

**Carleton University
Fall 2018
Department of English**

ENGL 1609A Introduction to Drama Studies

Location: 132 AP *please check on Carleton Central to confirm*

Wednesdays and Fridays : 10:00-11:30

Instructor: Rebecca Benson

Email: Rebecca.benson@carleton.ca

Office: Dunton Tower 1914

Office Hours: *please email to make an appointment*

Introduction to Drama Studies -- Course Description:

Drama combines the literary arts of storytelling and poetry with the art of live performance. As a form of ritual as well as entertainment, drama has served to unite communities and challenge social norms, to vitalize and disturb its audiences. In order to understand this rich art form more fully, we will study and discuss a sampling of plays that exemplify different approaches to dramatic writing, various eras in the history of performance, and represent a variety of voices and experiences in Canadian theatrical practice. We will also connect with professional theatre practitioners who will share their craft with us through workshops, guest lectures, field trips, and other activities. Ultimately students will engage in practical and scholarly aspects of Drama Studies and be better primed to engage as informed spectators, emergent scholars, and/or practitioners.

Course Objectives:

- 1 To provide the tools necessary to read drama of multiple cultures seriously, appreciatively, pleurably, and critically.
- 2 To increase students' awareness of ethical, historical, political and artistic questions, as these emerge in dramatic literatures and performance.
- 3 To improve and refine your abilities to effectively express and communicate ideas and arguments.
- 4 To understand the role of drama in critically reflecting on the worlds which one inhabits.

Required Reading:

Where the Blood Mixes by Kevin Loring

Antigone by Sophocles. Translation by Richard Emil Braun (Oxford UP, 1990).

Harlem Duet by Djanet Sears

Excerpts of dramatic works (available on CU Learn throughout the term) and on Course Reserve

Highly Recommended:

The Broadview Guide to Writing – a Composition handbook

Backwards and Forwards: A Technical Manual for Reading Plays. by David Ball

The Drama Handbook: A Guide to Reading Plays by John Lennard and Mary Luckhurst..

Texts will be available at Haven Books (corner of Seneca and Sunnyside)

Copies of our required readings will be available on ARES (a digital repository of class readings made available through MacOdrum library); in the library on COURSE RESERVE; or available at HAVEN BOOKS. Students are expected to carefully read the assigned reading BEFORE the class in which we plan to cover it. Each class will begin with a writing exercise, debate, or presentation that relates to the assigned reading or topic on the agenda.

Note: Students will be expected to attend **at least one** performance of the following play and review it.

Silence by Trina Davies, directed by Peter Hinton. October 17-28.

National Arts Centre English Theatre: 1 Elgin Street (near Rideau Centre)

\$15 RUSH tickets available through the Trinity Live Rush Program/ limited tickets available

Student rates are more expensive but available for any show

<https://nac-cna.ca/en/event/18816>

Students are expected to arrange their own tickets, but there are multiple ways to purchase student/discounted tickets, which we will discuss in class. Some of the performances include a post-show talkback or a Pre-Show chat, which can enrich your experience, so check the schedules for these when booking your tickets.

Evaluation:

Attendance/Participation (10%)

Our class will succeed or fail based on your active, informed, and generous participation in class discussions. Your participation grade is based on your contribution to class conversations and/or your in-class notebook/portfolio (if you are shy or anxious about speaking in class); your ability to listen and respond to the ideas of others, your attendance record, work in small groups, peer-editing, etc. Attendance will be taken in every class. It is important to attend all classes, and come prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that week.

Performance Review (15%)

A performance review should provide close observations and critical analysis of a theatrical production. We will discuss the elements of what makes a good performance review in class. Students must attend a performance of SILENCE at the National Arts Centre and write a performance review to be submitted **within 5 days** of attending. An image of your ticket stub must be attached to your assignment. In **2 - 3** double-spaced pages, your review will contain the following things:

- 1) A **brief** summary of the story line (no more than a couple of sentences in your introduction)
- 2) A comment on design elements such as sound, lighting, costumes, and set. How do these support the story? Ex. How does the lighting reinforce the tone (humorous, sombre, sad, etc) of the story presented?
- 3) A consideration of how the actors conveyed character; do they speak clearly and with effective volume; do they remain 'in character' when on stage; is their physicality representative of the character?
- 4) What is the main mode of storytelling used in the production (acting, technical effects, music, movement, etc.)? How has the director used any or all of these to create a cohesive world for the play?
- 5) What do you think was the goal of the production? Do you think it reached that goal? Why or why not?

Annotated Bibliography (10%)

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. Each citation will be properly 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/>

Paragraph drafts due in class for peer feedback (10%)

We will workshop other's essay drafts two week before your paper is due. Students will learn how to proofread, revise, and edit each other's work as well as their own. On the due date, bring to class a draft of the introductory paragraph of your Final Paper. Students will work in pairs editing their peer's writing and receiving feedback on their own. This draft and the editorial comments made by your classmate must be included with the submission of your Final Paper.

Final Paper (20%)

This is a formal writing assignment. Using feedback from the thesis/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, and 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!

Choose one of the following essay topics (but not necessarily the example) on which to base your research and your paper. Do not wait until the last minute, since you will run out of time, and the end result will be a poor paper and a low grade.

- 1) In one of the plays we've studied this term, explore in detail the symbols and/or imagery used, and explain how these comment on the issues embedded in the play. For example, you might focus your discussion on the importance of the handkerchief in *Harlem Duet*. You will need to carefully explain what the symbols/imagery are, and how they are used to convey meaning in the play. For full marks, discuss both the content (narrative) and the form (staging indicated in the text) in relation to the symbols/images presented.
- 2) Focusing on one play we've studied, explore how one design element (lighting, sound, costumes, props, set) or dramaturgical element contributes to reinforcing the main themes of the play. For example, you might consider the function of the set (a design element) in *Antigone* or the function of the chorus (a dramaturgical element) in revealing or expressing themes in the play. Explore in detail how this chosen element functions and how it is connected to the narrative represented.

3) If drama can be understood to be a response to events and attitudes of the time in which it is created, consider how one play we've studied can be interpreted as relevant in our world today. For example, what events and attitudes is *Where the Blood Mixes* responding to in the time of its writing, and how is this play relevant to our contemporary moment? Make a specific comparison, and explain exactly how the play might be produced/staged to highlight the contemporary connection.

Portfolio Responses (15%)

You will be expected to create and maintain your own portfolio in a physical notebook that you will bring to class every day. You will use this notebook to write the various, regular in-class writing assignments we will do, as well as the occasional homework assignment. These assignments will always be in response to a work we read or watched for class or a discussion or lecture we had in class. Please always bring your notebook with you. I will collect your notebooks randomly throughout the term to go through your work and evaluate it based on the thoughtfulness and attentiveness of your responses. These regular "portfolio responses" are designed to insure that you attend class, keep up with the reading, and give the reading some thought in advance of our class meetings. For this reason, you will not be allowed to make up these assignments.

Group Presentations (20%)

All students will work in pairs or small groups to develop a short presentation, to be delivered to the class, either about the history and context of a topic or the theatrical performance context of a topic. This means that the presentations can range from a Scene Study rehearsed and performed by the group, to a design created for a play studied and presented to the class, or to a short historical or socio-political presentation of facts. Your choice! These presentations will accompany our unit on Realism versus Epic Theatre and on Adaptation: issues of race, diversity, and appropriation.

SUBMISSION POLICIES

- **All assignments are due on paper and in class, at the beginning of class, on the due date.**
- There will be **no extensions** granted unless discussed prior to the due date with the instructor. In the case where illness prevents a student from submitting an assignment on time, a doctor's note will be accepted. All other late assignments will be penalized **1 mark** per day up to seven days, including weekends. No assignments will be accepted if they are more than 7 days late, with the exception of those stated above.
- 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 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".
- No online submissions will be accepted unless you have been granted special permission by the instructor.

NO CELL PHONE USE & NO SOCIAL MEDIA. Laptops may be used for note-taking only.

Date and Topic	Required Readings	Notes
Week 1: Introduction/ Theatre as Ritual Wednesday Sept 5 Friday Sept 7	<u>Course Outline</u>	Please pick up the course books at OCTOPUS BOOKS. ALL readings must be read and completed FOR the class they are listed with.
Week 2: Indigenous Cultural Forms Wed. Sept. 12 Fri. Sept 14	<u>Where the Blood Mixes</u>	Groups for Presentations formed by Sept. 14
Week 3: Storytelling Wed. Sept. 19 Fri. Sept. 21	*Sept. 19: guest Jacqui du Toit: Storytelling	Sept. 19 Workshop: Storytelling; location TBA
Week 4: Classical Greek Drama / Aristotle Wed. Sept 26 Fri. Sept. 28	<u>Antigone</u>	Groups sign up for round 1 or round 2 of presentations on Wed. Sept. 26
Week 5: Professional Theatre Practice Wed. Oct. 3 Fri. Oct. 5	<u>Excerpts from <i>The Drama Handbook</i></u>	Field Trip to either the NAC or GCTC
Week 6: Commedia del Arte & Shakespeare Wed. Oct. 10 Fri. Oct. 12	*Oct. 10: guest Eleanor Crowder <u>Excerpts by Shakespeare</u>	Oct. 10 Workshop: Commedia; location TBA
Week 7: Modern Drama: Realism Wed. Oct. 17 Fri. Oct. 19	<u>Excerpts of modern drama</u>	ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY due Oct. 19
Week 8: Modern Drama: Epic Theatre Wed. Oct. 31 Fri. Nov. 2	<u>Excerpts by Bertolt Brecht</u>	PERFORMANCE REVIEW – due by Nov. 2
Week 9: Modern Drama: Pedagogy of the Oppressed / Community Art Wed. Nov. 7 Fri. Nov. 9	<u>Excerpts from <i>Rainbow of Desire</i> and <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> (Freire)</u>	PRESENTATIONS on Realism versus Epic Theatre – Nov. 7
Week 10: New Work Development Wed. Nov. 14 Fri. Nov. 16	*Nov. 16: guest Emily Pearlman	Workshop: Playwriting / Devised Theatre, loc. TBA
Week 11: Adaptation Wed. Nov. 21 Fri. Nov. 23	<u>Harlem Duet</u>	PARAGRAPHS for Peer Feedback – Nov. 23
Week 12: Post-dramatic theatre Wed. Nov. 28 Fri. Nov. 30	<u>Excerpts of postdramatic theatre</u>	PRESENTATIONS on race, diversity, appropriation - Nov. 28
Week 13: Wrap-up, last class Wednesday Dec. 5		Final Papers due on Friday Dec. 7

*To Be Confirmed

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM:

PLAGIARISM IS CHEATING.

The University Senate defines plagiarism as *“presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.”* This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence and it cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Final Grades:

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.

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a

formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit:

carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>