

ENG 306: DRAMA ~ FALL 2018

Dr. L. Bailey McDaniel  
270 SFH  
T/TH 10:00-11:47AM

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Office: 522 O'Dowd  
Office Hours: T, TH 12-1PM

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The major forms of dramatic expression studied from generic and historical points of view. Prerequisite: WRT 160 or equivalent with a 2.0 or higher and Junior Standing.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** In addition to further developing our critical analysis abilities, this course explores dramatic texts and performance histories from Western drama's canon and beyond. Using primary texts (actual plays) and the critical discourses surrounding them, we'll cultivate the skills necessary for a rigorous examination of literature and performance. Our primary material will start with the very beginnings of Western theatre (ancient Greece) and conclude with the present day, paying special attention to relevant aesthetic "moments" in the history of Western drama as (1) a genre of literature and (2) a style of performance.

As we examine these plays, performance histories, and the scholarship surrounding them, we'll also investigate how notions of race, class, sexuality, nation, and gender locate themselves within drama and performance.

This course does not assume that students have any prior experience with theatre studies or analyzing dramatic literature. (Besides being a 300-level English class, it's also a Gen Ed class – so don't be nervous.) If you've never read a play before, you can still do exceptionally well in this class. But this course is challenging at times. Coming to class, keeping up with readings, and ***always bringing your texts to class*** are crucial.

**REQUIRED PRIMARY TEXTS (if it doesn't say "MOODLE" you need to purchase):**

- Dutchman*, Amiri Baraka (free on MOODLE)
- Waiting for Godot*, Samuel Beckett (isbn: 9780802144423)
- Hedda Gabler*, Henrik Ibsen (free on MOODLE)
- Death of a Salesman*, Arthur Miller (isbn: 978-0140247732)
- Shadow of a Man*, Cherrie Moraga (free on MOODLE)
- The Emperor Jones*, Eugene O'Neill (free on MOODLE)
- The Three Theban Plays*, Sophocles (isbn: 978-0140444254)
- Death and the King's Horseman*, Wole Soyinka (isbn: 978-0393977615)

**REQUIRED SECONDARY READINGS (all are free on Moodle)**

- "Chicano Men: A Cartography of Homosexual Identity and Behavior" Tomás Almaguer
- "The Empress Jones" Hilton Als
- "What We Want, What We Believe," Wayne Au
- "Act II: American Racial History Plays in London" Ben Brantley
- "Theatre of the Absurd," Martin Esslin
- Post-Colonial Drama* (selection), Helen Gilbert, Joanne Tompkins
- "An Emperor Who Tops What O'Neill Imagined" Charles Isherwood
- "Tragedy and the Common Man," Arthur Miller
- "Emperor Jones is a Racist Relic" Nia Reynolds
- "1965," Malcolm X
- Naturalism in the Theatre* (selection), Emile Zola



Gustav Moreau's *Oedipus and the Sphinx*



Cherrie Moraga

**EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

<b>Class Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Weekly Reading Quizzes</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Kindling Questions</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Essay (8 pgs)</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Mid Term Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>

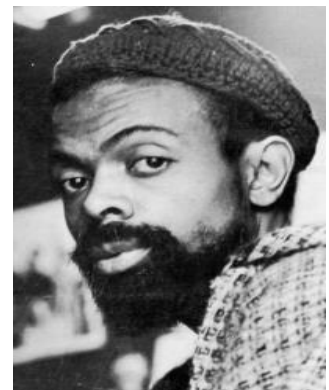
**COURSE POLICIES:** Since this is not the kind of course in which the teacher talks endlessly while students silently take notes, **your voice counts very much to the quality of our class**. In addition to your questions and comments being welcomed, they're also a part of formal assessment (via "participation points" - - an easy way to accumulate points). In other words, in addition to your written work, **consistent, thoughtful class participation that indicates a student's physical and intellectual presence in class will be considered in the final course grade**. This recognition of participation is also extended to our group-based discussions.

Obviously illness and emergencies are sometimes unavoidable; accordingly, two absences can be accrued with no penalty to the course grade. After the second absence, the final grade is reduced considerably. **Every absence beyond the allotted two reduces the course grade by one-third of a letter grade** (e.g., a B becomes a B-). (*Most people will experience illness, car trouble, etc. at some point - so it's a good idea to save these absences for real emergencies.*) Being more than 20 minutes late/leaving more than 20 minutes early counts as an absence. Absences due to religious observance are obviously not included here; see me ahead of time if you need to miss class for this reason.) As an extension of respect and fairness to everyone, *all deadlines are final*. These policies are firm.

Please make sure all cell phones and electronics are turned off before class starts. Many of you are working long hours, raising families while going to school, and/or carrying heavy class loads; for these reasons, some students find in-class drowsiness an understandable issue. If you start to drowse off during class, the first instance will result in a discreet, private alert/warning. After this initial "warning," all following instances will result in an absence. (Feel free to bring whatever snacks or beverages you need to stay alert; coffee, soda, snacks, etc. are helpful for some). **Use of laptops, readers, and/or texting once class starts is not allowed**. (This is firm.)

*A final note, regarding email:* It's likely that at some point this semester we'll communicate (individually) via email. Consider this friendly reminder: emails to your professors should be considered formal communication. Particularly in light of the fact that this is a college-level English course, emails to an instructor should always refrain from text speak, vulgar language, and of course avoid any tone that might be misread as offensive or aggressive. What you write in papers, exams, and emails reflects your intelligence, as well as the respect you allot and expect to receive.

**KINDLING QUESTIONS:** On one occasion during the semester, each student is responsible for composing two *open, live* questions which might act as discussion prompts at the beginning of that day's class. (Thus, everyone will be required to come up with two questions to be presented on one day.) At our second class, a detailed assignment sheet will follow and we'll discuss the term further, but for now, consider a *live question* as one that can't be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." As with literal "kindling," these questions should spark bigger discussion, the shape and direction of which might be unpredictable, powerful, and illuminating. You're free to request a specific session/play for your Kindling Questions, providing that day is available. By our second class I'll distribute a schedule on which everyone can sign up for a day to "present." On your day to present your questions, you'll (1) start us off with a brief "response" to your questions (approximately 2-4 minutes), and also (2) bring printed copies of the questions (enough for everyone in class).



Amiri Baraka

**QUIZZES:** For the most part (exceptions are noted on the course schedule, notably weeks 3 and 11) the weekly Moodle reading quizzes for this class are due on Tuesdays, due no later than just before the start of class. These quick (5 minutes or less) 10-point quizzes are comprised of three **easy** questions - 2 T/F (3 points each) and 1 multiple choice (4 points). The total average grade of the semester's quizzes make up 20% of the course grade. Quizzes are meant to be (1) easy points and (2) provide a positive incentive to keep up with our reading - which itself will help your course grade *significantly* (I promise).

**Because these quizzes are online and taken through our course Moodle page, consistent, dependable access to the internet is a requirement for this course. If you think this might be an issue for you at some point, you should drop the course.** Because IT-related nightmares are often unavoidable, it's a very good idea to *not* take the quiz just before it's due. Each weekly quiz is due no later than the start of our class (10:00AM).

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** This is a no brainer for most of us, but its importance merits stating the obvious. Plagiarism — using someone else’s words or ideas without acknowledging the source — is unacceptable and unnecessary. Part of the process of academic writing is highlighting the ways you use other’s ideas and research in your own work. Getting help from others is not something to hide, but rather something to demonstrate and remark upon. No one ever writes alone, and successful academic writers relish the opportunity to tell the story of how others helped them think and write. It is your responsibility to adhere to OU’s Academic Conduct policy, with regard to plagiarism as well as all assignments. More details are at <http://www.oakland.edu/?id=1610&sid=75>, as well as the "Academic Conduct" section in the OU catalogue. Please always feel encouraged to consult with me, the OU Writing Center, or any MLA style book with citation questions. (There are no stupid questions!) Finally, as per OU policy, please be aware that faculty are *required* to report cases of suspected academic misconduct to the Office of the Dean of Students. **Any student found responsible for academic misconduct will fail the class.**

**STUDENTS W/SPECIAL NEEDS:** Please feel free to discuss any special circumstances with me after class, in office hours, or via email. Students with special needs have a federally-mandated legal right to accommodations - - on this campus and off of it. There are many services available for students with special needs at the Office of Disability Support Services, 103A NFS, 248-370-3266. [<https://wwwp.oakland.edu/dss>] I’m also happy to talk, anytime.

**DROP/ADD:** OU’s add/drop policy will be explicitly followed in our course. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of all deadlines for dropping the course. [<https://wwwp.oakland.edu/registrar/important-dates/>]



Cate Blanchett and Hugo Weaving in Ibsen’s *Hedda Gabler*

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:** I practice an inclusive pedagogy and value differing experiences of and perspectives on religion, sexual orientation, race, class, sex/gender, (dis)ability, and nationality, as well as different approaches to learning. I do, however, reserve the right to challenge any set of beliefs around those issues, and I welcome you to do the same. My objective is a classroom community that is both challenging and welcoming, a community in which all students play a vital and active role. A multiplicity of voices contributes to the quality of the work we do, the richness of our ideas and their continued development. In this vein, students’ voices and perspectives are a serious part of the course and we’ll eagerly await what you have to say (your voice matters very much.) We’ll often discuss sensitive and/or provocative issues dealing with ethnicity, gender, class, and sexuality.

Your point of view will always be honored, respected, and allowed; but it’s also worth mentioning that this course has a zero tolerance policy regarding intolerance, hate-speech, harassment, and/or disrespect. Free speech and diversity of ideas are guaranteed to everyone in class, but so is the protection of everyone’s individual dignity and respect. On that note, I ask that you be collegial, and open to the examination of your own ideas as well as those of others’. I believe that learning should be a transformative experience. With your help, I expect to leave this course with a richer perspective than when I entered; I hope the same will be true for you.

ENG 3620 COURSE GRADING SCALE			
95-100%	A	77-79%	C+
90-94%	A-	73-76%	C
87-89%	B+	70-72%	C-
83-86%	B	67-69%	D+
80-82%	B-	60-66%	D
		0-59%	F

*This course satisfies the university general requirement in literature knowledge exploration (4 credit hours)*

In accordance with OU's General Education parameters, this course also fulfills the **learning outcomes** described below:

Students will demonstrate:

- knowledge of how literature, performance, and drama is an expression of culture—We will do this by examining drama/performance in the social and historical contexts in which it was written.
- knowledge of literary and performative forms—We will do this by considering the different forms of drama and performance (satire, tragedy, melodrama, farce, theatre of the absurd, epic, realism, etc.) and by attending to the particular elements of drama (plot, set, character, etc.)

Cross-Cutting Capacity: critical thinking

- demonstrate an understanding of how drama, literature, and performance function as critical commentary on society and culture(s)
- recognize and analyze literary and performative narratives that exist as constructed paradigms of human knowledge

Other Course Objectives

- personal enrichment: study of drama and performance enriches our ability to engage with our own and other cultures and enables us to begin a life-long engagement with literature and other arts.

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**As of Fall 2018**, Oakland University will no longer employ numerical grade points in assessing final course grades, but will instead use only letter grades (**see table above for our course's grading scale**). Because students will still earn a total "GPA" in honor points on their transcript, OU has provided the table below as a key for the official OU letter-grade-to-honor points system. Again: below is *not* the course scale for this specific course (that is the table above); below is the key to understanding how the new letter grades will compute into a student's overall OU GPA:

Grade	Honor Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0.0

For further information, please consult the OU Registrar's grading information at <https://oakland.edu/registrar/resources/grading-information/> or: "Academic Policies/Procedures, Grading System": [http://catalog.oakland.edu/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=1145#Grading\\_System](http://catalog.oakland.edu/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=1145#Grading_System).

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

*Readings and assignments are due the day listed; slight changes may be necessary as the semester progresses; please always bring your texts with you to class.*

### WEEK ONE

TH 9/6

INTRODUCTIONS/SYLLABUS REVIEW  
**KEY TERMS**

### WEEK TWO

T 9/11

#### TRAGEDY

*Oedipus the King/Rex*, Sophocles (entire play 157-251; from *Theban Plays*)

**SYLLABUS QUIZ DUE (QUIZ #1)**

**QUIZ #2 DUE**

TH 9/13

*Oedipus Rex*, Sophocles (discussion cont'd; no new reading)

### WEEK THREE

T 9/18

*Oedipus Rex*, Sophocles (discussion cont'd; no new reading)

TH 9/20

#### REALISM: FROM MELODRAMA TO "MODERN" DRAMA

*Hedda Gabler*, Ibsen (entire play; Moodle)

**QUIZ #3 DUE**

### WEEK FOUR

T 9/25

Zola (Moodle)

*Hedda Gabler*, Ibsen (discussion cont'd)

**QUIZ #4 DUE**

TH 9/27

*Hedda Gabler*, Ibsen (discussion cont'd; no new reading)

### WEEK FIVE

T 10/2

#### REALIST TRAGEDY

*Death of a Salesman*, Miller (entire play)

Miller (Moodle)

**QUIZ #5 DUE**

TH 10/4

*Death of a Salesman*, Miller (discussion cont'd; no new reading)

### WEEK SIX

T 10/9

*Death of a Salesman*, Miller (discussion cont'd; no new reading)

**QUIZ #6 DUE**

TH 10/11

**MIDTERM EXAM**

### WEEK SEVEN

T 10/16

#### EXPRESSIONISM

*Emperor Jones*, O'Neill (entire play; Moodle)

**QUIZ #7 DUE**

TH 10/18

Als, Brantley, Isherwood, and Reynolds (Moodle)

*Emperor Jones*, O'Neill (discussion cont'd)

**WEEK EIGHT**

T 10/23

**ABSURDISM***Waiting for Godot*, Beckett (entire play)

Esslin (Moodle)

**QUIZ #8 DUE**

TH 10/25

*Waiting for Godot*, Beckett (discussion cont'd; no new reading)**WEEK NINE**

T 10/30

**POLITICAL/POSTCOLONIAL***Death and the King's Horseman*, Soyinka (entire play)**QUIZ #9 DUE**

TH 11/1

Gilbert and Tompkins (Moodle)

*Death and the King's Horseman*, Soyinka (discussion cont'd)

ESSAY "Assignment Sheet" distributed

**WEEK TEN**

T 11/6

*Dutchman*, Baraka (entire play; Moodle)**QUIZ #10 DUE**

TH 11/8

*Dutchman*, Baraka (discussion cont'd; no new reading)**LAST DAY TO DROP CLASS WITH A "W"****WEEK ELEVEN**

T 11/13

Malcolm X (Moodle)

Au (including "Ten Point Program"; Moodle)

*Dutchman*, Baraka (discussion cont'd)

TH 11/15

*Shadow of a Man*, Moraga (entire play; Moodle)**QUIZ #11 DUE****WEEK TWELVE**

T 11/20

*Shadow of a Man*, Moraga (entire play; Moodle; no new reading)

TH 11/22

**NO CLASS – NOVEMBER BREAK****WEEK THIRTEEN**

T 11/27

Almaguer (Moodle)

*Shadow of a Man*, Moraga (discussion cont'd)

Junot Diaz on masculinity (in class)

**QUIZ #12 DUE**

TH 11/29

(to be decided)

**WEEK FOURTEEN**

T 12/4

Paper Workshop

TH 12/6

FINAL EXAM REVIEW

