Course Description
The Honors Humanities First-Year Seminar addresses two major Program themes: “and justice for all” and “the city as text.” To this end, our class will incorporate both themes in its primary focus: Drama in Chicago. We will read, analyze, and re-interpret key dramatic texts, all of which are set in Chicago. What is fundamental to our approach is that no play is meant to be read silently, and as a result, our focus is on the performative nature of drama. Part of our study will include performance theory, as well as the opportunity to attend two theater experiences in Chicago.

Learning Goals and Outcomes
• Students will understand the importance of performance as interpretation of plays.
• Students will understand the cultural, social, and political contexts of plays.
• Students will demonstrate the ability to summarize, synthesize, analyze, and evaluate a broad range of material.
• Students will demonstrate their ability to apply and extend their learning in other contexts through the experiential component of the course.
Course Materials

*Jungle of Cities and Other Plays.* Brecht.
*A Raisin in the Sun: The Unfilmed Original Screenplay.* Hansberry.
*Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom.* Wilson.
*American Buffalo.* Mamet.
*Glengarry Glen Ross.* Mamet.
*Proof.* Auburn.

Theater in Chicago

Through the generous financial collaboration and contribution of the Honors Program and the Dean’s Office in the College of Arts and Sciences, students will have single theater tickets to two separate productions underwritten. As a result, students in the course will be required to attend two plays. We will see one play in common, which is *Saviour*, performed at the ETA Creative Arts Foundation, and the second play will be the student’s choice. In terms of the first play, the Honors Program will purchase blocks of tickets for multiple performances. In terms of the second play, students will be reimbursed for the price of their ticket via a receipt. Students will need to inform me which play they will see and where it is being performed. Attendance at the two plays will contribute to your participation grade.

Course Technology

Students enrolled in the course will be expected to use the following:

- SXU email account.
- Internet access to Canvas. You will upload to Canvas your ensemble script, essay exams, and production book.
- USB flash drive.

Students may also bring to class a tablet, iPad, or laptop so long as the device is used for educational purposes related to the course. During class, a student may not send text messages, talk
Participation
HON 250 is not a lecture. Consequently, the class relies upon the robust, engaged, and reflective participation of its students. Students might engage in class participation in a number of ways: offering meaningful and relevant comments and/or questions in class, taking a leadership role in small group discussion, and/or submitting email questions based on the issues raised in the texts we will study.

Quizzes
In the course, please be prepared for unannounced pop quizzes. I will administer the quiz at the beginning of class. If you are absent on the day of a quiz, or you enter the room after I have collected the quiz, you may not make it up.

Essay Exams
During the semester, you will have two, take-home essay exams. The dates on which these are due are listed in the course calendar. These exams will assess the extent to which you can analyze and apply the theories studied to the primary texts.

Production Book
As the course’s final project, each student will select one of the plays we have studied and create a production book that outlines how s/he would produce one of our texts. The assignment will be distributed to students by the third week of class. Each production book will include the selected play, the selected theater and rationale for it, the era, the script and directions, actor selections, music, blocking, costuming, and other materials necessary for its performance. On the day of our final exam, students will not only submit the production book to Canvas, but they will also give a brief in-class presentation on what they have submitted.

Ensemble Groups
Each student will be a member of an ensemble group, where
they will select one of our plays and re-write and re-imagine it so the group may perform the play for a new and contemporary audience. In the group, each member must participate and all members will share the grade. In terms of the final grade, I will determine it based on the shared evaluations of the class, the ensemble group, and my evaluation. What is critical here is not an evaluation of an ensemble’s acting ability; rather, I will ask us to pay close attention to the ways in which the group has adapted the play for a contemporary audience, showcasing the theatrical nature and value for this audience.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism involves the use of someone else’s words or ideas without the proper citation that these concepts do not originate with you. Such a practice pertains to all forms of communication—including electronic. The practice also pertains to the paraphrasing of someone else’s ideas or concepts as if these points or ideas were yours rather than another individual’s. If a student commits plagiarism in HON 250, s/he will fail the course and be subject to further disciplinary action. If you have any questions about proper documentation, please see me.

Disability Services
If you believe you need accommodation for a disability, please contact the Learning Center and Disability Services in L-108 or call 773.298.3956 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. LCDS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities “Confidential Accommodation Plan” letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact LCDS as soon as possible.

Grade Scale
A= 90-100
B= 80-89
Grade Distribution
Your final grade will be calculated according to the following weights/measure:

Participation 15%
Quizzes 10%
Essay Exam #1 15%
Essay Exam #2 15%
Ensemble Group 20%
Production Book 25%

Course Calendar
All assignments are Subject to Change

1/14  Introduction.
1/16  Brecht’s *Jungle of Cities*; reading #1 on Canvas.

1/21  *Jungle of Cities*; reading #2 on canvas about Brecht.
1/23  Reading #3 on Canvas about Brecht; reading #4 on play.

1/28  Ensemble #1: *Jungle of Cities*.
1/30  Introduction to *A Raisin in the Sun* and up to fade out in *Raisin*, p. 110.

2/4   *A Raisin in the Sun*; reading #5 on canvas about play.
2/6   Begin viewing film version of *Raisin*.

2/11  Finish film version of *Raisin*.
2/13  Ensemble #2: *A Raisin in the Sun*.

2/18  *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*.
2/20  *Ma Rainey*; reading #6.
2/25  Ensemble #3: *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*.

2/27  Take-home Essay Exam #1 is due to Canvas: No Class.

3/4  Meyerhold and Stanislavsky articles on Canvas: Readings 7 & 8.

3/6  *American Buffalo*.

March 10-14: Spring Break

3/18  *American Buffalo*; reading #9 on play.

3/20  Ensemble #4: *American Buffalo*.


3/27  *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

4/1  *Glengarry Glen Ross*; reading #12 on Canvas.

4/3  Ensemble #5: *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

4/8  Brook’s articles: Readings 13 & 14 on Canvas.

4/10  *Proof*.

4/15  *Proof*; reading #15 on Canvas on play.

4/17  Easter Recess: No Class.

4/22  Ensemble #6: *Proof*.

4/24  Take-Home Essay Exam #2 is due to Canvas: No Class.

4/29  In-class workshop for production book.

5/1  In-class workshop for production book.

5/8  Final at 12pm in our classroom: Presentation of Production Book Project.