Instructor:  Erik Viker, Associate Professor of Theatre
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Office Hours:  8:00 AM - 9:30 T/Th, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  An introduction to world dramatic literature through study of the development of drama and its various genres, focusing on the cultural, literary, and political contexts of individual works by diverse playwrights.

GOALS OF THE COURSE:  Students will be able to
1. Debate the definitions of literary text and canon, and the relationships between them
2. Discuss the impact of social and historical contexts on the creation and reception of the dramatic literature studied during the course by studying plays of different genres, which may include classic verse drama and contemporary texts exhibiting schools of thought such as realism, existentialism, and other approaches to drama.
3. Explain the impact that diversity factors have on writers and readers of literary texts, by studying dramatic literature addressing issues of power and identity written by diverse playwrights including members of underrepresented populations.
4. Demonstrate entry-level competence in reading and analyzing dramatic literature by examining both the form and the content of each text studied, including formalism and other methods of dramatic criticism appropriate to the various texts studied.
5. Develop an interpretation of dramatic literature texts and articulate it orally and in writing.

TEXTBOOK: The majority of plays studied this semester are available on line and the professor will provide links as necessary.  Two texts are not available on line:  *Fences* and *M. Butterfly*. These texts will be at the campus bookstore or you may secure them on your own in print or e-reader format.

CLASS POLICIES:

Exam dates are unchangeable and late assignments will not be accepted.  Exceptions may be considered only due to a catastrophic personal or family event, with documentation from the office of the Dean of Student Life.

Any requests for learning disability special accommodations must be made during the first two weeks of class.  Documentation from the university administration is required.

Cell phones and electronic devices may not be used during class time except for academic purposes.  Violations of this expectation will adversely affect the participation component of your course grade.
The professor recognizes each student is an adult responsible for his or her academic experience. Under no circumstances will the professor discuss a student’s grade or course progress with anyone other than the student or the student's academic advisor.

Academic honesty is necessary to the spirit of a learning community. The university will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism on tests, examinations, papers, and other course assignments, which may result in failing grades or expulsion. Plagiarism, the appropriation or imitation of the language or ideas of another person and presenting them as one’s original work, sometimes occurs through carelessness or ignorance. This does not make it less serious. Students who are uncertain about proper documentation should consult the professor for guidance. The Student Handbook definition of plagiarism is used for this course.

**GRADING:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; attendance</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written response assignments</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Response assignments are 300-word typed responses to works discussed in class. The midterm exam is a short-answer essay exam conducted in class. The final exam includes short-answer essays and an essay reflection of the course content and dramatic literature in culture. Guidelines for these assignments will be discussed in class.

Your written work will be graded by professional academic assessment of grammar, spelling, insight, engagement with the material and clarity of expression. Easily avoidable errors including evidence of inadequate proofreading and editing will result in drastic grade reductions. Your in-class participation work will be assessed by professional academic observation of your engagement with the literature, your efforts to use critical analysis, and your cooperative interaction with colleagues during discussions. Participation is assessed weekly by your professor. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions and activities and the participation component of your final grade will be adversely affected by absences or late arrivals. Your attentive presence will earn a weekly participation grade of C, with your questions, comments and discussion increasing your weekly participation grade. Efficient verbal expression will also impact positively on the participation component of your grade; for example, students avoiding unnecessary use of the word “like” will be rewarded for their precision and self-discipline. See the professor with participation expectation questions.

CLASS MEETING AND EXAMINATION SCHEDULE: Assignments should be read thoroughly before the class period for which they are due.

- **Week 1** Jan 12 - 16
  - Introduction to the course.
  - Discuss dramatic elements and critical perspectives.
  - *Trifles* by Susan Glaspell
Week 2  Jan 19 - 23  
*Oedipus the King* by Sophocles.

Week 3  Jan 26 - 30  
*Matsukaze* by Kan’ami Kiyotsugu  
*Everyman* by Anonymous

Week 4  Feb 2 - 6  
*Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe

Week 5  Feb 9 - 13  
*A Doll House* by Henrik Ibsen.

Week 6  Feb 16 - 20  
*The Hairy Ape* by Eugene O’Neill.

Week 7  Feb 23 – 27  
Office hours during class time Tuesday  
MIDTERM exam in class Thursday

Week 9  March 9 - 13  
*South Pacific* by Rodgers and Hammerstein (via PDF)

Week 10  March 16 - 20  
*Endgame* by Samuel Beckett  
No class Thursday due to conference travel

Week 11  March 23 - 27  
*The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams

Week 12  March 30 –April 3  
*True West* by Sam Shepherd

Week 13  April 6 - 10  
*Fences* by August Wilson

Week 14  April 13 - 17  
*Art* by Yasmina Reza (via PDF)

Week 15  April 20 - 24  
*M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang

Final exam paper (take-home style) is due by 1:30 PM on Friday, May 1.

This schedule is subject to change on short notice.
Grading guidelines for writing assignments

A
- Excellently written; avoids mechanical or grammatical errors and uses language efficiently and elegantly. No significant room for improvement.
- Well organized, with arguments supported by especially insightful text examples.
- Effective and engaging; exhibits sophisticated synthesis of ideas.
- May demonstrate or illuminate something about a text the instructor had not previously considered.
- May connect the text to relevant, intriguing personal insights.

B
- Very good written work with no major mechanical or grammatical errors.
- Clear, well-developed thesis supported by text examples.
- Thorough and efficient organization of ideas; evidence of critical analysis.
- Evidence of familiarity with the text.

C
- Average work; several mechanical errors or instances of awkward writing.
- No clear thesis and/or inadequate effort to connect text to the assignment.
- Evidence of limited familiarity with the text.

D
- Below average work; poor writing skills or numerous mechanical errors.
- Awkward or unclear writing.
- Superficial connection to the text or evidence of minimal reading.
- No recognizable thesis.

F
- Many mechanical errors.
- No connection to the text, or an obvious attempt to bluster through an assignment with no preparation.
- Unnecessary conversational use of the word “like” (even a single instance).
- Plagiarism.

Note: Easily avoidable errors including evidence of inadequate proofreading and editing will result in drastic grade reductions, up to one letter grade per instance.