

Theatre Arts Department Writing Plan

Department Mission:

The mission of Coe's Theatre Program is to provide hands-on training in theatre making in classes, labs and productions) with a collaborative process that builds community, fosters global awareness and examines the complexities of diverse human narratives.

This document outlines how Writing Emphasis courses reflect the department mission and are integrated into the theatre course offerings. Since theatre making often begins with a story, most of our courses give students experience in varying levels of script analysis. Writing to learn exercises are utilized in many of our classes as well. Those classes designated as Writing Emphasis are based in formal scholarship involving creative analysis, literary production, or historical analysis to build an awareness of and engagement with the scholarly dialogue of the discipline.

Values

The theatre arts are inclusive of playwriting, acting, directing, visual storytelling, dance, and technical theatre. These diverse modes of creative expression and problem solving are grounded in the common goal of effective written communication as part of the process of theatre making. To that end, the following writing values are stressed in our courses:

- Specificity
- Demonstration of critical thinking
- Synthesis of information
- Use of appropriate terminology
- Awareness of audience
- Use of evidence to support claims

Analytical writing based on observation is the form of writing students are asked to practice in courses designated as Writing Emphasis with the exception of Playwriting courses cross-listed with the Creative Writing Department. (See Creative Writing Plan for specific learning goals related to playwriting.)

Development of Skills and Activities

In order to develop skills in written analysis of plays, productions, or historical styles and practices, students are guided through the following processes:

- Deep reading of the script
- Historical research of the context of the play/production
- Revision
- Oral presentation
- Peer review and workshopping in small groups
- Review of examples of scholarly models and exposure to the scholarly resources
- Research to provide evidence and comparative analysis
- Scaffolding of writing process
- Training in proper citation where appropriate

Types of Texts We Create

Theatre students will learn to create a variety of texts to reflect both their analytical training, their practical and professional training, and their self-reflective and creative expression. Those may include:

- Script analysis
- Character analysis
- Academic papers
- Annotated bibliographies
- Journals
- Illustrated presentations/PowerPoint
- Informal texts (Moodle posts, blogs, social media)
- Theatre Reviews
- Comparative analysis

While our Writing Emphasis courses are typically those focused on the scholarly and historical aspects of theatre, our Senior Capstone course does require students to author an artist's statement as part of the culmination of their development as a theatre artist. The following types of texts will be generated in the Senior Capstone to reflect the cumulative development of these forms of written communication:

- Artist's statement
- Resume and Professional Letter of Introduction
- Comparative analysis of contemporary theatre styles
- Summaries of scholarly journal articles
- Documentation of final project or formal proposal for final project in specific area of concentration.
- Self-reflection/evaluation of own work and development as theatre artist with stated goals for utilizing theatre training.

Courses Focused on Writing

As stated earlier, the majority of theatre courses utilize writing to learn exercises to emphasize synthesis of information, analysis of texts, observation and description of the creative process, reflection on the creative process and understanding of technical skills related to honing the craft.

Those courses designated as Writing Emphasis include the following:

- THE-228 Theatre History I
- THE-238 Theatre History II
- THE-288 History of Dress
- THE-290 Directing I
- THE-390 Directing II
- THE-464 Senior Seminar