

## Department of English &amp; Writing Studies

**Understanding Performance**

Theatre Studies 2201F (001)

Fall 2022

**COVID Statement**

Students will be expected to wear triple layer non-medical masks at all times in the classroom as per Western policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask for medical or religious reasons must seek formal accommodation through Accessible Education at [aew@uwo.ca](mailto:aew@uwo.ca).

Students are expected not to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.

Students unwilling to wear a mask as stipulated by Western policy and public health directives will be referred to the Department, and such actions will be considered a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

**Instructor:** Dr M. J. Kidnie; she/her (I prefer M.J.; you can also call me Dr or Prof Kidnie)  
Email: [mjkidnie@uwo.ca](mailto:mjkidnie@uwo.ca)  
Office: UC 4420  
Office hours: Weds 12:30-2:30 and by arrangement

**Course Location:** UC 3220

**Course Date/Time:** Mon 10:30-12:30 &  
Wed 11:30-12:30

**Prerequisites:** At least 60% in 1.0 of any 1000-level or above “E” or combination of two 1000-level or above “F/G” courses from any department in the following Faculties: Arts and Humanities, School of Humanities (Brescia), Information and Media Studies (FIMS), or Music; or from any of the following additional Departments: Anthropology, English (King’s), English and Cultural Studies (Huron), History (Main and Affiliates), Philosophy (Affiliates), Political Science (Main and Affiliates), the Religious Studies (Affiliates), or permission of the Department.

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.

**Land Acknowledgement:**

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

Course Description

This course will equip students with the primary tools necessary to conduct basic performance analysis. From costumes to lighting and sound effects to textual alterations, students will learn to analyze a production while exploring the social, political, and aesthetic meanings of the required texts. Much of our work will be pursued through hands-on engagement with live and archived theatre.

**Objectives:**

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Recognize and analyze the component parts of live or archived performance;
- Use specialized terminology relevant to the study of performance;
- Engage with scripts as blueprints for performance and theorize that interpretive strategy;
- Think critically about the reception of performance;
- Locate and search library databases to find critical and theoretical analyses relevant to a topic of study;
- Write an essay about a piece of theatre that contains an effective thesis

Course Materials for purchase (texts are available at the bookstore)

Caryl Churchill, Top Girls

Shakespeare, Hamlet

Theatre ticket to see Hamlet at the Stratford Festival

Theatre ticket to see Grand Ghosts at the Grand Theatre

Cinema ticket to see NT Live production (to be determined)

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

1000-word essay – 15%

1500-word essay – 30%

Podcast (8-10 minutes, group project) – 20%

Director's Notebook – 25%

Participation – 10%

**Teaching Methods**

I teach using a combination of lectures, classroom discussion, and “on your feet” exploration of theatrical texts.

**Course Expectations:**

Attendance at every class is mandatory, but please do not come to class if you are feeling ill.

**Submission of Assignments:**

All submission dates are listed below. Submit written coursework on the due date through our OWL website.

**Late Paper Policy:**

If you submit a paper after the due date, the paper will be counted as late. The grade will be reduced by a penalty of two marks (2%) for each calendar day that it is late.

Extensions will only be considered if supported by a request for accommodation sent by students' Academic Counsellors in their home faculty (see below, “Accommodation”).

**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. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

**Please note:** The department of English and 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/Student%20Information.html>.

### Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

### Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

### Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

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 [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

The full policy is set out here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

**Religious Accommodation:**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

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

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.

Teaching Programme

This class outline is subject to change. Students are expected to stay abreast of coursework through regular attendance at class.

September

12 Intro to course: From Text to Performance

14 *Hamlet*: Scene Exploration

19 *Hamlet*: Scene Exploration

21 *Hamlet*: Scene Exploration

Saturday, September 24 – Stratford Trip: *Hamlet* and Stratford Festival Archives

26 “Saving” performance – From Performance to Text

28 Writing about Performance: Long-form writing

October

- 3 Stage Space, Fictional Space, and the Actor's Body  
**essay submission:** Performance analysis of *Hamlet* due today (1000 words)
- 5 No class due to weekend field trip on September 24
- 10 THANKSGIVING MONDAY (no class)
- 12 Stage Space, Fictional Space, and the Actor's Body con't; Directors' Notebooks
- 17 Theatrical Spaces
- 19 The Grand Theatre in London. *This class will be held in Museum London.*

Wednesday, October 19, 7:30pm – Grand Theatre trip: *Grand Ghosts*. Backstage tour (time TBA). Half-hour Q&A with artists after the show.

- 24 *Grand Ghosts*: The Performance Event
- 26 My Words, Their Words; Podcast workshop

Reading Week – October 31-November 6

November

- 7 *Top Girls*: Scene Exploration: Dialogue and Characterization  
**podcast submission:** "*Grand Ghosts* – Theatre as Event" podcast due today (8-10 min)
- 9 *Top Girls*: Scene Exploration: Female Voice, Doubling, and Feminist Politics
- 14 National Theatre Production of *Top Girls*  
**required viewing:** *Top Girls* (Drama Online)
- 16 Escaping the Information Bubble: Researching Performance
- 21 Screened theatre and "Liveness"
- 23 Cinema outing this week to see NT Live (production TBA)
- 28 NT Live post-performance discussion
- 30 NT Live post-performance discussion

December

- 5 Director's Notebook – workshop  
**essay submission:** Performance analysis of *Top Girls* or NT Live production due today (1500 words)
- 7 End of term celebration!  
**director's notebook submission**