

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

Course Title: **Modern Drama: 1940-Present**

Code: **Ingles 4217**; Credit Hours 3

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Olsen, E-MAIL: c_olsen@onelinkpr.net, phone during office hours 764-0000 (x-7569) or leave message with English Dept. (x-2553).

Classes: Mon&Wed; 8:30-9:50am; Office Hours = Mon&Wed, 10-11:30am.

Prerequisites: None

Text: Plays and essays will be available at Copies Unlimited or you can purchase them on your own. They include Endgame by Samuel Beckett; Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams; The Lover by Harold Pinter; Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? By Edward Albee, Dutchman by Amiri Baraka; Norman Conquests by Alan Ayckbourn; Amadeus by Peter Schaffer; Glengarry Glen Ross by David Mamet; Suburbia by Eric Begosian; Ruined by Lynn Nottage plus stand-up and performance art pieces.

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 after World War II until the present. Through analysis and close reading, you will be better prepared to read, understand, and criticize plays. 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 different genres of contemporary plays. 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 learned scene performed by two actors with one director. Written paper to be included.

Play Review: Write a two-page review of a theatre production.

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 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.

penalty. Any further absences will adversely affect your grade.

Grading: The course is based on 500 points. The breakdown is as follows: Exam = 200 pts.; Quizzes = 50 pts.; Performance Scene = 75 pts.; Play Critique = 50 pts.; Group Presentation = 50pts. 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 Jan 16-20	Introduction/Modernism/Theory	Readings
Week Jan. 23-27	<u>Endgame</u> – Theatre of the Absurd	Read <u>Endgame</u>
Week Jan. 30-Feb. 3	Finish <u>Endgame</u>	Begin <u>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</u>
Week Feb. 6-10	<u>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</u> - Lyrical Realism	Finish <u>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</u>
Week Feb. 13-17	<u>The Lover</u> - Minimalism	Begin <u>The Lover</u>
Week Feb. 20--24	<u>Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</u> Modern Naturalism	Begin <u>Virginia Woolf?</u>
Week Feb. 27-March 2	Finish <u>Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</u>	
Week March 5-9	<u>Dutchman</u> – Political Theatre & Expressionism	
Week March 12-16	<u>Norman Conquests</u> – Comedy of Manners	
Week March 19-23	Finish <u>Norman Conquests</u>	Begin <u>Amadeus</u>
Week March 26-30	<u>Amadeus</u> – Historical “Alienation”	<u>Amadeus</u>
Week April 2-6	Finish <u>Amadeus</u>	Begin <u>Glengarry</u>
Week April 9-13	<u>Glengarry Glen Ross</u> Performance Groups Formed	Read <u>Glengarry Glen Ross</u>
Week April 16-20	<u>Suburbia</u> Play Reviews Due.	Begin <u>Suburbia</u>

Week April 23-27	<u>Suburbia</u>	Begin <u>Ruined</u>
Week April 30-May 4	<u>Ruined</u>	Read <u>Ruined</u>
Week of May 7-11	Final Scenes and Final Exam Due.	

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 Studentes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tipos de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el (la) profesor(a).

Reminders:

- You are expected to attend ALL classes and you should provide a WRITTEN excuse if you miss more than three 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 Exam
 - One Group Playwright Research Project
 - One Performed Scene
 - One Theatre Review
 - Nine 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 on a level which 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.”

Plays:

Endgame, Marisol, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Dutchman, Mineola Twins, Amadeus

Scenes from various plays – Beyond Therapy and one other scene All in the Timing

What is a play? History?

What are the parts of a scene?

How to look at a play

Direct your own scene