  
**QUIZ 4 and Roundtable Sharing of "Create a Musical" Projects**