

SYLLABUS

COURSE #: F19 (ENG 123; CRN 26037)

TITLE: Playwriting

Course Description:

Not unlike the essay or laboratory experiment, a play is a tool that allows the curious mind to develop, test, and rethink ideas, and to grapple with significant issues (both public and private) in live, three-dimensional space. Playwriting introduces the beginning writer interested in exploring the discipline of live performance (and the seasoned writer wishing to develop his/her craft) to the exciting world of writing for the stage. Each semester, students in this course get the chance to study with a different, award-winning guest playwright. In so doing, they get to experience instruction and guidance under the tutelage of some of the most exciting voices working professionally in the American theatre.

Credits: 4

Semester/Year: Fall/2019

Class Day/Time/s: Mondays, 12:30-3:15pm

Location: Todd 202F

First Class: Mon, September 9, 2019

Last Class: Mon, December 9, 2019

Lab Days/Times: n/a

Labs begin: n/a

Last Lab: n/a

Location: n/a

Does this course use Blackboard Learning Management? Y N

If yes, explain how Blackboard will be used:

To share readings, submit assignments, and possibly share weekly exercises.

Course Webpage/s [if applicable]: n/a

Instructor: Sam Chanse

Contact Email: schanse@gmail.com

Contact Telephone*:

Office Hours** : by appointment

Office Location: Todd 207

Entrance Prerequisites [if applicable]: n/a

Course Aims & Objectives:

This course is focused on exploration of the process and practice of playwriting, and the exploration and development of an individual idiom/writing practice.

Goals:

- explore a playwriting practice through daily pages and other course activities;
- deepen understanding of and familiarity with reading/experiencing, responding to, and engaging with plays;
- practice/experiment with various dramatic elements (dialogue, monologue, scene, stage direction)
- use and invent generative practices to launch and sustain the work of writing;
- generate an exploratory draft of a new play;
- participate and be fully present in a playwriting community.

General Course Requirements:

Required Texts & Readings:

Available from the bookstore:

Suzan-Lori Parks, *The America Play and Other Works* (TCG)

Caryl Churchill, *Far Away* (TCG)

Kristoffer Diaz, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Samuel French)

Quiara Alegria Hudes, *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue* (TCG)

Kimber Lee, *Brownsville Song (B-Side for Tray)* (Samuel French)

Other course readings will be made available on Blackboard, or distributed as hard copies in class.

Other Recommended Reading:

Other recommended reading will be shared on Blackboard, and in class.

Assignments and Exams/Quizzes/Tests:

Assignments will be given in class, and shared on Blackboard.

Daily pages are required.

Recommended Attire [if applicable]:

n/a

Attendance Policy:

Your presence in class is essential to the course and to your experience/process (and the experience/process of your fellow writers), and any absences beyond one will adversely affect your grade. I understand there may be cases of unavoidable absences; in such cases, we can arrange ways to make up the session, and you'll be expected to check in with a classmate to share notes.

(Please note: attendance also means being fully present. If you are on your phone/online, it will count as an absence.)

Grading:

Grading will be equally weighted between the following three elements:

- Presence, attendance, engagement and participation in class sessions
- Weekly writings, exercises, and posts
- Portfolio (demonstration of experimentation, exploration, application of ideas/concepts, and development of your own writing)

While evaluation in Theatre Program classes are by necessity subjective, I will be using the following general grading system as a guide for determining grades (in the elements above, that will be weighted equally in determining the final grade):

Grading System

A: Exceptional performance/written work scores. Impeccable attendance record and enthusiastic class participation. Full, enthusiastic and comprehensive completion of all assignments including voluntary extra effort and significant displays of initiative and responsibility

A-, B+: Very good written work. Impeccable attendance record and enthusiastic class participation. Full, enthusiastic and comprehensive completion of all assignments, displaying initiative.

B, B-: Good or above average written work. Good attendance record. Above average performance of assignments and related activities.

C+, C: Average written work. Imperfect and/or uncooperative attendance of classes, assignments and related duties.

C-, D+, D, D-: Poor written work. Poor class attendance and/or poor execution of assignments. Uncooperative attitude and lack of initiative.

E : All others. Don't go there.

Incompletes

Should a student not complete classwork by a due date, a temporary grade of "I" (Incomplete) may be awarded. If so, the student and instructor need to meet *before* this grade is assigned, and a revised due date for the submission of complete work needs to be agreed upon. An official Incomplete Contract Form *must* be filled out and submitted to the Registrar's Office before an Incomplete grade can be assigned. Incomplete Contact Forms are available from Theatre Program Administrator, Katie Farrell, in the Theatre Program Office.

Academic Support Services:

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/

Writing, Speaking and Argument Program: <http://writing.rochester.edu/>

Academic Honesty:

All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. More information is available at:

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The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at:

http://disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

Credit Hours:

This course follows the College credit hour policy for four-credit courses. This course meets once weekly for a total of three academic hours per week. The course also includes group activities, independent group, or solo work that meet for approximately one academic hour per week.

In this course, students will rehearse or complete other independent/group activities.

Content/Weekly Outline or Schedule:

Each week will consist of a combination of group discussion and writing, geared toward exploring the process of playwriting, developing a playwriting practice, and becoming familiar with reading/experiencing, responding to, and engaging with plays.

In addition, theater outings or other activities will be recommended or required.

Other Information:

Please reference the Arts Explorer Initiative handout that will be distributed in class, and which will be made available on Blackboard.