

**ENGLISH 233 Modern Drama and Theater Fall 2011**  
**Monday and Wednesday 2:35-3:45 Comenius Hall 114**

**Instructor: Dr. Nicole Tabor, [ntabor@moravian.edu](mailto:ntabor@moravian.edu)**  
**Office Hours: Tue 1:30-3:30 and Thu 1:30-3:30, and by appointment**  
**Office Location and Phone: 302 Zinzendorf Hall, (610) 625-7842**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This 200-level English course investigates, interprets, and interrogates modern plays as literary texts. Students will also analyze modern drama's performative dimensions. We will closely read and discuss twentieth century plays in order to think critically about the major styles, techniques, and conventions that characterize modern drama. The class will provide a broad introduction to theoretical concerns (including periodization, diversity, and historical materialism) that stand at the center of modernist studies today. Students will enter into these debates through critical writing assignments. Our readings, discussions, and writing assignments will offer the opportunity to develop questions at issue for our discourse community. Writing especially will provide the chance to develop your own line of inquiry regarding specific texts.

**COURSE GOALS:**

- Develop a sophisticated vocabulary of key terms to closely read, discuss, and write about modern drama
- Enrich our textual experience of modern drama by critically engaging with its historical tradition(s)
- Deepen our understanding and appreciation of multicultural contributions to dramatic literature
- Interrogate ideas about periodization and disciplinary distinctions related to modernism(s)
- Work collaboratively to generate challenging questions at issue for our discourse community
- Design and implement an intellectually engaging research project drawing on original argumentation, writing, and research that substantiates claims utilizing modern dramatic literature as textual evidence
- Utilize life experiences to make connections between modern drama and personal identity

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*Longman Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Drama, The Collected Shorter Plays of Beckett, Our Town: A Play in Three Acts, Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, A Raisin in the Sun.* ISBNs on AMOS

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**PERCENT OF FINAL GRADE:**

First Essay	20
Second Essay	20
Third Essay	20
Reading Journal	20
Oral Presentations	10
Class Participation	10

**ESSAYS:** You are required to compose three argumentative essays. The first essay will be 3-4 pages, essay two will be 5-6 pages and the final essay will be 10-12 pages in length. You will develop the final essay from an abstract and rough draft. These essays will be thesis-driven and follow MLA guidelines. Essays will be evaluated primarily on the quality of your ideas and the thoroughness of your critical argument (including appropriate citations of the text). Organizational, grammatical, and other writing matters will, however, also affect your grade. We will discuss these essays in further detail throughout the term.

**READING JOURNAL:** You will write a one-page journal entry for each date's assigned primary reading. This entry will consist of two parts. In part one you will briefly summarize the day's play in a page-long summary. Part two will consist of a discussion question. These questions are useful in generating class discussion and essays from our readings. Please refer to the handout "Discussion Questions as Post-reading." You may be asked to read from your response in class. These journals will be checked each class period (*dates marked with a \**) and collected twice during the term. In addition, you will write a journal response/discussion question regarding the live production of David Ives' plays which will take place on October 28<sup>th</sup> at the Arena Theatre.

**ORAL PRESENTATIONS:** You will be required to give one group presentation. Your group will summarize, historicize, and ask the class significant discussion questions related to your assigned topic as well as create/photocopy/distribute a handout. The presentations will provide in-depth analysis of the day's assigned play and terms from our syllabus. A sign-up sheet will be circulated in class.

**PARTICIPATION:** Our classroom comprises a *discourse community*, in which we gain knowledge and insight through mutual inquiry as a result of both verbal and written interaction with others in the class. This interaction will take the form of co-operation as well as respectful disagreement. As a member of this discourse community, you will be expected to contribute intelligently and frequently to the discussion. Along with speaking, effective participation requires active and open-minded listening to others. Respond to and interact with your peers, not just with me. The more you participate, the more interesting, exciting, and rewarding this class will be. Always bring your textbook and notes to class. Expect to read passages aloud and closely investigate details of the texts we are studying. There will be unannounced quizzes and in-class writings throughout the term. I highly encourage you to visit me during office hours (or make an appointment) to discuss your paper ideas or any other questions or concerns related to the course. There will be extra-credit options related to the Multicultural Reading Group and the Classics Panel.

**ENGLISH MAJORS:** In preparation for creating an English Major Portfolio in your senior capstone seminar, please save both digital and hard copies of your work for this class, including drafts with peer and instructor comments.

**POLICIES:**

**Grades.** It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for any assignments and for the final course grade.

**Format.** All written work should include your name, the course number and instructor (Tabor), the date, and the assignment in the upper right-hand corner. Any pages after the first should be numbered and stapled. All work must be typed using a reasonable 12-point font, double-spaced, and conventional margins (one inch). No electronic assignments accepted without special arrangement.

**Deadlines.** Reading responses, quizzes, and other daily assignments will not be accepted late, including assignments due to absence. Assignments are due during the class period of the due date. Extensions may be given on essays, provided that a student asks for the extension at least one week in advance. Unless an extension is given, late essays will be reduced by one letter grade for each day that passes after the due date, e.g. an A becomes a B if one day late.

**Access for Students with Disabilities.** Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

**Plagiarism.** All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please see the Student Handbook if you have any questions about your use of sources.

**Attendance.** It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet at each class. Your final course grade will be dropped by 10% for each unexcused absence after the third. Arriving to class more than 10 minutes late will count as 1/3 of an absence. A note from a doctor's office is required for an excused absence.

**Tentative Reading Schedule.** Readings are to be completed on the day assigned. The schedule is subject to change.

**Week One**

Mon Aug 29 Introduction

Wed Aug 31 \*Primary Reading: *Trifles*, <http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/eng384/trifles.htm>

**Week Two**

Mon Sep 5 Labor Day: No Class

Wed Sep 7 Primary Reading: *Trifles*

**Week Three**

Mon Sep 12 \*Primary Reading: *Good Woman of Setzuan* pp. 280-320  
Secondary Reading: *Epic Theatre: The Berliner Ensemble of Bertolt Brecht* pp. 201-203  
Terms: Epic Theatre, "A" Effect, *gestus*

Wed Sep 14 Primary Reading: *Good Woman of Setzuan* pp. 280-320  
**Essay One Due**

**Week Four**

Mon Sep 19 \*Primary Reading: *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*  
Secondary Reading: Essays by Walter Benjamin, handout  
Terms: Historical Materialism, Aura

Wed Sep 21 Primary Reading *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*

**Week Five**

Mon Sep 26 Brechtian Close Reading: In Class Exercise

Wed Sep 28 **Thesis Workshop, Thesis Due**

**Week Six**

Mon Oct 3 \*Primary Reading: *Blood Wedding* pp. 250-279  
Secondary Reading: *Designing the Scenery for Blood Wedding* pp. 278-79  
Terms: *Duende*, Surrealism

Wed Oct 5 Primary Reading: *Blood Wedding* pp. 250-279

**Week Seven**

Mon Oct 10 Fall Recess: No Class

Wed Oct 12 \*Primary Reading: *Machinal* pp. 214-249  
Secondary Reading: *Commentary & Theatre in the Industrial Age* pp. 248-249  
Terms: Expressionist Theatre, Stream of Consciousness  
**Essay Two Due**

**Week Eight**

Mon Oct 17 \*Primary Reading: *Our Town*  
Terms: Narrator, Metatheatrical  
**Reading Journal Due**

Tue Oct 18 *Classics Panel 4p, Extra Credit Option*

Wed Oct 19 Primary Reading: *Our Town*

**Week Nine**

Mon Oct 24 Library Visit: Primary and Secondary Sources, *please meet at the computer lab next to the Reference Desk on the library's main level*

**Optional Abstract Due**

Wed Oct 26 \*Primary Reading: *Words, Words, Words*, handout

Fri Oct 28 8:00P *David Ives' Plays* at the Arena Theatre, Directed by Dan Marrero

**Week Ten**

Mon Oct 31 \*Primary Reading: *Moon for the Misbegotten* pp. 321-360

Secondary Reading: *Commentary on Moon for the Misbegotten* pp. 361-362

Terms: Psychoanalysis, Subconscious

Wed Nov 2 **Draft Workshop: Two Copies of Rough Draft Due**

**Week Eleven**

Mon Nov 7 \*Primary Reading: *Raisin in the Sun*

Secondary Reading: *Portrait of America in Transition*, pp. 204-205,

Langston Hughes, handout

Terms: Second Generation Realists, Harlem Renaissance

Wed Nov 9 Primary Reading: *Raisin in the Sun*

Wed Nov 9 *Multicultural Reading Group, 4P, Extra Credit Option*

**Week Twelve**

Mon Nov 14 **Conferences**

Wed Nov 16 **Conferences**

**Week Thirteen**

Mon Nov 21 \*Primary Reading: *Krapps Last Tape* pp. 452-462 (or Beckett Text, 47-58)

Secondary Reading: *The Theatre of the Absurd*, pp. 210-213

Terms; Absurdist Drama, Existentialism

Wed Nov 23 Thanksgiving Recess: No Class

**Week Fourteen**

Mon Nov 28 \*Primary Reading: Beckett Text, *Rockabye* pp. 269-280, *Footfalls* pp. 235-243

**Reading Journal Due**

Wed Nov 30 Primary Reading: Beckett Text, *Come and Go* pp. 193-198

**Week Fifteen**

Mon Dec 5 Beckett Close Reading: In Class Exercise

Wed Dec 7 Conclusions and Evaluations

**Essay Three Due**