

ENG580: Modern and Contemporary Drama
W 6:00 p.m.-8:45 p.m.
University Center 242
Fall Semester (2010)
Texas A&M University-Texarkana
903-223-3022
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Dr. Brian C. Billings
University Center 222
(M) 1:15 p.m.-2:15 p.m.
4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
(T) 2:15 p.m.-3:15 p.m.
(W) 1:15 p.m.-2:15 p.m.
4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.
(R) 2:15 p.m.-4:15 p.m.
(F) 1:15 p.m.-2:15 p.m.

ASK Center
(M) 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.
5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m.
(T) 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.
(W) 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.
(R) 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.
(F) 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.
5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

Texts: Auburn, David. *Proof*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 2002. Print.
ISBN: 978-0822217824

Churchill, Caryl. *Plays: 2*. New York: A&C Black, 2003. Print.
ISBN: 978-0413622709

Edson, Margaret. *Wit*. New York: Turtleback, 2002. Print.
ISBN: 978-0606209953

Friel, Brian. *Molly Sweeney*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1998. Print.
ISBN: 978-0822215325

---. *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* London: Faber, 1994. Print.
ISBN: 978-0571085866

Letts, Tracy. *August: Osage County*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 2009. Print.
ISBN: 978-0822223009, PRICE: \$8.00

McDonagh, Martin. *A Skull in Connemara*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1999.
Print.
ISBN: 978-0822216650, PRICE: \$8.00

Norman, Marsha. *Getting Out*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1998. Print.
ISBN: 978-0822204398, PRICE: \$8.00

O'Neill, Eugene. *Desire under the Elms*. New York: Players, 2008. Print.
ISBN: 978-0887349614, PRICE: \$8.00

Pinter, Harold. *The Dumb Waiter*. New York: Samuel French, 1960. Print.
ISBN: 978-0573042102, PRICE: \$5.00

Shepard, Sam. *Buried Child*. New York: Vintage, 2006. Print.
ISBN: 978-0307274977, PRICE: \$15.00

Wheeler, Hugh, and Stephen Sondheim. *A Little Night Music*. New York: Applause,
2000. Print.
ISBN: 978-1557830708, PRICE: \$15.00

Description: This course examines representative modern and contemporary works of drama using philosophical and sociological filters.

Student Objectives: 1) Examine the literary and cultural contexts of individual scripts.
2) Discuss scripts as literary and dramatic works.
3) Use advanced scholarship to produce critical writing about scripts.

Student-Learner Outcomes: 1) Develop awareness of the scope and variety of works in modern and contemporary drama by reading the assigned literary works and completing the course requirements of exercises and projects.

2) Understand works of literature as expressions of individual and human values in historical and social contexts by evaluating the importance of literary contextual issues in essays and reviews.

3) Respond critically to works in the humanities by employing literary terminology and applying a critical approach to literature in research exercises and analysis essays.

4) Engage in the creative process and comprehend the intellectual demands required of an author by performing script analysis and creating alternate versions of scenes and characters for comparison and consideration.

5) Articulate informed personal reactions to works in the humanities in critical reviews, research essays, and active viewing sessions.

6) Build an appreciation for the aesthetic principles that guide or govern the humanities and arts by reading the assigned texts and

completing critical exercises and research essays.

- 7) Obtain and display knowledge of the influence of literature upon intercultural experiences by reading literary works representative of various cultures and discussing issues relating to cultural exchange during critical exercises and research essays.

Disclaimer: Several of the selected scripts deal with unsettling and distasteful scenarios. These situations exist not for gratuitous purposes but rather to show the complexities and difficulties of life. *Classroom discussions will address these issues directly.*

Projects: 1) Analysis Papers: Analyze four of the works assigned by the instructor using different critical approaches. Each analysis should range from five hundred words to seven hundred and fifty words in length. Do not use secondary sources. Follow MLA format.

2) Construction Time: Help construct one of the sets for a performance sponsored by Texarkana College. Three hours of time must be contributed. The set designer will provide a sheet for workers to sign on workdays.

3) Critical Reviews: Produce three critical reviews of locally performed plays. Each review should range from seven hundred and fifty words to one thousand words in length. Follow MLA format. Answer the following questions when completing the review:

- a) What is the performance history of the play?
- b) What group is performing the play? What other plays has this group performed?
- c) Who is the director of the play? What notes has the director provided?
- d) What designs are adopted for lighting and scenery?
- e) What choices are made for costumes and makeup?
- f) How is sound (especially music) used during the play?
- g) Who are the principal actors? Are their performance choices effective?
- h) What is the strongest moment of the performance?
- i) What is the weakest moment of the performance?
- j) Would you recommend this production of the play to other people?

Combine answers into a single evaluative response. A review which merely answers the provided questions with no attempt at cohesive expression will receive no grade.

4) Exercises: Perform twelve critical writing exercises. The instructor will provide prompts. Produced exercises must range from two hundred and fifty words to five hundred words in length. All exercises shall be performed during class sessions. Submit a polished version of an assigned exercise to the instructor by the class session following the exercise. Follow MLA format.

- 5) Research Essay: Write one critical essay examining a script discussed during class. This essay should range from twelve pages to fifteen pages in length. Create a strong argument. Use textual evidence and content from at least six critical articles to inform the paper. The topic for the paper may be freely selected, but the instructor must approve the topic. Attach an annotated bibliography to the essay. Follow MLA format.

Requirements: This course features numerous readings, twelve class-oriented exercises, three critical reviews of local performances, four analysis papers, and one critical essay. Students should be prepared for an intense class discussion during each class session. A work must be read by its assigned date on the syllabus.

Submissions: Assignments must be typed and submitted to the instructor. Assignments must also be submitted electronically to *Turnitin.com*. (The class identification number is 3390095, and the class password is *boldscripts*.) Submit each assignment by the appropriate due date printed on the syllabus. An assignment submitted after its due date has expired will not be graded.

Conferences: Students should conference with the instructor for assignment clarification or immediate writing feedback. Conferences are available during the instructor's office hours or by special appointment. Please arrange a date and a time for a conference by sending a request to the instructor using e-mail. Students may also consult with tutors in Texas A&M University-Texarkana's ASK Center.

Attendance: Class-oriented assignments and group work are essential for this course, so students should attend all class sessions. *One absence* is allowed. According to the university's attendance policy, the instructor may drop from the course a student who misses more than one class session. The instructor may grant excused absences at his discretion.

Cellular Phones: Set cellular phones to vibrate during class sessions. Sending text messages is prohibited.

Academic Honesty: Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in this course. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, and plagiarism (the copying or undocumented use of materials from any source) constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of F in this course and/or disciplinary action. Each student is responsible for reading and understanding the University Policy on Academic Integrity (UPAI).

ADA Statement: Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the A&M-Texarkana Disability Services Office by calling 903-223-3062.

E-Mail Statement: After applying to and being accepted into a program by Texas A&M University-Texarkana, an individual will receive an A&M-Texarkana e-mail account. Instructors and university officials will deliver official university correspondence to this account. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via his or her university e-mail

account, and each individual must check his or her official A&M-Texarkana e-mail account completely and frequently. Faculty members and students must use their university e-mail accounts when communicating about coursework.

Grading: Each assignment corresponds to a given point value. Grades are computed by dividing a student's accumulated points by the number of points possible.

Points by Assignment

Analysis Paper	100
Construction Time	75
Essay	500
Exercise	50
Review	100

Grade Computation (Example)

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points Earned</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
Construction Time	50	75
Essay	350	500
Exercises (Ten)	375	500
Analysis Papers (Four)	315	400
Reviews (Three)	255	300
Total:	1345	1775

$$\text{Grade} = 1345/1775 = 75.77\% = C$$

Tentative Schedule

09/01/10:	Course Introduction Viewing of <i>Riders to the Sea</i> Discussion about <i>Riders to the Sea</i> First Exercise
09/08/10:	Discussion about <i>Desire under the Elms</i> Second Exercise First Exercise Due
09/15/10:	Active Viewing of <i>Desire under the Elms</i> Third Exercise

- First Analysis Due
Second Exercise Due
- 09/22/10: Discussion about *Getting Out*
Active Viewing of *Getting Out*
Fourth Exercise
Third Exercise Due
- 09/29/10: Discussion about *The Dumb Waiter*
Active Viewing of *The Dumb Waiter*
Fifth Exercise
First Critical Review Due
Fourth Exercise Due
- 10/06/10: Discussion about *Buried Child*
Discussion about *A Skull in Connemara*
Sixth Exercise
Second Analysis Due
Fifth Exercise Due
- 10/13/10: Discussion about *Proof*
Active Viewing of *Proof*
Seventh Exercise
Sixth Exercise Due
- 10/20/10: Discussion about *Wit*
Active Viewing of *Wit*
Eighth Exercise
Seventh Exercise Due
- 10/27/10: Discussion about *August: Osage County*
Ninth Exercise
Second Critical Review Due
Eighth Exercise Due
- 11/03/10: Discussion about *Top Girls*
Active Viewing of *Top Girls*
Tenth Exercise
Third Analysis Due
Ninth Exercise Due
- 11/10/10: Discussion about *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* and *Molly Sweeney*
Active Listening for *Molly Sweeney*

Eleventh Exercise
Tenth Exercise Due

11/17/10: Instructor's Absence

11/24/10: Instructor's Absence

12/01/10: Active Viewing of *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*
Twelfth Exercise
Third Critical Review Due
Eleventh Exercise Due

12/08/10: Discussion about *A Little Night Music*
Twelfth Exercise Due

12/15/10: Active Viewing of *A Little Night Music*
Fourth Analysis Due
Essay Due