ENGL 4106: Studies in Drama (Studies in Genre)
Dr. Maria Doyle
Fall 2012
MW 11-12:20
Hum 208

Office and Phone: TLC 2-248, 678-839-4853
Email: mdoyle@westga.edu
Office Hours: MW 1-2, 4-5 and by appt.
Virtual Office Hours: T 9:30-1 (log in to CourseDen and use the chat function)
Website: http://www.westga.edu/~mdoyle

Course Description:
Literally, a play is a piece of literature written in dialogue and meant for performance, but the larger question that this course will explore is the more important issue of why a writer might choose this particular form of expression: what’s the value of putting real actors in a room with a real audience, and how does this shape the way a writer presents his or her ideas? Rather than attempting a complete survey of a genre that has been around for well over two millennia, this course will organize its exploration around a set of archetypal Greek models – the human fall of Oedipus, the rebellion of Antigone and the frenzied destruction of the Bacchae – using analysis of these plays to inform a reading of major developments in modern theater, from Tennessee Williams’s modern gothic to Tom Stoppard’s parodic absurdism and August Wilson’s stage chronicle of African-American experience. Discussions will provide students with a vocabulary for reading British, American and world drama as literature – its connection to larger literary, political and social movements – and as theater – its relation to performance conventions and stage spaces.

To gain an understanding of the breadth of developments within the genre, students will be reading a play a week (about 50-100 pages a week). Since this is a very manageable load for an upper level class, it is expected that students keep up with the pace of the reading and discussions.

Students should familiarize themselves with the use of the CourseDen web interface, as materials for this course, including paper assignments and handouts, will be posted there. Students should also use their university email accounts to correspond with me.

For information on learning outcomes and the course’s relationship to departmental program goals, see http://www.westga.edu/~engdept/fr/CourseGuid/4106.html. As a “Discipline Specific Writing” course, this class will engage students in a variety of formal and informal writing activities. Students must have completed 6 hours of DSW credit to graduate. For more information on DSW goals and outcomes, see http://www.westga.edu/dsw/.
Required Texts:

*For the three editions in translation (Sophocles, Euripides and Brecht), students are required to purchase the specific translation assigned. For texts originally written in English, the assigned editions are highly recommended, although you may use another edition if you already have the text.

Requirements:
(1) Analytical Response Papers (20%): Students will complete two short analytical responses, designed to develop your ability to engage with and respond to critical theory and dramatic texts. Students will have a selection of topics for each response, and further guidelines for these responses will be discussed and distributed in class.
(2) Course Project (40%): This project will consist of an essay, performance study and introductory statement. This assignment will allow students to apply what they have discussed in class to the critical study of drama as both written and performance text. Further guidelines outlining length, appropriate sources and the different components of this assignment will be distributed separately. Students are encouraged to begin work on this project early (I will distribute a suggested timeline to help you plan your approach to the assignment) and to consult with me about drafts. Students will be required to turn in a project plan a month before the final project is due.
(3) Midterm (10%) and Final Exam (20%): Exams will assess each student's ability to identify and discuss particular passages and/or images from the plays and to apply terms and ideas discussed throughout the course. The final exam will also ask students to synthesize, through a clearly argued essay, themes and concepts covered in our discussions. No makeup exams will be scheduled, and students who arrive late to exams will not be given extra time.
(4) Class Participation (10%): Class participation – your preparation for class meetings and your willingness to contribute to our discussions – is an important component of your grade. Consistent, punctual attendance is the minimum expected of all students (minimum = C), and after four absences, you will lose half a letter grade in this category for each additional class missed. You do not need to explain your absences to me – I understand that sometimes illness, childcare issues, uncooperative automobiles or unforeseen emergencies prevent you from coming to class – but use those allowed days for real emergencies, as I will not differentiate between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. Doing well in class participation means more than just coming to class. Students are further expected to have read the material carefully before class meetings, to listen attentively both to the instructor and to the comments other students make during
discussions, to ask questions and offer ideas about the material and to respond thoughtfully to ideas presented both by the instructor and the other students.

Additional Policies and Information:
I do not give 'makeup' assignments, and unless an exceptional opportunity arises that is directly related to the course material, I do not offer 'extra credit' opportunities: you will all be assessed by the same methods on the same assignments. If you find that you are having trouble with the course material, adjust your study schedule, come to my office hours or make an appointment at the Writing Center to get help with your writing.

Special Needs: If you have a registered disability that will require accommodation, please see me at the beginning of the semester; I will be happy to discuss your situation. If you have a disability that you have not yet registered through the Disabled Student Services Office, please contact Dr. Ann Phillips in Student Development (678-839-6428).

Nonengagement Policy: As part of the University’s RPG (Retention, Progression and Graduation) initiative mandated by the State of Georgia, faculty are required to report students who demonstrate their nonengagement in the first several weeks of the course. Nonengagement includes repeated inattentiveness (i.e. texting, doing tasks not related to this course during class time), frequent absences or lateness or lack of preparation for class discussion. Students who demonstrate these behaviors will be referred for tutoring or counseling to help them understand the value of individual engagement to their academic success.

Deadlines and Late Policy: The response papers that are due in class are due in the first ten minutes of class in hardcopy. Papers not received by this time will be considered late. My strictness regarding this particular policy stems from two considerations. First, if you are not in class, you are missing discussion and thus course material. In addition, it is disruptive to the class and distracting for both the instructor and other students to have others straggling in midway through the class period. Plan your schedule so that you can have papers printed and ready by the time class begins. No papers will be accepted over email.

For these short response papers, a late penalty of one half of a letter grade will be assessed for each day they are late. Papers that are more than four days late (including weekend days and holidays) will receive an automatic "F." Extensions will be granted only if you have a verifiable medical or other sufficiently serious ("seriousness" will be determined at the instructor's discretion) excuse and you request an extension (in person, via email or phone) before the paper deadline. Regardless of your situation, no extensions will be granted beyond the four-day late period. Having papers or exams for other classes, a schedule conflict with work or other responsibilities, or simply being "swamped" are not sufficiently serious excuses and will not result in your being granted an extension. Late penalties for papers turned in outside of class will
be assessed based on when I receive the paper, since if you do not hand it to me directly, I cannot verify when you turned it in.

For the final project, **no late papers will be accepted**, nor will papers be accepted over email. You have the majority of the semester to plan and complete this assignment; make sure that you get it in on time.

**Paper Format:** All papers should be typed, double-spaced, in a standard 12 point font (preferably Times New Roman) with 1" top/bottom margins and 1-1.25" left/right margins. Big fonts, extra spaces between your paragraphs, large margins and supersized periods are pretty easy to spot, so stick to the standard size guidelines and use the revision process to help you generate enough information to present a clear and well-reasoned analysis within the designated space limitations. Papers are required to have inline citations where appropriate and a descriptive title (i.e. not "The Piano Lesson" but "Gendered Definitions of Self in The Piano Lesson"), and you must number your pages and staple (NOT paper clip, glue, or origami fold) them together. Title pages are unnecessary for your response papers; simply include your name, the course number and the date in the top right corner of your first page. Your course portfolio, because it is a multi-part assignment, should be submitted in a folder.

**Outside Sources and Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty involves any attempt on your part to claim ideas and/or specific phrasing that you have gotten from elsewhere – including, but not limited to, Wikipedia, the dictionary, The New York Times, Sparknotes, an article you found that just sounds "better" than you think you could say it or your Aunt Sally – as your own or to fabricate sources or evidence so as to make your argument sound stronger. Plagiarism thus includes actions such as copying papers or online responses from the internet or other sources (including word-for-word copying and paraphrasing without citation), cheating on exams, turning in work written by someone else or turning in work that you previously submitted for another course.

* All work that you turn in for this course must be your work completed in this semester in response to an assignment for this class; course assignments are designed to help you develop a set of skills, not just produce information, and failure to do your own work both shortchanges you in this skill development process – rather like attempting to play basketball or sculpt a piece of wood without mastering the dribble or learning about your tools – and violates the shared trust of this course.

* Academic dishonesty is a serious offense, and plagiarizing any assignment or part thereof, regardless of the relative value of the assignment in the calculation of your course grade, is grounds for failure of the course.

* In keeping with departmental and university honor policies, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported both to the Chair of the English Department and to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In short, do your own work and when you use
outside information, provide accurate citations for it. For more on the English Department's plagiarism policy, see [http://www.westga.edu/~engdept/Plagiarism/pladef.html](http://www.westga.edu/~engdept/Plagiarism/pladef.html).

* Students should include a signed copy of the following statement with written assignments (your short papers and final research project) submitted this semester: "I have read the course statement on academic honesty, and I pledge that the material I am submitting for credit in this class is my own work."

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments:**

Unless otherwise indicated, students should have read the entire play by the first day of discussion. Bring your course texts with you to class.

**Unit I: The Oedipus Model: The Suffering Hero**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>8/20</td>
<td>Introduction: Drama and the Greek Tradition</td>
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<td>8/22</td>
<td>Sophocles, <em>Oedipus Rex</em></td>
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<td>8/27</td>
<td>Shakespeare, <em>King Lear</em> (Acts 1-3)</td>
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<td>8/29</td>
<td>Shakespeare, <em>King Lear</em> (Acts 4-5)</td>
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<td>9/3</td>
<td>Labor Day: No class meeting</td>
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<td>9/5</td>
<td>Shakespeare, <em>King Lear</em></td>
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<td>9/10</td>
<td>Wole Soyinka, <em>Death and the King's Horseman</em></td>
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<td>9/12</td>
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| 9/17  | August Wilson, *Fences*  
**Paper #1 due in class** |
| 9/19  | August Wilson, *Fences* |
| 9/24  | Midterm (bring a bluebook) |

**Unit II: The Antigone Model: Public, Private and Contests of Will**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/26</td>
<td>Sophocles, <em>Antigone</em></td>
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| 10/1  | Sophocles, *Antigone*  
Initial discussion of course project |
| 10/3  | Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children* |
| 10/8  | Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children* |
| 10/10 | Paula Vogel, *How I Learned to Drive* |
| 10/15 | Paula Vogel, *How I Learned to Drive*  
**Paper #2 due** |

**Unit III: The Bacchae Model: Chaos, Creation and Destruction**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>Euripides, <em>The Bacchae</em></td>
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10/22  Euripides, *The Bacchae*
10/24  J.M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*

10/29  J.M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*
10/31  Project Workshop **(bring project outline:** the plays you’ve chosen for Parts 1 and 2 and a brief description of what you’re interested in discussing in Part 3)

11/5  Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*
11/7  Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*

11/12  Tom Stoppard, *The Real Inspector Hound*
11/14  Tom Stoppard, *The Real Inspector Hound*

Nov 19-25: Thanksgiving break

11/26  Individual project consultations
11/28  Course wrap-up and exam review
11/30  **Final projects due IN HARDCOPY by noon** (TLC 2248)

Exam: Monday, Dec. 3 from 11-1:30 (bring a bluebook)