English 3606: Modern Drama

Instructor: Dr. David Radavich
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Office Hours: 1:00-2:00 MWF; 10:00-11:00 F

Required Text:

Jacobus, Lee A., ed., *The Bedford Introduction to Drama*

**PURPOSE.** This course will provide an overview of the wide range of drama from Ibsen to the present. We will read a variety of plays that have maintained a hold on the stages and imaginations of the Western world for over a century. We will attempt to define and understand such major movements in modern drama as realism, naturalism, symbolism, surrealism, expressionism, psychological realism, epic theatre, social realism, absurdism, agitprop theatre, and feminism, among others. In addition to reading and commenting on the plays, we will also, depending on time and the interests of the class, perform individual scenes, view productions on videotape, and otherwise enjoy and share the rich dimensions of these works.

**COURSE ORGANIZATION.** The course will unfold roughly chronologically, beginning with Ibsen, Strindberg, and Chekhov, then continuing through Pirandello and Brecht to recent American and European playwrights. Except for short plays, we will read a play each week, supplementing discussion with either a reading/performance or videotape as time and resources permit.

**ASSIGNMENTS.** Three papers will be required: one shorter essay (ca. 3-4 pages), a prospectus, and one longer essay (ca. 8-10 pages) using outside sources. There will be a midterm and a final exam. Response quizzes will be given at random during the semester; these will be brief but provocative for class discussion, focusing on your reaction to the reading. Everyone will be required to attend two stage performances during the semester and to write brief reviews.

**GRADING.** Evaluation of your work will be demanding and fair and will include an assessment of your class preparedness and participation. The first paper will make up 10%, the prospectus 5%, and the documented paper 20% of the course grade. The midterm exam will count 15% and the final exam 25%. Active participation in class discussion, combined with in-class quizzes and play reviews, will constitute the remaining 25% of the overall grade.

**LATE WORK.** Assignments turned in late will be penalized one-third grade PER CALENDAR DAY late. Missed in-class quizzes cannot be made up; that is the reward for coming to class regularly.
ATTENDANCE POLICY. You are assumed to be professionals-in-training and are expected to attend class regularly as you would show up for work on the job. The attendance policy for this course will operate as follows: you may miss up to one week of class without penalty; this allows you flexibility in case of illness or unexpected emergency. Thereafter, the course grade will be lowered proportionately for each week missed. If you are absent more than four weeks of class, you will automatically receive an F in the course.

PLAGIARISM. According to University policy,

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Random house Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.

CONFERENCES. Please feel free to consult me regarding ideas, planning, problems, revision, etc. I would be happy to meet with you at any mutually convenient time.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. 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.
English 3606 Assignments

Aug.  25 - Introduction
  27 - Ibsen, *A Doll House*, Act I
  29 - *A Doll House*, Act II

Sept.  1 - No class; Labor Day
  3 - *A Doll House*, Act III
  5 - Strindberg, *Miss Julie*

Sept.  8 - More *Miss Julie*
  10 - Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*, Act I-II
  12 - *Cherry Orchard*, Acts III-IV

  17 - *Mrs. Warren’s Profession*, Acts II-III
  19 - *Mrs. Warren’s Profession*, Act IV

Sept.  22 - Glaspell, *Trifles*
  24 - Synge, *Riders to the Sea*
  26 - PAPER #1 DUE

Sept.  29 - Pirandello, *Six Characters . . .*, Act I

  3 - Discussion

Oct.  6 - Brecht, *Mother Courage*, Scenes 1-3
  8 - *Mother Courage*, Scenes 4-8
  10 - No class; Fall Break

  15 - Review and Discussion
  17 - MIDTERM EXAM

Oct.  20 - Soyinka, *The Strong Breed*
  22 - Pinter, *Betrayal*, Scenes 1-4
  24 - *Betrayal*, Scenes 5-9
Oct.  27 - Wilson, *Fences*, Act I  
29 - *Fences*, Act II  
31 - Discussion; PROSPECTUS DUE

Nov.  3 - Churchill, *Top Girls*, Act I  
5 - *Top Girls*, Act II  
7 - Discussion

Nov.  10 - Hwang, *M. Butterfly*, Act I  
12 - Review and trouble-shooting  
14 - PAPER #3 DUE

Nov.  17 - *M. Butterfly*, Act II  
19 - *M. Butterfly*, Act III  

Nov.  24-28 - No class; Thanksgiving Break

Dec.  1 - *Angels in America*, Act II  
3 - *Angels in America*, Act III  
5 - Vogel, *How I Learned to Drive*, to p. 1683

Dec.  8 - *How I Learned to Drive*, pp. 1683-95  
10 - Overview of modern drama  
12 - Final Exam Review and Evaluation

FINAL EXAM