GROSSMONT COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Curriculum Committee Approval: 05/18/2021

GCCCD Governing Board Approval: 06/15/2021

ENGLISH 160 DRAMA WRITING I

1. Course Number Course Title Semester Units

ENGL 160 Drama Writing I 3

Semester Hours

3 hours lecture 48-54 total hours 96-108 outside-of-class hours 144-162 total hours

2. Course Prerequisites

None

Corequisite

None

Recommended Preparation

A “C” grade or higher or “Pass” in English 126 or equivalent.

3. Catalog Description

The first in a four-course sequence, this class is designed to familiarize students with the study, analysis, and application of fundamental tools, techniques, and forms used by established and contemporary authors of drama. By composing and submitting original works of drama, students learn to use the writers' workshop to develop their skills as critics and drama writers. Students have opportunities for recognition and public reading/performance of their own work. Students may enroll in this class without having to enroll in the other courses in the sequence.

4. Course Objectives

The student will:

1. Distinguish, both orally and in writing, the fundamental tools, techniques, and forms used by professional practitioners of drama writing, including script design, character development, conflict, setting, theme, and plot.
2. Identify and employ basic techniques of invention;
3. Write and revise short scripts utilizing fundamental tools, techniques, and forms;
4. Evaluate benefits of criticism of their own work and demonstrate application in consequent revisions;
5. Develop ability to critique other students’ dramas, acts or scenes, both orally and in writing;
6. Cultivate aesthetic criteria for drama;
7. Practice performative reading and performance of their own works
8. Practice competency in college-level grammar, punctuation, and mechanics used in drama writing.

5. Instructional Facilities

Standard Classroom

6. Special Materials Required of Student

1. Access to a computer, the Internet, and word processing with capacity to save/export as Portable Document Format (.pdf) and/or Microsoft Word (.doc, .docx).
2. Collegiate dictionary and thesaurus.
3. Writing materials and copies of poems for workshop.

7. Course Content

1. Invention, composition, and revision of scripted dramas or scenes amounting to approximately 20 pages per semester.
2. Fundamental elements and techniques of the craft of writing drama, including character development, conflict, setting, theme, plot, and manuscript design.
3. Written and oral critical commentary of peers’ original dramatic works.
4. A diversity of dramas by emerging, established, and/or contemporary dramatists, published in print and electronic media or produced theatrically, filmically, or videographically.
5. In-class writing exercises.
6. Critical essays on dramaturgy.
7. Strategies for performing or performatively reading works of drama.
8. Practice in assembling a portfolio of written dramatic works.
9. Introduction to publishing and to pursuing production.

8. Method of Instruction

1. Lecture by instructor, visiting writers, media.
2. Writers’ workshop: Students convene in groups. Selected writer assigns peer reader or readers to read aloud original dramas or scenes**,** and discussion follows. A student may be designated by the instructor to commence discussion for each work. Workshopped writers do not speak until work has been discussed by peers and addressed by instructor. Once a work is workshopped, the writer has the opportunity to respond and ask questions. Lastly, manuscript with written commentary is made available to its author. Cycle repeats with next selected writer.
3. Discussion and writing exercises based on tools, techniques, and forms of scripted drama.
4. Discussion and performative reading of scripted dramatic works by emerging, traditional, and/or contemporary dramatists.
5. Individual conferences.

9. Methods of Evaluating Student Performance

1. Student writing and revision of dramatic works.
2. Participation in writers’ workshop, both orally and in writing.
3. Participation in class discussion and writing exercises such as modeling based on published authors.
4. Completion of written drama portfolio (including exercises, drafts and revisions) as a final project.
5. Performance or performative reading of original works composed for the class presented as part of a final examination.

10. Outside Class Assignments

1. Reading and studying of work by emerging, established and/or contemporary dramatists.
2. Composing and revising works of scripted drama.
3. Reading and writing critiques of classmates’ written plays, acts or scenes.
4. Researching material for short works of drama.
5. Craft and imitation exercises**.**
6. Attending and/or participating in campus and community literary events and readings.
7. Submitting manuscripts to the Grossmont College literary journal, *Acorn Review*, as well as researching production and staging opportunities.

11. Representative Texts

1. Representative Text(s):
2. Aronson, Linda. *The 21st Century Screenplay.* Fine Communications, 2020.
3. Bentley, Eric. *The Playwright as Thinker: A Study of Drama in Modern Times*. 4th ed. Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2010.
4. Egri, Lajos and Gilbert Miller. *The Art of Dramatic Writing: Its Basis in the Creative Interpretation of Human Motives.* Literary Licensing, LLC, 2013.
5. Downs, William Missouri, Lou Ann Wright, and Erik Ramsey. *The Art of Theatre: Then and Now.* 4th ed.Cengage Learning, 2017.
6. Harbison, Lawrence, Ed. *The Best New Ten-Minute Plays, 2020.* Applause, 2020.
7. McKee, Robert. *Dialogue: The Art of Verbal Action for Page, Stage, and Screen.* Twelve, 2016.
8. True Acting Institute, ed. *Best Ten-Minute Plays of 2019.* Smith & Kraus, 2019.
9. Supplementary texts and workbooks:

Stevenson, Angus. New Oxford American Dictionary. 3rd ed. Oxford University Press. 2010.

Addendum: Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, our students will be able to do the following:

1. Identify and employ fundamental elements of scripted drama and use specific details from memory, imagination, knowledge, and research to invent, draft, revise, and reflect upon drama in traditional forms.
2. Use the writers’ workshop to evaluate their own manuscripts as well as the manuscripts of others (both orally and in writing) and to develop skills as critics and writers of drama.
3. Discuss the content and form of works by emerging, established and/or contemporary dramatists.