

1-2014

THTR 235L.01: Dramatic Literature

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THTR 235L 01, Dramatic Literature	
Instructor John Kenneth DeBoer Associate Professor of Theatre	Class Dates & Location TR 11:10 AM – 12:30 PM, LA 201
Contact Information Email: johndeboer@umontana.edu UMOnline: 406.243.4999 Tech Support	Office Hours MWR 1-2 PM McGill 212B

Course Overview: This course is designed to familiarize the student with various aspects of dramatic literature. Students will investigate this topic through literary criticism and script analysis of six plays. Due to the nature of the material, attention will also be given to theatre as a practical art form inspired by the written text. Selected scenes will be considered in performance on film, through class demonstration, and through attending live performances. This course, faithfully undertaken, will provide students with a strong foundational knowledge of story, structure, dramatic action, character development, symbolic layering and theme that will enhance their skills and experiences as perceptive and participatory readers, writers, audience members, and potential practitioners of theatre.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes:
Have a broad knowledge of dramatic literature, style, context, plot, structure, and character.
Have a knowledge of chosen play texts through close reading
Have a critically informed understanding of chosen play texts through reading and analysis of critical material
Have an understanding of how each play performs its language, characters, place, plot, politics, context and the conditions of contemporaneous production
Have engaged with this work through script analysis, scene study, research and critique
Have articulated their engagement with the work through formal research and writing of structured criticism and analysis
Have developed the skills necessary to engage in independent criticism and analysis of dramatic literature as a practitioner, reader, or audience member

Required Materials:
<i>Page and Stage: An Approach to Script Analysis</i> , by Stanley Vincent Longman
Any edition of the six play texts listed in the schedule (inexpensive editions of each are available at the UM Bookstore)
Tickets to the UM Production of <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , Available at the UMArts Box Office. Visit www.umtheatredance.org for more information.

Attendance and Participation: This course is participatory in nature. School of Theatre & Dance policies will be enforced strictly. Only documented absences will be excused. Points will be awarded for participation each day.

- 5 The student was actively participating in class, obviously well prepared, and positively engaged with the material and fellow classmates.
- 4 The student was present, somewhat prepared, but not fully engaged
- 3-0 The student was unprepared, disruptive, disrespectful or absent

A solid work ethic is expected in this class so high marks should be the norm. Poor work will stand out. Students receiving low marks for participation should meet with me to discuss the problem and how it will be resolved.

Electronic Resources

In this class we will embrace twenty-first century technology as the incredible resource that it is. Therefore, email is the required method of communication for the course. Please check your email and Moodle frequently throughout the day. Due to its unreliability, refrain from messaging me on Moodle using the IM feature. **I will always contact you using the primary email stored in Moodle and Cyberbear so be sure that your information is up to date.**

All course assignments, readings, and tests will take place on Moodle this semester. You are expected to check the web daily in order to participate fully in the class. All written work must be formatted in the manner stated on the assignment page and submitted as a PDF document via Moodle by the beginning of class on the date due. I will not accept paper copies. If Moodle is down, please use email as an alternate submission option.

Please use the following naming scheme for all files: lastname_assignmentname

If you have course materials stored on your phone, tablet, laptop or equivalent device, please set it to “Airplane Mode” so that the functionality is limited to stored data retrieval for class participation. Please silence and stow other unneeded electronic devices. I will have my phone on vibrate in case an emergency message should be sent by the university. If accessing the web becomes necessary, inform me that you are doing so for the benefit of the entire class. Raise your hand and proclaim, “I’m Googling it!”

If one of your devices rings accidentally during class, please silence it as **quickly as humanly possible**. Don’t be embarrassed, just turn it off and all will be forgiven. Having said that anyone caught text messaging or frivolously surfing the web will be dismissed immediately from class, resulting in a complete absence. **I’M NOT KIDDING.**

Grading Scale and Breakdown:

Grading Scale:	
A	100 – 90%
B	89 – 80%
C	79 – 70 %
D	69 – 60%
F	59 and Below
Assignments:	Percentage:
Chapter Tests (5)	30%
Essay 1 – 600-800 Words	10%
Essay 2 – 800-1000 Words	20%
Essay 3 – 800-1000 Words	20%
Participation	20%

Course Schedule:	
Topic/Date	Topic/Reading Due:
The Nature of Drama: What is a Play, Weeks 1-2	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> by Oscar Wilde <i>Page and Stage</i> Chapter 1
Thursday, 2/6	Essay 1 Assigned
Tuesday, 2/11	Test on Chapter 1
Tuesday, 2/18	Essay 1 Due
Playwright and Audience, Weeks 3-4	<i>Book of Days</i>, by Lanford Wilson <i>Page and Stage</i> Chapter 2
Tuesday 2/25	Test on Chapter 2
The Contextual Dimension of Drama, Weeks 5-7	<i>The Glass Menagerie</i>, by Tennessee Williams <i>Page and Stage</i> Chapter 3
Thursday, 2/27	Essay 2 Assigned
Tuesday, 3/18	Test on Chapter 3
Friday, 3/29	Essay 2 Due Friday by 5 PM
The Temporal Dimension of Drama, Weeks 8-11	<i>Machinal</i>, by Sophie Treadwell <i>Page and Stage</i> Chapter 4
Tuesday, 4/15	Test on Chapter 4
Form and Style in the Drama, Weeks 11-13	<i>Angels in America Part 2</i>, by Tony Kushner <i>Page and Stage</i> Chapter 5
Tuesday, 4/22	Final Essay Assigned
Tuesday, 5/6	Test on Chapter 5
Steps in Analysis, Week 14	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>, by William Shakespeare
Tuesday, May 14	Final Paper Due at 5 PM
	The Contextual Dimension of Drama <i>Book of Days</i> , by Lanford Wilson

Course Policies and Procedures:

[Student Conduct Code](#): All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

[School of Theatre and Dance Handbook](#): All students in theatre courses must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance *Handbook*. The Handbook is available online if you have any questions.

[Disability Services for Students \(DSS\)](#): If you have a disability for which accommodations are needed please contact me in the first week of the semester. We will discuss what accommodations you need and will receive in this course.

[Late Work Policy](#): Tests may only be rescheduled with prior arrangement with the instructor. Only final essays may be turned in late for partial credit. No other assignments can be turned in late.

[Naming and Submitting Assignments](#): All file formats (doc, docx, txt, rtf, pdf, mp3) must be uploaded using the following naming standard: Lastname_Assignment

[Specification for papers](#): Please upload your assignments as a doc, docx, txt, rtf, dts, pdf. **Please no .wps files, they are unreadable.** If you choose the last option be sure to SAVE your work elsewhere on your computer before attempting to upload it. Losing your work due to Moodle-error is not an excuse for turning in work late.

[Technical Requirements](#): Visit the UMLearn web page that lists downloads and plug-ins that they may need to complete your course.