ENG 2011-002
McDonough
Eastern Illinois University

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Course Goals: This course is designed to introduce students to the world of drama and its reflections of human social systems. Since the Greeks first designed the theater as a civic duty, western drama has been one of the ways that we have sought to raise and sometimes to answer, questions regarding our lives and the worlds we create. Through class discussion and writing assignments, we will explore ways in which theater provides a forum for debate—both in the past and in the present—as well as explore recurring issues of drama that concerns ourselves and our worlds.

Texts: The Bedford Introduction to Drama, 2nd edition, Jacobus
Plays from the Contemporary American Theater, ed. McNamara
Sam Shepard: Seven Plays, Shepard

Each play must be read in entirety before the first class discussion of that play. I will resort to pop quizzes to enforce this policy, if reason to do so arises.

Requirements:
* Class attendance and participation (includes class discussion, in-class work, and pop quizzes)—5%
* Mid-term and final exam—20% each
* 4 informal response papers, 2-3 pages each (2 are due before mid-term)—30%
* 1 formal research paper, 4-5 pages—25%

Each reading assignment must be read in entirety before the first class meeting devoted to that assignment so that you may come to class prepared for discussion. The informal papers should help you to prepare for class discussion, as well as give you practice in writing to help prepare you for completing the formal research paper.

Attendance Policy: You are allowed five (5) unexcused absences. However, "excused" absences must be cleared with me before they occur, or (if due to sudden illness or emergency) as soon as is reasonably possible. I will not retroactively cancel my record of absences if you have not taken the responsibility to promptly inform me of their cause. After seven (7) unexcused absences, your final grade drops a letter. After 12 absences (which constitutes 4 weeks of the course), you will receive an F for the course. Why? This course is not an independent study, so your attendance and participation are required in order for you to earn a passing grade. In addition, missing class will result in confusion for you, usually leading to poor performance on tests and papers.

NOTE: My "allowing" some absences with no penalty does not mean I condone absences. I expect that you will use your absences sparingly and wisely. Keep in mind that regardless of absences, you are responsible for keeping up with due dates, and any changes that I may announce in the syllabus.

FURTHER NOTE: Arriving late and/or leaving early, in addition to interrupting class time for your classmates, will lead to your being marked absent. Attend class on time, in entirety, or not at all.

Policies Regarding Written Assignments: The informal papers are always due at the beginning of class on the first day we discuss the play you choose to write about. I will not accept them after we have discussed that play in class. Regarding the formal research paper, it must be turned in at the beginning of
class on the date due. Late work is severely frowned upon and will result in a lowered grade. I generally do not accept papers late unless some prior arrangement has been made with me for just cause.

The informal response papers are written in response to questions about each play that I will hand out in class at the meeting before we discuss that play (usually on Fridays). You may choose to respond to any four of the twelve plays we will be reading, but YOU MUST RESPOND TO AT LEAST 2 BEFORE THE MID-TERM EXAM. These papers are 2-3 pages of response to a specific question I will give you and will be evaluated mainly on content. The purpose is to get you to think through some ideas about the plays you are reading BEFORE class discussion so that you can bring to class some ideas and questions that interest you. Each will be given a score out of 25 points and the combined scores will give you a score out of 100.

NOTE: If any questions or problems arise throughout the semester that you wish to discuss with me, drop by my office during office hours or make an appointment to see me.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

August
25: Introduction to the course
27: Reading Drama
29: Introduction to Comedy

September
1: Labor Day, class canceled
Section One: Comedy and Social Satire
3: Aristophanes' Lysistrata (Bedford)
5: Lysistrata
8: Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, Acts 1-3 (Bedford)
10: MSD
12: MSD, Acts 4-5

15: MSD
17: MSD
19: MSD

22: Moliere's The Misanthrope (Bedford)
24: Misanthrope
26: Misanthrope

29: Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest (Bedford)

October
1: IBE
3: IBE
Section Two: Tragicomedy
6: Chekhov's The Cherry Orchard (Bedford)
8: CO
10: CO
13: Pinter's The Dumbwaiter (Bedford)
15: DW
17: Mid-term Exam

Section Three: Family Legacies and Self Perceptions
20: Williams' The Glass Menagerie (Bedford)
22: GM
24: GM
27: Wilson's Fences (Bedford)
29: Fences
31: Fences

November
3: Henley's Crimes of the Heart (Cont. American Theater)
5: Crimes
7: Crimes
10: Howe's Painting Churches
12: Painting
14: Class canceled

Section Four: Focus on a Playwright, Sam Shepard
17: Intro to Shepard
19: True West (Shepard's Seven Plays)
21: True West
24: Thanksgiving Break
26: Thanksgiving Break
28: Thanksgiving Break

December
1: True West
3: True West
5: Buried Child
8: Buried Child, Research papers due
10: BC
12: BC

Final Exam Week: Dec. 15-19