

ENGL 0029 - INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA AS LITERATURE

Catalog Description

Prerequisite: Eligibility for ENGL 1A

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Introduction to drama as literature emphasizing the critical analysis of individual plays; the analysis and exploration of the social, historical, and critical contexts of the writing and performance of dramatic literature; and exploration and analysis of the changing nature of its performance and reception. Class explores significant works of drama from a variety of cultures and historical periods. Intended for both English and Drama majors and non-majors. (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Identify, interpret and analyze drama in various contexts, genres, types, eras and themes through exams and written work.
- CSLO #2: Apply the elements of drama to the analysis of individual plays and performance of plays through exams and written work.
- CSLO #3: Conduct independent research and evaluate primary and secondary sources in drama.
- CSLO #4: Synthesize themes and forms of drama across time, periods, and works by various authors through exams and written work.
- CSLO #5: Analyze, interpret, and critique works by the same author through written work.

Effective Term

Fall 2020

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

Students, through examinations and written work, will be able to:

1. Identify, interpret and analyze drama in cultural, social, political, and critical contexts;
2. Identify and analyze differences and similarities between different genres, types, and eras of drama;
3. Analyze the relationships between culture and dramatic form and function;
4. Define the elements of drama, and apply that knowledge to the analysis of individual plays and performances of plays;
5. Identify, interpret, and analyze the themes of individual plays and authors;

6. Conduct independent research in drama;
7. Interpret, analyze, and evaluate primary and secondary sources in drama;
8. Synthesize and generalize about themes and forms of drama across time, across thematic periods, and across works by various authors; and
9. Analyze, interpret and critique at least two works by the same author.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Literature & Language
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
 - CSUGE - C2 Humanities
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 3B Humanities

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: 1. Students will invite conversation by preparing at least 3-5 open, thoughtful questions about the readings or plan some kind of activity informed by the readings. Students need to work together, offer insightful questions, and model a clear organizational strategy.
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: 1. Sample midterm questions: (a) Tennessee Williams used a variety of non-realistic elements in *The Glass Menagerie*. What was Williams' purpose in using non-realistic elements, and do they add or detract from the play's effectiveness? (b) M. R. Ridley suggests that the theme of *Othello* centers on the conflict between "reason" and instinct." Carol Neely maintains that "the play's central theme is love—especially marital love; its central conflict is between the men and the women." Which critic's point of view do you most agree with and why? The effective essay will have a clear thesis statement and sufficient evidence—developed in the body paragraphs—to prove the thesis. 2. Sample final presentation question: Pick at least two plays we have read this semester and discuss what the plays are saying about ONE of the following topics: (1) prejudice (racism, sexism), (2) relationships between people, or (3) the meaning of human existence/life. For example, if you were to pick the third topic, some of the plays you may consider writing about would be *Waiting for Godot*, *The Sandbox*, and *The American Dream*. For many of the plays, there is a commonality of theme, but if you also want to compare/contrast two different perspectives on the same topic, that would be effective as well.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will use lecture and multimedia to introduce the play "The Crucible." After assigning students to complete reading the play, the instructor will facilitate a discussion in which students will be expected to articulate how concepts and theories of drama in historical context apply to this particular work.
2. Using available readings from a course anthology or supplemental text, instructor will assign students to read selections from Aristotle's works and lead a class discussion on theoretical and critical approaches to textual analysis of plays. Instructor will divide students into groups to begin a discussion on how tragic structure affects the specific themes of tragedy. Instructor will have students build on this discussion in a writing assignment.

Typical Out of Class Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read "Oedipus the King" and "Antigone" along with Aristotle's definition of tragedy ("Poetics"). As you read the plays, consider how tragic structure affects the specific themes of tragedy. What type of problem or dilemma does tragedy generally address? 2. Read "Hamlet"; consider the extent to which it fulfills or does not fulfill Aristotle's definition of tragedy. Read Stephen Greenblatt's essays on Shakespeare and then consider how both "Hamlet" and the Theban plays reflect and question their respective cultures.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. As you read "She Stoops to Conquer," respond to the individual characters and to the comic situation: what motivates the characters? What stance toward them does the author seem to expect us to take? Is this primarily a comedy of character or circumstance? 2. For practice, write a brief continuation of "The Crucible." What consequences flow from Proctor's death? Is his death a tragic conclusion or redemptive? How effectively does the play illuminate the historical and personal situation of the writer (e.g., is a tragic action appropriate to an understanding of the McCarthy hearings)? 3. Performance: With your group, determine how you would present the assigned scene from "Twelfth Night." What specific aspects of the play and its context lead you to your decisions? Was your goal to reflect the play in Shakespeare's day or to reveal what it might reveal to modern perceptions?

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

1. Choose one writer from our class, read one other play by that writer, and then, using independent research, analyze the two plays in terms of one of the following: a. The themes of the play in the context of culture and/or history. b. The critical response to these plays over time and the thematic implications of these responses. c. The thematic effects of specific features in the plays (e.g., imagery, plot, character type).

Required Materials

- The Norton Anthology of Drama
 - Author: J Ellen Gainor, et al, ed.
 - Publisher: Norton
 - Publication Date: 2014
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

- The Compact Bedford Introduction to Drama
 - Author: Lee Jacobus, ed.
 - Publisher: Bedford
 - Publication Date: 2013
 - Text Edition: 7th
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- The Seagull Reader: Plays
 - Author: Joseph Kelly, ed.
 - Publisher: Norton
 - Publication Date: 2014
 - Text Edition: 3rd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.