MUSICALS PLAYED A FORMATIVE ROLE IN OUR COLLECTIVE MYTH-MAKING FOR NEARLY A CENTURY, GIVING US THE WORDS AND MUSIC FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM. -- JOHN LAHR

COURSE DESCRIPTION: As America’s major contribution to theatre, musical theatre has long been considered a quaint form of Americana. But looking just beneath the surface one sees that the American musical has always served a critical social function that moves far beyond simple songs about the golden haze on Oklahoma meadows. With its popular appeal and widespread audiences, the musical has been a fruitful place to both endorse and critique American ideologies and institutions. And as Americans became more rebellious in the turbulence during and following the 1960s and the Vietnam War, the musical followed suit. This course will begin with the Vietnam-era musical Hair in order to consider how the American musical of the late twentieth century is a contested site – a source of popular entertainment and profit and a means to make important political and social critiques. The course will move from the concept musicals of the 1970s, to the profit-driven mega-musicals and nostalgic revivals that dominated the 1980s, to the “Disneyification” of Broadway in the 1990s, to the pastiche and satire that dominated the early 2000s, to the current trends of synergistic marketing and star power in order to explore the ways the musical has variously paralleled and challenged larger trends in the American landscape.

REQUIRED VIDEOS:
Show Business: The Road to Broadway, Wicked (link available under modules), Gypsy (with Bette Midler), Hair, Company (with Neil Patrick Harris -- link available under modules), A Chorus Line, Sweeney Todd (stage version), Evita (with Madonna), Into the Woods (stage version), Phantom of the Opera (Live at Royal Albert Hall – link available under modules), Rent (filmed live on Broadway), Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Hairspray (2007 film), Dr. Horrible Sing-Along Blog, Spring Awakening (link available under modules)

Unless otherwise noted, all videos will be available on Canvas. If you do not watch the videos on Canvas you may be able to find the video online or at Hornbake library.

REQUIRED TRIP TO NEW YORK: On either April 18 or April 25 we will take an all-day trip to New York to see a Broadway production.

COST: In lieu of paying for textbooks (there are none required) you will submit a check for $50 made out to “University of Maryland, College Park” no later than February 3. This is to cover the cost of tickets and transportation to Broadway. Honors has generously agreed to supplement the total cost.

REQUIRED READINGS: Available under the Readings Module on Canvas.
• Jones, John Bush. Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre. Lebanon, NH: Brandeis
• Miller, Tim. 1001 Beds. The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. (220-249).
PLEASE BE AWARE THAT SOME OF THE REQUIRED MUSICALS AND READINGS CONTAIN MATURE CONTENT, EXPLICIT LANGUAGE, DIFFICULT THEMES, AND NUDITY. THEY MAY BE OFFENSIVE TO SOME PEOPLE.

USEFUL WEB RESOURCES:
- Playbill Online: http://www.playbill.com/
- Broadway World: http://www.broadwayworld.com/
- Tony Awards: http://www.tonyawards.com/
- Blue Gobo: http://bluegobo.com/
- Broadway Database: http://www.ibdb.com/

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
**Attendance:** Excused absences from class include religious holidays, a death in the family (an obituary or funeral program must be submitted), or court dates (an official notice from the court must be submitted). For illness you must provide written documentation from the Health Center or an outside health care provider verifying dates of treatment and the time period during which you were unable to meet academic responsibilities. In accordance with the university policy on medical absences, I will accept a self-signed note for a SINGLE missed lecture that includes a statement about the illness and a statement acknowledging the information is true and correct under the Code of Student Conduct. The self-signed note will not be accepted for students missing more than one class or for Major Scheduled Grading Events, which include all quizzes and days when the student has in-class presentations. The self-signed note also does not exempt a student from turning in a paper on time.

**Participation:** As this is a seminar style class, regular attendance and respectful contribution to our ongoing exploration is crucial. You should come to class prepared to offer thoughtful comments about the material. Remember, if you are not present you cannot participate, but attendance does not equal participation. You will lose 10 participation points for using cell phones in any way and for doing things not related to class on your computer.

**Quizzes:** Throughout the semester there will be sixteen quizzes. Quizzes are designed to encourage you to stay attentive in class and up-to-date with the assignments and will cover assigned readings and viewings, as well as material from class lectures and discussions (including the lectures given by your classmates). The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes are Major Scheduled Grading Events and cannot be made up, except in the case of an excused absence (see above). If you miss a quiz because of an unexcused absence, you may count it as your dropped quiz.

**Play Review:** You will be asked to write a two-page response to the Broadway show. A detailed description of this assignment will be available on Canvas.

**Class Presentations:** Once in the semester you will lead the class discussion for a musical we are covering in class. A detailed description of this assignment will be available on Canvas.

**Final Project:** You will work in a group of four students to develop a “pitch” for a contemporary musical. A detailed description of this assignment is available on Canvas.

**EXTRA CREDIT:** You can earn 10 extra credit points by completing one of the options listed below. Extra credit will be added to the total cumulative grade. You can turn in the extra credit any time in the semester, but all extra credit is due by May 6

- **Play Review:** You can earn up to ten points of extra credit by attending a university or professional theatre production of a musical or a musical theatre themed event (this includes Broadway productions, but does not include high school productions) and writing a two-page review discussing how that production or event addressed issues raised in class. Unless the musical is on Broadway or was suggested by me in class, be sure to get prior approval from me. Include your ticket stub with your review.
- **Play Analysis:** You can earn up to ten points by watching a video of one of the following musicals and writing a two-page response paper that considers how the musical fits in with the topics we have addressed in class. The musicals you can write on are: *Cats, Dreamgirls, Mamma Mia, Memphis, Moulin Rouge, Nine, Passion, Pippin, The Producers, Sunday in the Park with George*
- **Discretionary:** Extra credit points may also be distributed at my discretion for extraordinary contributions to class.
GRADING: Your grade, based on a 500-point scale, will be determined as follows:

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<th>Component</th>
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| Participation           | 50 pts.
| Quizzes                 | 150 pts. (10 e) |
| Play Review             | 50 pts. |
| Presentation & Paper    | 100 pts. |
| Final Project           | 150 pts |

A+ 98 and above
A 93-97.9
A- 90-92.9
B+ 88-89.9
B 83-87.9
B- 80-82.9
C+ 78-79.9
C 73-77.9
C- 70-72.9
D+ 68-69.9
D 63-67.9
D- 60-62.9
F 59.9 and below

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:
Format and Editing: All assignments must be typewritten in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, and free of errors. Please consult the “Guide to Common Writing Errors” available on Canvas. You will be graded on both the content of your ideas and the clarity and accuracy of your writing, so I strongly suggest you visit the Writing Center on campus (http://www.english.umd.edu/writingcenter) before turning in your papers.

Citations: All information used in your papers must be fully and accurately cited. You may use any formal citation method you prefer, as long as your citations are correct and consistent. For suggested reference manuals you may refer to A Writer's Reference by Diana Hacker, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers by Joseph Gibaldi (these both use MLA style), A Manual for Writers by Kate Turabian or The Chicago Manual of Style (these both use Chicago style). If you have concerns about your understanding of proper citations, please see me or visit the Writing Center.

Late Papers: All written work must be submitted at the beginning of class. For every hour that a paper is late, I will deduct 5% of the grade. If you email the paper to me I will consider the time it was sent the time it was turned in. Then bring me a hard copy of the paper in the next class.

Academic Integrity: The University has a Code of Academic Integrity, available on the web at www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInto/Departments/jpo/code_acinteg.html. The code prohibits cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers or portions of papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, forging signatures, and using unauthorized study aids. This class abides by this code.

Academic Services: If you are experiencing difficulties in keeping up with the academic demands of this course, contact the Learning Assistance Service, 2202 Shoemaker Building, 301-314-7693. Their educational counselors can help with time management, reading skills, note-taking and exam preparation skills. All their services are free to UM students.

Challenges: If you wish to challenge a grade, you must present the graded assignment and one paragraph explaining why the grade should be changed (including any supporting evidence) to me no later than one week after the grade is received. After one week, appeals will not be considered.

A NOTE ABOUT EMAIL: Email correspondence with an instructor is a form of professional communication. Before emailing please consult your notes, Canvas, and your syllabus to ensure your question has not already been answered. Please note that I do not always check email on the weekends.

Please consult Canvas for a handout on University and Honors College policies regarding Academic Accommodations, Religious Observances, Academic Integrity and the Honors College, CORE Human Cultural Diversity Courses, CORE Distributive Studies Courses, CourseEvalUM.