

This syllabus has been provided as a reference tool for students considering this course. It has been modified to follow Senate regulations. Current students enrolled in any undergraduate course must obtain the most recent syllabus from their course instructor or from their course website. This is not the latest version.



Department of English & Writing Studies

American Drama English 3666F (001) Fall 2013

Instructor: Erica Leighton

Date/Time: Tuesday 11:30am-12:30pm
Thursday 11:30am-1:30pm

Location: Physics and Astronomy Building 106

Prerequisites

At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Antirequisite(s): English 2460F/G.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

What is America, as a theatrical idea? How does the stage reflect the nation, its myths and aspirations? This course explores theatre as a "public art" form in the modern and contemporary United States, reading a variety of dramatists that may include Hansberry, Kushner, Miller, O'Neill, Parks, Williams, and Wilson.

Objectives:

Successful students who complete the course will be better able to:

- Discuss American dramatic productions in their historical and literary contexts;
- Think critically about the role of American drama in the context of American literature;
- Understand some of the problems and concerns associated with the production and adaptation of plays, and consider how these issues affect the meaning and reception of a dramatic production;
- Develop the ability to analyze texts and to produce clear, well-articulated and logical arguments supported by adequate evidence from the text(s);
- Write a research paper in MLA format by integrating research materials and references from the text(s).

Course Materials

Required Texts:

Eugene O'Neill, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*
Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*
Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*
Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf?*

LeRoi Jones/ Amiri Baraka, *Dutchman*
Maria Irene Fornes, *Fefu and Her Friends*
Sam Shepard, *True West*
David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*
John Guare, *Six Degrees of Separation*
Tony Kushner, *Angels in America, Part I*

Methods of Evaluation

Reading quizzes (6 total)	5%
Group performance	15%
Peer response	5%
Post-performance reflection (750 words, 3-4 pages)	10%
Research essay (1600 words, 6-8 pages)	20%
Attendance and participation	10%
Final exam	35%

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. **Please note:** The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

Timetable:

Date	Topic	Pre- Reading	Assignments
Tu. Sept.10	Introduction and course overview		
Th. Sept. 12	O'Neill, <i>Long Day's Journey Into Night</i>	O'Neill, <i>Long Day's Journey Into Night</i>	
Tu. Sept. 17	O'Neill con't: Williams	Williams, <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	
Th. Sept. 19	Williams	Williams, <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	
Tu. Sept. 24	Film Adaption	Film: <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	
Th. Sept. 26	Film and adaption discussion	Film: <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	
Tu. Oct. 1	Miller, <i>The Crucible</i>	Miller, <i>The Crucible</i>	Quiz #1
Th. Oct. 3	Miller con't and Performance 1		Performance 1
Tu. Oct. 8	Albee, <i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf?</i>	Albee, <i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf?</i>	Quiz #2
Th. Oct. 10	Albee con't and Performance 2		Performance 2
Tu. Oct. 15	Jones, <i>Dutchman</i>	Jones, <i>Dutchman</i>	Quiz #3
Th. Oct. 17	Jones con't and Performance 3		Performance 3
Tu. Oct. 22	Fornes, <i>Fefu and Her Friends</i>	Fornes, <i>Fefu and Her Friends</i>	Quiz #4
Th. Oct. 24	Fornes con't and Performance 4		Performance 4
Tu. Oct. 29	American reality TV as drama	TBA	
Th. Oct. 31	Fall Study Break		
Tu. Nov. 5	Shepard, <i>True West</i>	Shepard, <i>True West</i>	Quiz #5
Th. Nov. 7	Shepard con't and Performance 5		Performance 5
Tu. Nov. 12	Hwang, <i>M. Butterfly</i>	Hwang, <i>M. Butterfly</i>	Quiz #6

Th. Nov. 14	Hwang con't and Performance 6	Performance 6
Tu. Nov. 19	Guare, <i>Six Degrees of Separation</i>	Guare, <i>Six Degrees of Separation</i>
Th. Nov. 21	Guare con't, and Performance 7	Performance 7 and Research Essay
Tu. Nov. 26	Kushner, <i>Angels in America, Part I</i>	Kushner, <i>Angels in America, Part I</i>
Th. Nov. 28	Film adaption	Film: <i>Angels in America Part 1</i>
Tu. Dec. 3	Film adaption discussion	Film: <i>Angels in America Part 1</i>
Th. Dec. 5	Last Day of Class: Review	Questions and comments
Dec. 8-19	Exam Period	

Assignments:

Reading Quizzes: These quizzes are designed to encourage thoughtful analysis and response to the plays covered, and to reward reading and engagement.

Group performance: For the group performance, the class will be divided into seven groups of approximately six students. Each group is responsible for staging a scene from the play we are discussing in the class that day as well as offering an explication of their performance. Not all students need to perform in front of the class; rather, students may direct the play, contribute to the set design (as far as the classroom will allow) or costume design, or some other behind the scenes role. Each member of the group will be expected to do an equal amount of work, as determined by the group. The performance should take approximately 15 minutes and the subsequent explanation should take another 15 minutes. The group needs to explain why they chose the scene they performed, the importance of the aesthetic and interpretive choices they made in staging the play, and discuss the relationship between their performance and some themes of the play. The performance grade will be based on the students' participation in the staging of the play and their participation in the discussion.

Peer response: After each group performance, another group will be responsible for formally responding to the interpretive decisions of the performance. The Peer Group will provide comments and pose questions that are respectful and thought-provoking.

Post-performance reflection: One week after the group performance, each member of the group is required to submit a brief (750 word) paper describing the specific role he or she took in the production and how his or her contribution to the performance related to his or her interpretation of the play. Like the post- performance presentation, each student should indicate the relationship(s) between their interpretive choices in staging the play and some theme or themes addressed in the play. However, in contrast to the group explication, this should focus on the individual student's contribution as actor, director, set designer, and so on.

Research essay: Students will be required to write an essay on one of a list of topics presented later in the term. Essays should include a clear, argumentative, and specific thesis statement, as well as a logical argument defended with evidence from the play or plays being discussed. Students need to incorporate secondary sources from scholarly journals and books. The

assignment must be submitted in MLA format. It is recommended that you consult the instructor or teaching assistant regarding your essays before getting too far into the assigned topics.

Attendance and participation:

The grade for attendance will be determined based on a student's attendance and participation in class discussions. If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, you may meet with the professor or teaching assistant to discuss the plays outside of class.

Assignment rules and regulations:

Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day, including weekends. As per UWO regulations, students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any misses texts, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on assignments cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.