

ENGL 2405 -- Introduction to Drama

Section 003 | Fall 2019
T/TH 11:00pm-12:15pm | STRS 001



Class Details

Instructor: Kari Daly

Office: AUST 155

Office Hours: T/Th, 2-3pm and by appointment

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Course Description: This course provides students with survey of major dramatic works from Greek drama through today. The plays we will read for this course were written to be performed; as such, in our analyses of these works, we will focus not only on historical contextualization, but also on theatrical production history. Students will be asked, therefore, to analyze not just the content of the works we read, but also to juxtapose the original significance of these plays against the feasibility of producing such plays today.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, I hope that you will:

- Be able to recognize and discuss major works of drama from the Greek theatre to the present
- Obtain a basic knowledge of theatrical performance history so as to analyze and critique dramatic literature
- Experiment with different techniques to market a modern theatrical production
- Design a themed season of three theatrical productions

Required Texts

Gainor: *Norton Anthology of Drama - Shorter Edition* (3rd) (978-0393283501)

Other readings as assigned on HuskyCT

Grading

Midterm and Final: 35%

Papers: 30%

Class Participation: 20%

Presentations, Short Assignments, and Quizzes: 10%

Reading Responses: 5%

Participation and Electronic Devices

Class participation in a course such as this one is essential. Students are expected to take part in class discussions, which will be largely guided by written reading responses. Therefore, absences will be taken seriously.

While the use of electronic copies of the texts is acceptable, phones are absolutely forbidden. Use of a phone during class time will result in an automatic F for that day's participation grade.

Additionally, you will be expected to either bring a written copy of the text *or* a laptop or tablet (if

using an e-book) to *every* class. Students who attend class without either a paper copy of the texts or a laptop/tablet will be given an automatic F for that day's participation grade. Due to the nature of the texts we are reading for this course, use of a phone to reference a text during class is forbidden.

Email and Communications

Please be aware that I frequently use the announcement feature in HuskyCT. You are responsible, therefore, for regularly checking your UConn email, especially if classes are canceled. Note, too, that, per university policy, I can only respond to emails from your official UConn email address.

Ethical Scholarship

It is crucial to find and use sources legally and ethically. Review and abide by the University's code on academic misconduct (plagiarism and misuse of sources); you will be held responsible for understanding these materials. Anyone found plagiarizing will fail the essay or the course.

Accommodations

It is important to me that all students have the tools and resources necessary to be successful in this course. I have worked to ensure that this class is as accessible as possible for all students, incorporating UDL, multimodal texts, accessible content, and flexible deadlines and schedules. I am dedicated to meeting any accommodation requests, whether or not you are registered with UConn's Center for Students with Disabilities. I am also always learning, so I encourage you to approach me at any time with suggestions or requests for ways to make this class more accessible.

Schedule (subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	Due
1	Tuesday	08/27/19	Introductions
	Thursday	08/29/19	Excerpts from Aristotle's <i>Poetics</i> (pp. 135-50) ; "Reading Drama, Imagining Theater" from Introduction (pp. 81-84)
2	Tuesday	09/03/19	Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i> (pp. 87-134)
	Thursday	09/05/19	Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i> (pp. 87-134)
3	Tuesday	09/10/19	Aristophanes, <i>Lysistrata</i> (pp. 195-232)
	Thursday	09/12/19	<i>Everyman</i> (pp. 289-315)
4	Tuesday	09/17/19	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> (pp. 333-428)
	Thursday	09/19/19	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> (pp. 333-428)
5	Tuesday	09/24/19	Aphra Behn, <i>The Rover</i> (HuskyCT)
	Thursday	09/26/19	Aphra Behn, <i>The Rover</i> (HuskyCT)
6	Tuesday	10/01/19	Ibsen, <i>A Doll's House</i> (pp. 608-61)
	Thursday	10/03/19	Ibsen, <i>A Doll's House</i> (pp. 608-61)
7	Tuesday	10/08/19	Wilde, <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> (pp. 665-712)
	Thursday	10/10/19	Glaspell, <i>Trifles</i> (pp. 760-75)
8	Tuesday	10/15/19	Odets, <i>Waiting for Lefty</i> (HuskyCT)
	Thursday	10/17/19	Midterm
9	Tuesday	10/22/19	Beckett, <i>Waiting for Godot</i> (pp. 1123-85)
	Thursday	10/24/19	Esslin, from <i>The Theatre of the Absurd</i> (pp. 1186-91)
10	Tuesday	10/29/19	O'Neill, <i>The Hairy Ape</i>
	Thursday	10/31/19	Miller, "Tragedy and the Common Man" (pp. 1119-22)
11	Tuesday	11/05/19	Miller, <i>All My Sons</i> (HuskyCT)
	Thursday	11/07/19	Williams, <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> (pp. 975-1046)
12	Tuesday	11/12/19	Hansberry, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (pp. 1192-1261)
	Thursday	11/14/19	Ta Nehisi-Coates, "The Case for Reparations" (HuskyCT)
13	Tuesday	11/19/19	Wilson, <i>Fences</i> (1458-1512)
	Thursday	11/21/19	Wilson, from <i>The Ground on Which I Stand</i> (1513-1525)
14	Tuesday	11/26/19	Thanksgiving Break
	Thursday	11/27/19	
15	Tuesday	12/03/19	Kushner, <i>Angels in America Part I: Millennium Approaches</i> (1578-1646)
	Thursday	12/05/19	Final Exam Review; final exam TBD

Details for Class Assignments

Presentations

Each student will be required to present on two plays during the semester -- one on a play we're reading as a class (also known as "Presentation A"; see course schedule above) and one from the list I've provided at the end of this syllabus (also known as "Presentation B"). These presentations should provide the class with contextualization for the chosen play, including historical information, reviews, production challenges, and descriptions of various successful (and unsuccessful!) productions. Additionally, when presenting from the Presentation B list, the student should provide a (short!) summary of the play, so the class can follow along.

The manner of the presentation is up to the student: slideshows, videos, podcasts, or simple handouts are all acceptable. Presentations should include snippets from reviews; videos of performances, whenever possible; and photos of various set and costume designs (or descriptions thereof). A note on slideshows: Please do not just create a slideshow of various bullet points and then read directly from the slide. No one wants to see that.

Because there are so many of us, presentations should run no longer than 15 minutes.

Papers

Two papers will be required as a part of this course. These papers will be about the plays the student has chosen to present on and are due on the day of the presentation. Please be aware that late papers will result in *half* a letter grade being subtracted from your final grade for the assignment. Extensions may be granted, but only with advanced notice.

Papers should build on the presentation given in class and should include much of the following:

- Historical context (as in your presentation)
- Quick summary of the play (less than 300 words)
- Recent productions -- how have others produced this play and how do these productions compare?
- If you've seen a performance of the play, you can add a short review with your thoughts
- Questions:
 - Who (or what) is the play about, in your opinion? What is the main theme that interests you?
 - What would be some problems with producing this play today? How might you overcome these? (Don't forget to take into consideration copyright considerations and playwright idiosyncrasies)
 - Who is the audience for this play?

Think about the paper as consisting of two parts -- the curation of facts (historical context, past productions, reviews, etc.) and an analysis of these facts. The analysis part should be largely your own opinion. Think about how you would produce this show. What are the benefits and drawbacks? Would it work around here? There may be many themes, but which one would be your guiding theme? Who is your audience? This will be much like the conversations we have in class. I'm

interested in how -- considering the information you've curated -- you would approach this play in a production.

Submission information

Papers should be emailed to me by 11:59:59 pm on the day of your presentation. These should be in Word format *only* (.doc or .docx). Pdfs and .pages will not be accepted.

Evaluation

Successful papers will give a detailed analysis of the play using some (or all) of the elements above; will be in MLA format with a proper Works Cited page; will be cohesive and follow a logical structure.

Presentation B List (accompanied by incredibly simplistic one-line descriptions)

William Wycherley, *The Country Wife* (city guy seduces innocent country wife)
George Farquhar, *The Beaux' Stratagem* (18th-century bromance)
Hannah Cowley, *The Belle's Stratagem* (18th-century woman's take on the bromance)
Oliver Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer* (throwback to the bromance; more accessible than the previous two)
Karel Capek, *Rossum's Universal Robots* (sci-fi; first use of the word robot)
Clifford Odets, *Awake and Sing!* (Depression-era drama)
Eugene O'Neill, *A Long Day's Journey into Night* (autobiography of O'Neill's life; a little long)
Eugene O'Neill, *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (sequel to *Long Day's*, but stands on its own)
Eugene O'Neill, *The Iceman Cometh*
Arthur Miller, *The Death of a Salesman*
Arthur Miller, *A View From the Bridge* (immigrant drama)
Tennessee Williams, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (sex drama)
Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*
Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit* (asks, what is hell?)
Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Victors* (WWII existentialist play)
Larry Shue, *The Foreigner* (comedy)
Marsha Norman, *Night Mother* (short play about suicide)
Frank McGuinness, *Dolly West's Kitchen* (WWII Irish drama)
Brian Friel, *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Irish drama set in the 1930s)
August Wilson, *The Gem of the Ocean* (first play in the Wilson cycle)
August Wilson, *The Piano Lesson* (second most popular Wilson play)
August Wilson, *Radio Golf* (last play in the Wilson cycle)
Yasmina Reza, *God of Carnage* (short play about warring parents)
Noel Coward, *Private Lives* (romantic comedy)
John Guare, *Six Degrees of Separation*
Lynn Nottage, *Sweat* (modern drama about the working class)
Bruce Norris, *Clybourne Park* (sequel to *A Raisin in the Sun*, but written by a white guy)
John Patrick Shanley, *Doubt* (Catholic abuse scandal)
David Auburn, *Proof* (feminist play about math)
David Mamet, *Oleanna* (play about sexual harassment)