

## English 215: History of Drama and Theater I

Fall 2011  
Oxford College

Dr. Lemons, Few Hall 104  
Office Hours: M-F 3 - 4 & by app't

### 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 Greeks through the 18th century and to see the influence of plays and playwrights in succeeding generations.
3. to improve the ability to a) talk about, and b) write about plays and theater, the human and spiritual issues they present, and the theatrical environment, including the historical, religious, philosophical and sociological contexts of those plays.

**Texts:** Stages of Drama; Sophokles: The Complete Plays

### Methods:

- Introductory remarks, particularly on historical and theoretical contexts
- In-depth class discussion of texts\*
- Frequent brief, factual quizzes
- One major paper & a presentation on this paper
- Final & Midterm essay Exams
- 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 a Class Blog
- Student-teacher conferences during office hours and by appointment

\*We will strive for class discussions that are lively, engaging, fun, creative, and informative and involve everyone; this is how the majority of class time will be spent.

### Guidelines:

1. Since the course involves active and informed class participation, I expect you to be in class every day, on time. Each absence will result in one point off the final grade. However, you may miss two classes without penalty. These two absences should be used for illnesses or whatever you choose. You do not need to get permission for these cuts. Participation in class depends on your own personal style, but it should include: listening, responding to classmates' comments, proposing interpretations, and answering questions. So a lot more than your physical presence is required in class. A note on illness: I suggest you save your 2 free cuts, if possible, for illness. I do not accept doctor's notes. If you miss more than 2 days (in this class that equals one week), you should contact Dr. Martucci, Director of Academic Services, so she can explain the situation to all your teachers. Laptops can be distracting; please don't use them during class.
2. The Mid Term & Final exams, covering readings and discussions, consist of in-class essays, graded for writing ability and content. The Mid Term covers the first half of the course, the Final the second half. You may not use your texts for the Midterm but you may for the Final.
3. Quizzes are brief, factual, easy, 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. Being late to class will probably mean you will miss the quiz.

4. The paper, 5-8 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. Late papers will be reduced one letter grade per day late, beginning at the due time. The **class presentation** will consist of two parts: one presentation before the paper is due and one when the paper is turned in. The class presentation will be on the topic of your paper, but may also include other elements, such as a report on your progress, powerpoint, even a staged reading.

6. Play work is help on the Fall Play or the OESA 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 of a play counts 3 points up to 6 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.

7. Class Blog and Blackboard Site. Check Blackboard for changes, updates, to share something relevant to the class. If there are last minute changes, tips, suggestions, these will go to the Blackboard Site. You will find the syllabus and other handouts there as well as the Class Blog. You must enter 3 entries and 3 comments on the BB site in the first half of the class and 3 entries, 3 comments in the second half of class.

8. As in all classes at Oxford, students are expected to act in a professional way, preparing for class ahead of time, meeting deadlines, collaborating with classmates, and generally contributing in a positive way to the class. Understanding this will make a positive difference in your work, and your grade.

9. The **HONOR CODE** is in effect for all your assigned work in this class and every Oxford class. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses. You must submit your own work, not another's, and if you use material other than your own (from the internet, books, etc.) that material must be acknowledged with citations.

#### **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:**

Have the entire play read by the first discussion due date day. Below is the assignment order. Plays are in Stages of Drama unless otherwise noted.

Agamemnon

Oedipus Tyrannus (Sophokles Complete)

Antigone (Sophokles Complete)

Oedipus at Kolonos (Sophokles Complete)

Electra (Sophokles Complete)

Philoktetes (Sophokles Complete)

The Bacchae

Lysistrata

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way. . .

Master Peter Patelan (handout)

#### **Mid Term Exam**

Second Shepherd's Play

Medieval pageant play (text provided)

Everyman

Dr. Faustus

Much Ado About Nothing

Othello

Othello

Volpone

Volpone

**Paper Due: Presentations scheduled.**

The Misanthrope

The Rover

School for Scandal

**Final Exam Tuesday Dec. 13, 7-10pm**