

ENGLISH 233 Modern Drama and Theater Fall 2013
Wednesday and Friday 1:10-2:20 PPHAC 116

Instructor: Dr. Nicole Tabor, ntabor@moravian.edu

Office Hours: Tue 1:30-3:30, Wed 9:30-10:30, 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 4-5 pages, essay two will be 6-8 pages and the final essay will be 12-15 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 a live production.

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.

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.

Time Management. In completing work for and preparing for this class, you should expect to spend at least 2 hours per week outside of class for every hour spent in class. Some assignments or readings may require more time than that. We will discuss time management extensively throughout the semester.

Access for Students with Disabilities. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Mara, 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. A note from a doctor's office is required for an excused absence. Arriving to class more than 2 minutes late will count as 1/3 of an absence.

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

Week One

Wed Aug 28 Introduction

Fri Aug 30 *Primary Reading: *Trifles*, <http://www.vcu.edu/engweb/eng384/trifles.htm>

Week Two

Wed Sep 4 Primary Reading: *Trifles*

Fri Sep 6 *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*

Week Three

Wed Sep 11 Primary Reading: *Good Woman of Setzuan* pp. 280-320
Essay One Due

Fri Sep 13 *Primary Reading: *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*
Secondary Reading: Essays by Walter Benjamin, handout
Terms: Historical Materialism, Aura

Week Four

Wed Sep 18 Primary Reading *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*

Fri Sep 20 Brechtian Close Reading: In Class Exercise

Week Five

Wed Sep 25 **Thesis Workshop, Thesis Due**

Fri Sep 27 *Primary Reading: *Blood Wedding* pp. 250-279
Secondary Reading: *Designing the Scenery for Blood Wedding* pp. 278-79
Terms: *Duende*, Surrealism

Week Six

Wed Oct 2 **Draft Workshop, Draft Due**

Fri Oct 4 Primary Reading: *Blood Wedding* pp. 250-279

Week Seven

Wed Oct 9 *Primary Reading: *Machinal* pp. 214-249
Secondary Reading: *Commentary & Theatre in the Industrial Age* pp. 248-249
Terms: Expressionist Theatre, Stream of Consciousness

Fri Oct 11 Primary Reading: *Machinal* pp. 214-249
Essay Two Due

Week Eight

Wed Oct 16 *Primary Reading: *Our Town*
Terms: Narrator, Metatheatrical
Reading Journal Due

Fri Oct 18 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

Week Nine

Wed Oct 23 Primary Reading: *Our Town*

Fri Oct 25 *Primary Reading: *Moon for the Misbegotten* pp. 321-360
Secondary Reading: *Commentary on Moon for the Misbegotten* pp. 361-362
Terms: Psychoanalysis, Subconscious

Week Ten

Wed Oct 30 Primary Reading: *Moon for the Misbegotten* pp. 321-360

Fri Nov 1 **Draft Workshop: Two Copies of Rough Draft Due**

Week Eleven

Wed Nov 6 *Primary Reading: *Raisin in the Sun*
Secondary Reading: *Portrait of America in Transition*, pp. 204-205,
Terms: Second Generation Realists, Harlem Renaissance

Fri Nov 8 Primary Reading: *Raisin in the Sun*

Week Twelve

Mon Nov 13 **Conferences**

Wed Nov 15 **Conferences**

Week Thirteen

Wed Nov 20 *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

Fri Nov 22 *Primary Reading: Beckett Text, *Rockabye* pp. 269-280, *Footfalls* pp. 235-243
Reading Journal Due

Week Fourteen

Wed Nov 27 Thanksgiving Recess: No Class

Fri Nov 29 Thanksgiving Recess: No Class

Week Fifteen

Wed Dec 4 Primary Reading: Beckett Text, *Come and Go* pp. 193-198
Beckett Close Reading: In Class Exercise

Fri Dec 6 Conclusions and Evaluations
Essay Three Due