Dr. Terence Boyle

Online office hours Wednesday 6-7.30pm (Central time)

Synchronous meeting Tues. 6-7pm (Central time)
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**Texts** (B&N or Becks)

*Everyman* (Available on Sakai)

Samual Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

Eugene O’Neill, *A Long Day’s Journey into Night*

G.B Shaw, *Saint Joan*

Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Earnest*

Connor McPherson, *Shining City*

**Exploring Drama**

This course is an introduction to structure and designs of drama. In this course we will concentrate on the process of reading and interpretation of theatrical texts (student-reader responses). A selection of plays will provide the basis of our investigation. We will analyze and discuss the style, structure, and themes within each of these works, focusing on the technical language and philosophical interpretation of drama criticism.

**Reading assignments** (*Everyman*)

Week 1 (May 19-23)

During this first week we will be learning some of the basic skills of theatre criticism; for example the difficulty of reading a text while imagining it being performed. I will post some literary terms and definitions on Sakai. During this first week, you will begin explore
some of these terms with a short piece of work, *Everyman*, also posted on Sakai.

**Synchronous Class Meeting:**
Introduction to course of studies
Readings of Drama

**Assignment 1** (A short paper, 2 pages, on the classical structure)

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**Week 2 (May 26-30)**

Oscar Wilde: *The Importance of Being Earnest*
Comedy of manners: Social satire
Overview

**Synchronous Class Meeting:**

**Assignment 2**

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**Week 3 (June 2-6)**

G.B. Shaw: *Saint Joan*
Political satire: Pre-modernism
In this session we will examine the style and structure of a dramatic work.

**Synchronous Class Meeting:**

**Assignment 3**

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**Week 4 (June 9-13)**

Eugene O’Neill, *A Long Day’s Journey into Night*
Style and structure of Literature

**Synchronous Class Meeting:**

**Assignment 4**

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**Week 5 (June 16–20)**

Samuel Beckett: *Waiting for Godot*
As we begin this week, we will quickly re-cap on literary terms, and a quick look at the world of Beckett, and modernism. Using the classical structure we will explore how Beckett thwarts the audience’s expectations.

**Synchronous Class Meeting:**
Discussion board

**Assignment 5**

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**Week 6 (June 23-27)**
Connor McPherson

In this final work we will dissect what has been seen by some as an unfinished play. I will invite you to argue for or against this viewpoint.

Synchronous Class Meeting:
Overview
Final Assignment

Course objectives: The primary goal of this course is to train students in the understanding, appreciation, and criticism of drama.

Specific learning outcomes: In order to meet the objectives of the course, students will take part in the following activities:

Study works of drama as a means of exploring human experience and understanding the creative process. Students will learn to understand how theater expresses ideas, feelings, and values, and will explore why dramatists choose drama as their medium of artistic expression.

Acquire the critical and technical vocabulary that will enable students to describe, analyze, and formulate an argument about, artistic productions. Students will learn to use "terms of art" such as plot, narrative voice, point of view, structure, character, symbol, theme, and style, in order to analyze and interpret works of drama.

Examine multiple interpretive possibilities of works of drama. The course will offer varying interpretations of a single work, and will give students practice in discussing and writing about their own and others' interpretations.

Writing assignments

In order to meet our course objectives and learning outcomes the written part of the course is designed to help you acquire the skills required to analyze, critique and discuss a work of literature. There will be five short essays, 5 pages double-spaced, each of which will count for 20%. There is a letter grade penalty (one letter grade per day) for any late submissions that have not been approved by me. Papers submitted later than 3 days after the submission date will not be accepted. All papers are to be emailed to me as a Word attachment, font size 12. Your paper must have you name on it. Returned papers will have my comments (track changes) in Word, which will not be seen if you are using Pages. Papers will be graded according to how effective the essay responds to the assignment, how clearly the argument is structured, and the paper’s originality.
Email copies will not be accepted unless approved beforehand with me.

The **Due Date** for each assignment will be the end of each week (Saturday, 11.55pm). Sakai is very precise re: times of uploading, and if your paper is uploaded late it may not be accepted. If you are in any doubt of whether you have successfully uploaded your paper, you can of course email me a copy.

Papers later than 3 days will result in a **Fail** for that paper.

*Important things to remember when writing about literature:*

Always use the **present tense**
Do not **summarize/re-tell the plot/storyline**.
Remember there is a difference between a **review and a critique**. Remember, it is not enough to simply regurgitate lecture notes. You are asked to evaluate the text, provide textual evidence, and present an informed opinion.
Use **font size 12**
If citing more than **3 lines** indent the quotation
When citing a dramatic work: *(Act, scene etc.)*

**A statement on plagiarism**

Plagiarism is **NOT** acceptable at any time when it comes to writing assignments. If you cite a critic or any outside source, you must at all times reference the source in your bibliography. A plagiarized essay will result in a ‘fail’ grade; a copy of the essay will be submitted to the Chair of English who will inform the Dean’s department. Plagiarism is a serious offence.

**Attendance**

It is important that you attend classes. If you know you are going to be absent, or you are encountering any difficulty with the class please contact me.

If you have any questions please contact me.

**Ground rules**

I will be available most days by email, though not after 8pm and not before 9am (central time). I will post information on Sakai, especially prompts and course materials so it is advisable to check the website on a regular basis.