

**Carleton University  
Fall 2023 Preliminary Course Outline  
Department of English**

**ENGL 2609A: *Drama Studies: Modes and Movements***

**Prerequisite(s): *second-year standing***

**Day/Time: Tuesday/Thursday 11:30 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.**

**Format: In-person, not suitable for online students**

**Instructor: Prof Janne Cleveland**

**Email: [janneleveland@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:janneleveland@cunet.carleton.ca)**

**\*\*\*This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change. A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term\*\*\***

**Course description:**

Theatre, in part through the aspect of 'liveness' absent in film, is dependent on not just the narrative content, but also, importantly, the cultural events to which the dramas respond. The development of dramatic practice, over time, produces a number of experimental strategies on the part of playwrights and performance theorists looking to engage audiences within the specific context of their times and places. This course will explore a number of developments in dramatic practice and technological advances, beginning at the end of 19th C that set up theatrical experimentation of the 20th Century. Such aesthetic movements as, Epic Theatre, Theatre of the Absurd, African American drama (among others) will be closely examined through a sampling of play texts that represent these historical and cultural responses. As well, we will examine advances in staging techniques that enabled theatre theorists and practitioners to experiment with the aesthetic movements that emerged in this period, and continue to influence contemporary theatre-making. The plays exemplify how drama reflects our worlds back to us, and through experimentations in representation, give us pause to consider what we want our worlds to look like.

**Students can expect to achieve the following Learning Outcomes:**

1. To increase an understanding of the ways in which theatrical experimentation directly connects to the social, political, and psychological worlds we inhabit
2. To improve the skills of critical reading, analysis, and especially academic writing
3. To increase knowledge of the contexts in which these experimental styles emerged

4. To discover how these experimental performance/production/staging styles continue to influence on contemporary stages

**Required Reading:**

*Mother Courage and Her Children* Bertolt Brecht  
*Waiting for Godot* Samuel Beckett  
*Hamletmachine* Heiner Müller  
*Cloud Nine* Caryl Churchill  
*The Laramie Project* Moises Kaufman  
*Cottagers and Indians* Drew Hayden Taylor

**Texts will be available at Haven Books**

**Highly Recommended:**

Composition handbook (e.g., *The Broadview Pocket Guide to Writing*)

**Evaluation:**

**Character study (15%)**

This assignment requires you to think about the connection between the style of theatre and how the character(s) exemplify the style. You will write a short paper of **3-4 double-spaced pages** that focuses on one character from one of the plays assigned early in the term. Your analysis will connect the style of theatre (Epic Theatre or Theatre of the Absurd in either *Mother Courage* or *Waiting for Godot*) and make an argument for how and why the character you are examining is representative of that style. We will discuss the requirements of this assignment in further detail at the beginning of the term. You will be expected to properly use MLA formatting. The following link will provide you an example of the formatting requirements:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_sample\\_paper.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_sample_paper.html)

**Scene Study (15%)**

This assignment requires you to carefully consider the style of theatre of a particular play and explore it through a detailed analysis of **one scene**. Choose a scene from any of the plays studied up to this point and in **4-5 double-spaced pages** you will prepare a **detailed analysis** of one scene and comment on how it is representative of the style in question. We will discuss the requirements of this assignment in further detail at the beginning of the term.

You will be expected to use proper MLA formatting (see link above).

**Annotated Bibliography (30%)**

This assignment is the foundation of your final paper. From the list of essay topics provided, you will present a proposal for your final research paper that includes a thesis statement (argument), and a list of citations that you will use as evidence to support your argument. You must include **5 - 7** scholarly sources. Each source will be properly cited and annotated in **MLA format\***, and will contain a **brief** summary of each article used (no more than 2 sentences), and a careful explanation of how each resource supports your position, along with how you will use it in your paper. We will go over how to do an annotated bibliography in class, but here is also a very good resource to help you:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/1/>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

### **Paper workshop (5%)**

This is an in-class assignment on the last day of class. You will be divided into groups, and each student will have the opportunity to present the thesis and points of argument for the final paper. Each student will be expected to offer feedback to others in the group.

### **Final Paper (30%)**

A list of essay topics will be provided at the beginning of the term. This is a formal writing assignment. Using feedback from the annotated bibliography assignment, students will present a polished, carefully crafted final paper of **8 – 10** pages (excluding Works Cited page) in **MLA format** with a coherent, arguable thesis, supported by evidence from the text and scholarly sources, a conclusion that responds to and resolves the argument. The most important aspect of your paper is **critical analysis**; in other words, not just what happens in the play you are examining, but most importantly, why it happens. As well, elements of writing such as rich vocabulary, proper use of citation style, correct punctuation and grammar, and sentence structure (syntax) will be taken into account. Further, structural elements, such as the logical progression of ideas that form the basis of your argument, will be expected. This assignment is your opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned in the course. Don't be afraid to demonstrate your excitement about your discoveries!

### **Attendance and Participation (5%)**

It is important to attend class. Much will be discussed that happens organically and cannot be replicated otherwise. Your learning is much richer when you participate. That said, if you are sick (for any reason) please do NOT come to class and share that joy. Instead, email to say you're ill, post a request for notes on Brightspace, and make an appointment with your instructor if you have questions once you've seen the notes. If you follow this protocol, you will not be penalized for missing class.

**Late Policy:** Assignments must be submitted online through Brightspace on the due date by the beginning of class to receive full marks. There will be **no extensions** granted unless discussed prior to the due date with the instructor. No assignments will be

accepted if they are more than 5 days late, with the exception of those negotiated prior to the due date. **NOTE: It is your responsibility to insure that all assignments are submitted on time. Keep a backup copy that can be submitted upon request in the event of a lost or misplaced assignment.**

**All assignments will be submitted electronically on Brightspace**

**NOTE:** All assignments must be completed in order to be eligible to pass the course. Failure to hand in all assignments may result in a grade of “F”.

**Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.**

**NOTE:** All assignments must be completed in order to be eligible to pass the course. Failure to hand in all assignments may result in a grade of “F”. Assignments submitted after the course has ended will NOT be accepted.