

Department of English & Writing Studies

English 2041F

Special Topics in Drama

Fall 2015 Production: Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women*

In this course, students participating in a major Western University theatre production explore in theory and practice approaches to text in performance. Only students working as an actor, or in such major production roles as stage manager, assistant stage manager, lighting, set or costume designer may enroll. Permission of the Chair of Undergraduate Studies is required to enroll.

First Read through: **Thursday, September 17, 2015, starting at 7pm, Somerville House (SH) 3355.** Performances: McManus Theatre, November 11-14, 2015. All shows start at 7:30pm. The call for cast and crew for the run is 6pm. See complete rehearsal schedule below.

Instructor/Director:

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Text:Middleton, Thomas. *Women Beware Women*. Ed. William C. Carroll. London: Methuen, 1994. Print.Course Requirements and Evaluation:

First Essay (500-750 words)	10%
Second Essay (750-1000 words)	10%
Third Essay (1000-1500 words)	40%
Performance Evaluation (See below)	40%

Essay Due Dates, Late policy, Extensions, Plagiarism:

1. All overdue essays will receive a penalty of 1% per day late.
2. Essays must be handed to me in person or dropped in the English Department Essay Drop-Off Box in the hallway by the front doors to AHB, outside of room 2G02.
3. Essays must be typed, double-spaced, and stapled in the upper left hand corner. No binders or protective covers of any kind are necessary. Essays must follow current MLA format and must include a list of Works Cited at the end (see *MLA Handbook* for details).
4. **IT IS ADVISABLE TO RETAIN AT LEAST ONE COPY OF THE ESSAY IN THE EVENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE TO THE ORIGINAL.**
5. **Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a 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 (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).
6. **Plagiarism Checking:** The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

Academic Accommodation:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 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 Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. The full policy is set out here: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

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.

Essay Topics:

Essay 1: Scene Analysis (500-750 words) 10%: Due Thursday, 15 October 2015

Choose ONE scene from the play, and in a 500-750 word essay analyse the scene in terms of such elements as theme, literary devices, and patterns of imagery, character development, staging techniques, and relationship to the play as a whole.

Essay 2: Narrative Essay (750-1000 words) 10%: Due Thursday, 19 November 2015

Write an essay of 750-1000 words explaining your role in the production and discussing the ways in which this experience has affected your understanding of the play. Hint: Please note that the final essay (Essay 3) is due just under three weeks later, because of the requirement to submit grades on time to the department. Therefore, it would be advisable to work on both Essay 2 and 3 at the same time: i.e. very early in the term.

Essay 3: Short Research Essay (1250-1500 words) 40%: Due Wednesday, 9 December 2015

Choose ONE of the following questions, and write a 1250-1500 word research essay. Use at least two secondary sources to frame your own argument answering this question. Respond to those critics. Don't just copy their ideas, but show how yours differ from theirs. Use MLA format and document meticulously. This is a critical essay, so you need a clear argument/thesis. Be sure to talk to me early about your ideas for this thesis and how to research the question.

1. What arguments can you make about the role of women in this play? To what extent is it proto-feminist or is it at all proto-feminist? How does the play explore the problems of patriarchy in its time?
2. How does the language in this play compare with that of another play from the same period, such as a Shakespeare tragedy of the early seventeenth century? What specific devices or elements of discourse or literary strategies does Middleton deploy, and how does he combine the stage space with these textual strategies, in contrast to the same process in, for example, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* or *Measure for Measure*?
3. What is the most important prop or set piece used in *Women Beware Women*? Why? What kind of theatre does this prop exemplify or is it part of a challenge to the conventions or boundaries of the stage?
4. What are some of the effects and problems of the masque and final scene of *Women Beware Women*? Does it destabilize the entire play and, if so, how and why? How does the scene relate to the masque tradition of the period? What, if any, political implications might there be in this final scene?

Performance Evaluation and Expectations:

40% (subdivided below)

Attendance and Punctuality (5%)

You must attend all rehearsals, meetings, and performances to which you are called. All members of cast and crew must be on time for each call you are given.

Preparation (10%)

Cast members must research and prepare their roles from the first read-through to final performance. Actors must take careful blocking notes and must observe the off-book deadline punctually. Technical and production staff should also research their work thoroughly and produce set designs and set pieces, properties, costumes, and other necessities in a timely fashion.

Focus (5%)

Attentiveness and effort during rehearsals and performance will be assessed.

Innovation (5%)

Contribution of ideas and initiatives will be noted, in the rehearsal process and through the run.

General Progress and Improvement (5%)

Your attention to the director's and the stage manager's notes and your effort at improving performance or production work will be assessed.

Overall Professionalism (10%)

Respect towards the entire company, UWO staff, and the physical theatre, properties, and equipment will be noted. Commitment to the production, willingness to assist with production matters, and overall work ethic will be assessed, along with flexibility and problem-solving abilities. Clear communication of concerns and ideas will count.

Duties of Production Roles:

1. *Stage Manager*: Attend all auditions, interviews, and rehearsals, as well as each performance. Write blocking notes, props notes, and technical cues into prompt script. Supervise two ASMs (see below). Give the calls to all cast members and needed production staff for rehearsals and run of show. Call the cues during the run of the show. Take charge of dressing rooms, green room, and stage during rehearsals and run. Head up technical crew during rehearsals and run.
2. *Assistant Stage Managers* (ASMs—two): Work with Stage Manager on keeping blocking and technical notes, and on calling cast members for rehearsals and run. Head up the running crew for the run of the show. Assist with properties, costumes, costume changes, and other cues.
3. *Costume Designer*: In consultation with the director, design and build, rent and/or borrow costumes for the run. Measure all cast members, and draw up costume plot. Provide rehearsal skirts for female cast members in early rehearsal period. Organise and supervise two costume assistants. Take charge of costumes during run. Ensure return of borrowed and rented costumes after closing night. Submit all receipts to Producer.
4. *Costume Assistants* (two): Assist Costume Designer during design process, measuring, and rehearsals. Assist in building, sewing, and altering costumes. Help in any costume rental or borrowing. Assist with costumes during run—changes, repairs, laundry, etc. Help return costumes at end of run.
5. *Properties Designer*: In consultation with director, costume, and set designers, design and build, purchase, rent, or borrow props before production week. Locate and borrow needed furniture for run. Organise and supervise running, maintenance, storage, repair, and replacement of props during tech and dress rehearsals, as well as during run. Return props at end of run. Submit all receipts to Producer.
6. *Composer/Music Director*: Compose incidental, pre-show, intermission, and after-show music. Burn CD or arrange musicians to play during run.
7. *Production Photographer/Videographer/Web Designer*: Photograph cast and crew for programme and publicity stills to display on campus and elsewhere. Film rehearsal and/or show for record. Design and maintain production web site (linked to English department site).
8. *Publicity Manager and Programme Designer*: In consultation with director and producer, organize all publicity: flyers, teasers, posters, print and online advertising and media releases. Liaise with FIMS and with the USC and the *Gazette* and *Western News*, as well as London media, in order to set up television, newspaper, and online interviews and other coverage. With producer, organize pre-show ticket sales to large classes in English department and possibly other departments.
9. *Box Office Manager*: With Publicity Manager, organize and run selling of tickets pre-show to UWO classes, as well as at box office locations. Help manage box office during run. Look after box office receipts.

Please note that there are no scheduled classes, only rehearsals.

WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN Provisional Rehearsal Schedule Fall 2015:

All cast members are responsible for knowing which scenes their characters are in and therefore which scenes they are called to. Rehearsals are normally three hours long. Check times below carefully, and check email frequently for changes to the schedule.

All rehearsals from Sept. 17 to Nov. 7 are in Somerville House (SH) 3355.

From Nov. 9 to Nov. 14 we will be at the McManus Theatre.

Thurs. Sept. 17—READ THROUGH SCRIPT, 7pm

Sat. Sept. 19— Block Act 1, 1pm

Tues. Sept. 22— Block Act 2, 7pm

Thurs. Sept 24—Block Act 3, 7pm

Sat. Sept. 26—Block Acts 4 & 5, 1pm

Tues. Sept. 29—Work Act 1, 7pm

Thurs. Oct. 1—Work Act 2, 7pm

Tues. Oct. 6—Work Act 3, 7pm

Thurs. Oct. 8—Work Act 4, 7pm

Sat. Oct. 10—Thanksgiving weekend: whoever is in town work speeches, 1pm

Tues. Oct. 13—Work Act 5, 7pm **OFF BOOK DEADLINE**

Thurs. Oct. 15—Work needed scenes (TBA), 7pm

Sat. Oct. 17— Work needed scenes (TBA), 1pm

Tues. Oct. 20—Work needed scenes (TBA), 7pm

Thurs. Oct. 22—Work needed scenes (TBA), 7pm

Sat. Oct. 24—Stumble through whole show, 1pm

Tues. Oct. 27—Work needed scenes (TBA), 7pm

Thurs. Oct. 29—Run whole show, 7pm

Sat. Oct. 31— Work needed scenes (TBA), 1pm

Tues. Nov. 3—Run whole show, 7pm

Thurs. Nov. 5—Work needed scenes (TBA), 7pm

Sat. Nov. 7—Work needed scenes (TBA), 1pm

Mon. Nov. 9—Load-in and Tech: McManus Theatre

Tues. Nov. 20—Final Dress: McManus Theatre

Wed. Nov. 11—OPENING NIGHT: McManus Theatre

Thurs. Nov. 12—SECOND NIGHT: McManus Theatre

Fri. Nov. 13—THIRD NIGHT: McManus Theatre

Sat. Nov. 14—CLOSING NIGHT: McManus Theatre