

Drama 115 – Perspectives in Drama

Professor: Gregory Kable

Section 003: Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 1:25 - 2:15 pm

Carroll Hall 111

Overview: This class offers an introduction to Western drama from its beginnings in Ancient Greece to the contemporary stage. We will read texts, screen videos, engage in critical writing, and attend performances, all of which are intended to enhance your understanding and appreciation of drama. Bear in mind that this is a survey and as we're covering 2500 years of theatre, it is by definition not comprehensive. We will, however, attempt a reasonable amount of both depth and breadth in the course of our journey. We will explore how to look at plays in terms of both text and performance: that is, as literature or cultural artifacts, but also as blueprints for action in the theatre. Each work we study is remarkably different, and will likely give you a completely new perspective on what constitutes dramatic art. Approach them all with an open mind and an open heart. And welcome to the class.

Objectives: By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- * Identify relationships and distinctions between drama and theatre.
- * Recognize the basic elements of dramatic structure and key theatrical movements.
- * Define important theatrical terms.
- * Identify the contributions of several seminal playwrights and theatre artists.
- * Explain some of the social, cultural, and political influences on theatre.
- * Pursue an interest in current theatre practice, including active theatergoing.

Required Text: *The Compact Bedford Introduction to Drama*, 7/e. Lee A. Jacobus, ed.

Additional materials will be made available on the course Sakai site.

Required Department of Dramatic Art Privilege Card: In addition to the class work, you will be required to attend the three Mainstage productions by PlayMakers Repertory Company premiering over the course of the term. The DDA Privilege Card grants you admission at the lowest possible cost. Details will be posted on Sakai.

Prologue: Blank Space

Aug 24. Introductions and Course Outline

Aug 26. Mirror Up to Nature

Act One: Classical to Neoclassical Drama

Aug 29. Introduction to Greek Drama

Aug 31. Classical Drama 1: Euripides' *Medea*

Sept 2. *Medea* (cont.)

Sept 5. [No class—Labor Day Holiday]

Sept 7. Classical Drama 2: Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*

Sept 9. *Lysistrata* (cont.)

Sept 12. *Lysistrata* (cont.)

Sept 14. Introduction to Renaissance Drama

Sept 16. Classical Drama 3: William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*

Sept 19. *Twelfth Night* (cont.)

Sept 21. *Twelfth Night* (cont.)

Sept 23. *Twelfth Night* (cont.)

Sept 26. Introduction to Neoclassical Drama

Sept 28. Classical Drama 4: Moliere's *Tartuffe*

Sept 30. *Tartuffe* (cont.)

Oct 3. **EXAM ONE**

Act Two: Melodrama to Modern Drama

Oct 5. Introduction to Melodrama

Oct 7. Dion Boucicault's *The Poor of New York*

Oct 10. *The Poor of New York* (cont.)

Oct 12. Introduction to Naturalist Drama

Oct 14. **Exam One Review**

Oct 17. Modern Drama 1: Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll House*

Oct 19. *A Doll House* (cont.)

Fall recess.

Oct 24. Introduction to Farce

Oct 26. Modern Drama 2: Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Oct 28. *The Importance of Being Earnest* (cont.) + **COURSE PAPER DUE**

Oct 31. Introduction to Absurdist Drama

Nov 2. Modern Drama 3: Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*

Nov 4. *Endgame* (cont.)

Nov 7. **EXAM TWO**

Act Three: American Drama

Nov 9. Introduction to American Acting

Nov 11. American Drama 1: Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*

Nov 14. *A Raisin in the Sun* (cont.)

Nov 16. *A Raisin in the Sun* (cont.)

Nov 18. **Exam Two Review**

Nov 21. American Drama 2: Tony Kushner's *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*

Thanksgiving recess.

Nov 28. *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* (cont.)

Nov 30. *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* (cont.)

Dec 2. *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* (cont.)

Dec 5. American Drama 3: George Brant's *Grounded*

Final Exam: Monday December 12th @ Noon.

Academic Freedom: By enrolling in this class, you are accepting that aspects of the course may not conform to your personal beliefs, tastes or values. Please respect such differences as a factor in exploring the history of ideas.

Commitment: The reading load for this class is 11 plays in 16 weeks. Don't be daunted and don't ever grow discouraged. Some of the plays are short, some read swiftly despite their length and, yes, some may remain alien and frustrating throughout. Grant yourself the time to keep up with the syllabus. This is not only a necessity for the nature of the class work but without your contributions in having completed the reading, it's likely our meetings will drive you insane.

Attendance: To be a member of this class, you must *be* a member of this class, meaning class attendance is *mandatory*. While the discussions and the readings are designed to be complementary, neither is intended as a substitute for the other. The cumulative nature of the course will assume a familiarity with both.

Requirements: Students are expected to complete readings and assignments on time. The writing deadlines are absolute: no late work will be accepted, and no changes in exam schedules will be permitted. You are responsible for all material covered in class, regardless of whether you are present. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates (excluding the officially scheduled final examination), when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be announced as early as possible so that students can adjust their schedules.

Assignments: The following comprise the course assignments:

* **Daily Attendance.** Students are expected to be present at all class meetings. If necessary, attendance may be monitored via in-class assignments throughout the term. This policy is not intended as a hardship but to facilitate your success in the course.

* **Three Exams.** Tests will combine standard multiple choice, multiple choice fill in the blank and true and false questions, and cover major points of both the readings and discussions. The Final Exam will contain cumulative questions.

* **A Course Paper of 8 pages in length.** The Paper Prompt and Writing Guidelines will be made available on the course website.

Written Work: All submitted assignments must be typed. You must retain a file copy of your submitted assignments in case of accident or loss. Assignments must be well written and will be graded on style as well as content.

Grading: Assignments are graded on the following standardized ten-point grading scale:

A =94-100 B+ =87-89 B- =80-82 C =73-76 D+ =67-69 F =00-59
A- =90-93 B =83-86 C+ =77-79 C- =70-72 D =60-66

Course distribution will closely adhere to the following:

Exam One 25% Course Paper 20%

These percentages may change considerably in cases of poor attendance.

Course Grades: from *The Undergraduate Bulletin*

“A”. Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development. The A grade states clearly that the student has shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study that he/she may be strongly encouraged to continue.

“B”. Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The B grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.

“C”. A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The C grade states that while not yet showing any unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.

“D”. A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The D grade states that the student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline.

“F”. For whatever reasons, an unacceptable performance. The F grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content.

Honor Code: The Honor Code is in effect in this class and all others at the University. I am committed to treating Honor Code violations seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its terms set out at <http://instrument.unc.edu>. If you have questions, it is your responsibility to ask me about the Code's application. All exams, written work, and other projects must be submitted with a statement that you have complied with the requirements of the Honor Code in all aspects of the submitted work.

Where to Find Help: Professor Kable's office, Center for Dramatic Art - room 215. It's a large class, but it needn't remain impersonal. Office hours are an excellent opportunity to clarify issues, discuss assignments or simply meet and greet. See me in class or contact me by email at gkable@email.unc.edu.