

English 215: History of Drama and Theater I

Spring 2008
Oxford College

Dr. Lemons, Few Hall 104
Office Hours: M-F 2:30-3:30 & by appointment

Objectives:

1. to gain an understanding and appreciation of some of the best plays of the classical and early modern period.
2. to develop an understanding of the development of plays and theatrical conventions from the ancient Greece through the 18th century and to see the influence of plays and playwrights in succeeding generations.
3. to improve one's ability to a) discuss, and b) write about: plays, the issues they present, and the theatrical environment, including the historical, religious, philosophical and sociological contexts of plays presented in a chronological format

Texts:

Stages of Drama; Sophocles: The Complete Plays, others provided

Methods:

- Introductory remarks, particularly on historical and theoretical contexts
- Extensive class discussion of texts
- Frequent brief, factual quizzes
- One major paper
- Final & Midterm Exams in essay format
- One or two theater field trips to Theater Emory and/or Shakespeare Tavern--OR Participation in a "lab," working on the Spring Play (10 hours)
- Participation in the Learnlink conference: Oxford College>Classes>English>215 Lemons
- Student-teacher conferences during office hours and by appointment

Guidelines:

1. Since the course involves active class participation, I expect you to be in class every day, *on time*. Each absence will result in one point off the final grade per absence. However, you may miss two classes without penalty. These two absences should be used for illnesses and/or whatever you believe important. You do not need to get permission for these cuts, nor tell me when or why you take them. Participation in class depends on your own personal style, but it should include: paying attention, listening, responding to the professor's and other students' comments, proposing interpretations, and answering questions. This is not a lecture class.
2. The Mid Term & Final exams, covering readings and our discussions, will consist of in-class essay(s), graded for writing ability as well as content. The Mid Term will cover the first half of the course, the Final the second half. You will not be able to use your text book or notes during the exam.
3. Quizzes are brief, factual and frequent. *Missed quizzes cannot be made up*; and a 0 is recorded if a quiz is not taken. The quizzes cover the plays, the introductions to plays and other material about the plays in the texts. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped so that missing two classes is not a penalty. *Tardiness means you will miss* the quiz given at the beginning of class.
4. The paper, 4-8 pages long, will approach two or more plays from an historical, contextual, or literary critical perspective. Outside sources may be used and, if used, documented properly, but they are not required; the analysis should be essentially your own. Topics for papers are best worked with your professor. There will be some time given in class to instruction in paper

writing for this assignment. Late papers will be reduced one letter grade per day late, beginning at the due time.

5. Play work is help on the Spring Play. Each hour of work counts one point up to 10 points (10 hours). Hours are flexible. **OR,**

Reviews may be written: each 2 – 3 page review of a live performance counts 3 points up to 10 points.

For the play work/review section of your grade, a maximum of 10 points may be earned. Play work/play reviews may be mixed.

Grading Scale

Quizzes-20%

Paper-20%

Mid Term-15%

Final Exam-25%

Participation-10%

Reviews/Play Work-10%

(Keep track of your grades. I do not do averages until after the final exam is graded.)

Schedule of Assignments:

1/17 Introduction

1/22 Agamemnon (plays are in Stages of Drama unless otherwise noted)

1/24 Oedipus Tyrannus (Sophokles Complete)

1/29 Antigone (Sophokles Complete)

1/31 Oedipus at Kolonos (Sophokles Complete)

2/ 5 Philoktetes (Sophokles Complete)

2/ 7 The Bacchae

2/12 Lysistrata

2/14 A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Wedding

2/21 Master Peter Patelan (handout)

3/26 Second Shepherd's Play

2/28 one-act Medieval pageant plays (handout)

3/ 4 Mid Term Exam

3/ 6 Everyman

3/20 Dr. Faustus

3/25 Dr. Faustus

3/27 Much Ado About Nothing

4/ 1 Much Ado About Nothing

4/ 3 Othello

4/ 8 Othello

4/10 Volpone

4/15 Volpone

4/17 The Misanthrope

4/18 (a Friday) Paper Due, 4:30pm, at my office

4/22 The Rover

4/24 School for Scandal

4/29 Catch-up Day

5/ 1 Final Exam 2-5 pm

Note: Changes will probably be made to the syllabus so you should check the class conference or find out assignments from fellow students if you are absent. .