

**University of Puerto Rico  
Rio Piedras Campus  
College of Humanities  
Department of English  
Undergraduate Program – Fall 2012**

**Course Title:** Modern Drama – 1890-1940

**Code:** Ingles 4216; Credit Hours 3

**Instructor:** Dr. Christopher Olsen, E-MAIL: [c\\_olsen@onelinkpr.net](mailto:c_olsen@onelinkpr.net), phone during office hours 764-0000 (x-3812) or leave message with English Dept. (x-2553).

**Classes:** Mondays+Wednesdays: 2:30-3:50p.m.; LPM 310; Office Hours = Monday+Wednesday; 10:00-11:30a.m.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Texts:** Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen; Mrs. Warren's Profession by G.B. Shaw; The Second Mrs. Tanqueray by Arthur Pinero; Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde; Ubu Roi by Alfred Jarry; The Ghost Sonata by August Strindberg; Riders from the Sea by John Millington Synge; Six Characters in Search of an Author by Pirandello; Desire Under the Elms by Eugene O'Neill; Machinal by Sophie Treadwell, Private Lives by Noel Coward; and Surrealistic and Futuristic Short Plays, plus essays.

**Course**

**Description:** This class is designed to explore many facets of dramatic literature including, studying theatre history and developing performance skills. The class is focused on Modern Drama beginning in the late Victorian period and running through the years leading up to World War II. Through analysis and close reading, you will be better prepared to read, understand, and criticize plays. Also, you will be able to use a background in art history to distinguish some of the experimental genres of the era known as the fin de siècle (or Belle Epoque). You will also be expected to watch a live performance of a play and write a critique on it. In addition, you will be participating as an actor or director in a series of final scenes at the end of the semester. By the end of the course, it is expected that you will have a strong understanding of the historical events and artistic movements that converged during a very prolific era. This may sound like a challenging course (it is!), but I guarantee that your enthusiasm and participation will make this adventure an exciting ride. Good luck!

**Course**

- Objectives:**
1. To gain a better critical understanding and aesthetic appreciation of drama.
  2. To be able to better identify the language and terminology associated with drama.
  3. To develop critical writing skills about drama.
  4. To develop research skills.
  5. To develop critical thinking skills
  6. To be able to perform dramatic materials
  7. To know the basic language of performance

**Scene**

**Project:** 10 minute performed scene presented by your group. Further research on a genre of theatre from the era is expected. Details to be provided.

**Play Review:** Write a two-page theatre report.

**Research**

**Project:** Write a short research paper on the work of one of the playwrights we study and be prepared to make a short presentation in front of the class.

**Exams:** There will be one take-home written exam.

**Class**

**Participation:** This class is a discussion and participation class. You are expected to contribute in the discussion and participate in performance exercises. You will be receiving an attendance/participation grade.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. You will be excused for up to two (2) classes without penalty. Any further absences will adversely affect your grade.

**Grading:** The course is based on 500 points. The breakdown is as follows: Final Exam = 200 pts.; Quizzes = 50 pts.; Performance Presentation = 75 pts.; Play Critique = 50 pts.; Research Project = 50 pts.; Class Attendance/ Participation = 75pts.  
Grade scale: 448-500 = A; 395-447 = B; 347-394 = C; 300-346 = D; 0-299 = F.

**Class Schedule**

**Class Dates**

**Assignments**

Week Aug. 20-24	Introduction and what is Drama? What is a Genre? Victorian History and Literature	
Week Aug 27-31	<u>Hedda Gabler</u>	Read <u>Hedda Gabler</u>
Week Sept. 3-7	Finish <u>Hedda Gabler</u>	Begin <u>Mrs. Tanqueray</u>
Week Sept. 10-14	Finish Mrs. <u>Tanqueray</u>	<u>Mrs. Tanqueray</u>
Week Sept. 17-21	<u>Mrs. Warren's Profession</u>	Read <u>Mrs. Warren's Profession</u>
Week Sept. 24-28	Finish <u>Mrs. Warren's Profession</u>	Begin <u>Importance of Being Earnest</u>

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Week Oct. 1-5	Finish <u>Importance of Being Earnest</u>	<u>Importance of Being Earnest</u>
Week Oct. 8-12	<u>Ubu Roi</u> and anti-Theatre	Read <u>Ubu Roi</u>
Week Oct. 15-19	The “Isms” -- Art and anti-Art Symbolism/Futurism	Read <u>Ghost Sonata</u>
Week Oct. 22-26	Irish Theatre	Read <u>Riders to the Sea</u>
<sup>1</sup> Week Oct. 29-Nov. 2	Pirandello/Brecht/Modernism <b>Scene Groups to Form</b>	Begin <u>Six Characters</u>
Week Nov. 5-9	<u>Six Characters</u>	Begin <u>Desire Under the Elms</u>
Week Nov. 12-16	Eugene O’Neill and modern tragedy	Finish <u>Desire Under the Elms</u>
Week Nov. 19-23	American Expressionism <b>Final Exam Handed Out/Thanksgiving Break!!!</b>	Begin <u>Machinal</u>
Week Nov. 26-30	Finish <u>Machinal</u> & begin <u>Private Lives</u> <b>Machinal Report due.</b>	Read <u>Private Lives</u>
Week Dec. 3-7	Finish <u>Private Lives</u>	
Week of Dec. 10-14	<b>Final Scenes and Final Exam Collected</b>	

### Reminders:

- You are expected to attend ALL classes and you should provide a WRITTEN excuse if you miss more than two classes.
- After the midterm, a written warning will be given to students whose work in class is inadequate (a “D” or “F” grade).

- Your requirements for passing this course include the following:
  - One Written Take-Home Exam
  - One Group Playwright Research Project
  - One 5-Minute Scene
  - One Theatre Report
  - Ten Quizzes
- Any form of cheating will result in dismissal from the class.
- In order to receive an “A,” it is expected that you are contributing beyond the requirements of the course and are consistently scoring high grades on all your assignments.
- In order to receive a “B,” your work is consistently above standard and your work is superior to the average.
- In order to receive a “C,” you are fulfilling the requirements of the course but are doing only the minimum needed to pass.
- I don’t expect to give out any “Ds” or “Fs.”

**Ley 51**

Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el (la) profesor(a) al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el (la) profesor(a).

## Presentations

1. Arthur Pinero, *The Second Mrs. Tangueray* – Victorian Melodrama.
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2. George Bernard Shaw, *Mrs. Warren's Profession* – Social Drama
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3. Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* – Comedy of Wit
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4. Alfred Jarry, *Ubu Roi* – Anti-Theatre
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5. August Strindberg, *Ghost Sonata* – Symbolism
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6. J. M. Synge, *Riders to the Sea* – Irish Theatre
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7. Futurism, Marinetti
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8. Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author* – Theatre about Theatre
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9. Eugene O'Neill, *Desire Under the Elms* – American Realism
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10. Sophie Treadwell, *Machinal* – American Expressionism

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11. Noel Coward, *Private Lives* – Comedy of Manners

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