

English 233 Modern Drama and Theatre

Instructor: Dr. J. Ramsey

Office: Arena Theatre

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30 AM- 1:00 PM

Texts

Bennett, Alan. *The History Boys*. NY: Faber and Faber, Inc., 2004.

Edson, Margaret. *Wit*. NY: Faber and Faber, Inc., 1999.

Gilbert, Miriam & Carl H. Klaus. *Modern and Contemporary Drama*. NY: St. Martin's Press, 1994.

Plays

Ibsen	<i>Ghosts</i>	1881
Strindberg	<i>Miss Julie</i>	1888
Chekov	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i>	1903
Lorca	<i>The House of Bernard Alba</i>	1936
Buchner	<i>Woyzeck</i>	1836
Brecht	<i>Galileo</i>	1945
Artaud	<i>Jet of Blood</i>	1927
Beckett	<i>Endgame</i>	1957
Pinter	<i>Homecoming</i>	1965
Norman	<i>Night Mother</i>	1983
Edson	<i>Wit</i>	1995
Bennett	<i>The History Boys</i>	2004

Objectives of the Course

To trace the development of form and idea in the drama and theatre of the twentieth century: realism, naturalism, expressionism, epic theatre, symbolism, absurdism, and theatricalism.

To read, analyze, compare and contrast selected plays that exemplify the form and idea in twentieth century drama and theatre

To engage students in practical/creative theater activities: present one textual analysis of a play, prepare one visual analysis of a character, write five critiques of acting performances from videos viewed in class,

Requirements of the Course

- Attend class regularly. If more than two unexcused absences occur, the final course grade will be lowered one full letter grade.
- Read all assigned plays and supplementary materials
- Prepare for and participate in all assigned class activities
- Complete four unannounced quizzes that will cover the plays read, lecture material and student presentations. [20% of the final grade]
- Analyze one of the full-length plays assigned, using the format provided. You may do this alone or with one or more students. Prepare the written analysis using the complete sentence outline. That outline will be turned in before you make your oral presentation to the class on the date indicated in the calendar. **Do not read the analysis to the class – speak to the class.** You may use notes for the classroom presentation. [20% of the final grade]
- Analyze a major character (emphasis upon psychological traits) in terms of line (path, width, continuity, sharpness, length, direction), color (hue, intensity value) mass (heaviness/lightness), form, and texture, using the Character Analysis format provided and Alexander Dean's "Effect of Composition on Audience Emotions." After completing your written analysis, select a non-representational painting that visually illustrates this analysis of character. Bring the painting to class for an oral presentation that should not exceed 10 minutes and submit at least two typed, double-spaced pages summarizing the analysis. **Do not read to the class; speak to the class.** [20% of the final grade]
- Write a five - six page paper, using two plays to illustrate the following observation by Anthony Abbott in his book *The Vital Lie*:

Fear of the un-lived life is not only a central motif in modern drama, but in all of modern literature. Maybe it is the endemic disease of modern life. Whatever the causes, the heroes of modern life want desperately to live, and they will adopt stratagems necessary for their purposes --call them "vital lies" or "illusions" or "dreams." At the heart of the matter what we call them is less important than our acknowledgement of their necessity both as dramatic devices in stage plays and as stratagems real human beings use to cope with real life.

The paper should be typed, double spaced and include a bibliography. [20% of the final grade]

- Select five acting performances of the videos seen in class to critique, using the question/format provided (Two typed, double-spaced pages per entry – minimum). [20% of the final grade]

Absences

Two unexcused absences will lower the final grade in the course one-letter grade. In case of illness, see that the work reaches the instructor before the class period it is due.

Grades

The criteria for grades include clarity of purpose, organization, quality of material, expression and mechanics. All work submitted must be typed or done on a printer with a “fresh” ribbon unless specified otherwise. The final grade will be computed according to the percentages indicated below. Any work that is received after the class period it is due will be considered late. Late work will be penalized.

A+	98	B+	88	C+	78	D+	68
A	95	B	85	C	75	D	65
A-	92	B --	82	C --	72	D --	62

Students should expect to spend six to eight hours per week outside of class preparing for this class. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Academic Honesty

Refer to the statement on academic honesty at Moravian College in the current Student Handbook. Copies are available in the Academic Dean’s file (acdean) on the Public (P:) Drive of the Moravian Intranet. Keep copies of all written work submitted to the instructor, as well as notes, drafts and materials used in preparing assignments. If in doubt about appropriate collaboration, proper documentation and other honesty issues, ask the instructor.

Calendar*

SEP	28 T	Activities:	Introduction to the course	
	30 Th	Reading:	<i>M&CD</i> : 1-7	
		Activities:	Preview Class Projects	
	04 T	Reading:	<i>Ghosts</i>	Styan I: 1-5:1-37
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses	
	06 Th	Activities:	Video:	
52	11 T	Reading	<i>Miss Julie</i>	Styan I: 6&7: 37-
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses	
	13 Th	Activities:	Video	
	18 T	Reading:	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i>	Styan I: 10&11: 70-91
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses	
	20 Th	Activities:	Video	
	25 T	Reading:	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba</i>	
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses	
	27 Th	Video		
OCT	02 T	Lecture:	Styan: III: 1: 1-7; (Overview 2-7: 7-75); 10&11: 97-121	
	04 Th	Reading:	<i>Woyzeck</i> : 9-25	
		Activities:	Video	
	09 T	No Class – Fall Break		
	11 Th	Lecture:	Styan: III:13-15&19:128-164,193-4	
	16 T	Reading:	<i>Galileo</i> : 259-289	
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses	
	18 Th	Activities:	Video	
	23 T	Reading:	<i>Jet of Blood</i>	
		Lecture:	Styan II: 1:1-4, 3:10-35; 8: 51-60, 14-17: 105-145	
	25 Th	Reading:	<i>Endgame</i> : 453-485	
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses	

	30 T	Activities:	Video
NOV	01 Th	No Class	
	06 T	Reading:	<i>Homecoming</i>
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses
	08 Th	Activities:	Video
	13 T	Reading:	<i>'Night Mother</i>
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses
	15 Th	Activities:	Video
	20 T	Reading:	<i>Wit</i>
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses
			Papers Due
	22 Th	No Class – Thanksgiving Break	
	27 T	Activities:	Video
	29 Th	Reading:	<i>The History Boys</i>
		Activities:	Textual, Mood & Character Analyses
DEC	04 T	Activities:	Video
	06 Th	Activities:	Class Evaluations
			Acting Critiques Due

*Scheduled readings and assignments are subject to change.

Assignments

Textual Analysis

Visual Analysis

September

04 T *Ghosts*

11 T *Miss Julie*

18 T *The Cherry Orchard*

25 T *The House of Bernarda Alba*

October

16 T *Galileo*

25 Th *Endgame*

November

06 T *Homecoming*

13 T *'Night Mother*

December

20 T *Wit*

29 Th *The History Boys*