**WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**

**Campus Name**

**School of Languages and Literature**

**Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement:** Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

**Course Name:** ENGL 3303 *Studies in English – Modern American Drama*

**Term and Year: Fall-1, 2021 VC**

**Full Name of Instructor: Dr. Kimberlee Mendoza**

**Office Phone and WBU Email Address: (806)291-1106; mendozak@wbu.edu**

**Office Hours, Building, and Location:** Gates Hall, 200, Plainview

**Class Meeting Time and Location**: Online

**Catalog Description:** Topics vary to include subjects, genres, or themes not exclusively covered in other English courses. May be repeated once when topics change.

**Prerequisite:** **Advanced standing**

**Required Textbook and Resources**:

NOTE: *Most of these are only available in paperback. You may order through the bookstore to be delivered or on Amazon. Any version will do. Sometimes you can find the scripts online for free in PDF form. You will need the texts to be successful in this course.*

* Hart, Moss & George S. Kaufman. *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. ISBN: 978-0822207252
* Norman, Marsha. *‘Night Mother.* ISBN: 978-0822208211
* Simon, Neil. *Fools*. ISBN: 978-0573608773
* Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible.* ISBN: 978-0142437339
* Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie.* ISBN: 978-0822204503
* Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun.* ISBN: 978-0679755333

**Videos:**

It is recommended that you watch the play with the script in your hand so that you get the full understanding of the words. Plays were meant to be watched, not just read. But you will need the scripts for your assignments. You will be expected to cite the text (worth 20%).

* *The Man Who Came to Dinner:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HRiJz6LgaI>
* *‘Night Mother:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdHDdJrPTYg&t=4004s>
* *Fools:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHtvdi6ypIQ>
* *The Crucible:*  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLYIxQ1hi-E>
* *The Glass Menagerie:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dh_vmhtibmo>
* *Raisin in the Sun:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZmCR1k2s6o>

**Course Outcome Competencies**: Although the outcomes may vary according to the topic(s) selected for the semester, upon the conclusion of this course students actively engaged in learning will be able to:

1. Describe the distinct characteristics of the subject, genre, or theme selected for the course, and demonstrate how the subject, genre, or theme is connected to major literary movements.

2. Connect major world events to the subject, genre, or theme selected for the course.

3. Demonstrate the ability to read critically and communicate persuasively about the works selected.

4. Discuss the overall topic for the course and suggest how this topic is represented in each of the select pieces.

5. Conduct research on a topic related to a select piece of literature, articulate and support a thesis, and follow through with appropriate documentation.

The more the student puts into the course, the higher his or her outcome competencies will be.

**Attendance Requirements**: As stated in the Wayland Catalog, students enrolled at one of the University’s external campuses should make every effort to attend all class meetings.  All absences must be explained to the instructor, who will then determine whether the omitted work may be made up.  When a student reaches that number of absences considered by the instructor to be excessive, the instructor will so advise the student and file an unsatisfactory progress report with the campus executive director.  Any student who misses 25 percent or more of the regularly scheduled class meetings may receive a grade of F in the course.  Additional attendance policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the University’s attendance policy.

**Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**: Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported and second offenses will result in suspension from the university.

**Disability Statement**: “In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university.  The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291- 3765.  Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.”

**Course Requirements and Grading Criteria: (Fill in—include information about term papers, projects, tests, presentations, participation, reading assignments, etc. and how many points or what percentage of the final grade each of these components or assignments is worth)**

**Following statement must be included following Course requirements and grading criteria**:

**“Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.”**

**POINTS**

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| --- | --- |
| **Assignments** | **Points** |
| Reviews (6 x 100) | 600 |
| Discussions (8x25) | 200 |
| Final Research Essay | 200 |
| **TOTAL POINTS** | **1,000** |

**Play Reviews**

Each week in this course, students will read and watch a play. They will then write a play review by **Sunday at midnight**. These may be in first person, but keep it professional. Reviews should include:

* **Introduce—First paragraph will introduce us to the playwright and the history behind the play. Where was it first performed? Did it win any awards? Is there anything special to note about this play and its history?**
* **Describe—Second paragraph should describe the play. What is the plot? Who are the characters? What is the conflict? (This is surface level—what you can *see* on the stage, not the “why” behind the script.)**
* **Analyze—The third paragraph analyzes the play by breaking down the plot, the characters, critically thinking through the questions of “why” the different events or characters were written in, but try not to completely interpret it yet (that is paragraph 4). Are there literary devices used (symbolism, metaphors, flashbacks, allegories, imagery, etc.)? Who is the most important character (protagonist) and what does he or she want? Who or what stands in the protagonist’s way (antagonist)? Are all the characters necessary? Why or why not?**
* **Interpret—The fourth paragraph interprets your analysis of the play. What does all this mean? What is the author trying to communicate and why?**

**(The best way to describe the difference between analysis and interpretation is this: Analysis is, “the apple is brown, mushy, and sweet.” The interpretation would be, “the apple is rotting.”)**

* **Judge—Paragraph five is all about your opinion. Did you like it? Why or why not? Be specific, not general.**

**Discussions**

Students will be expected to answer a discussion question every week by **Thursday at midnight** (10-sentences or longer), then respond to two people no later than **Sunday at midnight**. Responses should be more than one sentence and “I agree” kind of statements. They must be *quality* responses. No late discussions will be excepted after Sunday at midnight.

**Final Research Essay**

Students will be expected to write a research essay (1,250 words) written on one of the pieces that we have studied in this class. Include a complete history of the play and the author, but go deeper. Explain the context of this play in society (does it reflect society?). You may use your review as a guide, but do not simply copy and paste (this will be flagged for plagiarism.) Essays are expected to produce an argument, and then use the play to back up that argument (see example below). Whatever argument you choose; you must stick with that argument throughout the paper. **This paper is due Saturday at midnight in Week 8.**

Expectations:

* The title should be creative and centered. Essay should free of errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and mechanics. [+15]
* The paper should have a strong thesis\* statement at the end of the introduction paragraph, with a topic sentence at the beginning of each additional paragraph that points back to the thesis. The paper must follow the HOT PEN formula found in the PowerPoint in Week 8. [+20]
* Essay must be in third person, academic tone. Any use of personal pronouns will be marked down. [+15]
* Essays must adhere to MLA formatting standards (signature block, 12-point font, TimesNewRoman font, double-spaced, 1” margins, and works cited page). [+5]
* Essays should address literary devices (symbolism, metaphors, imagery, point of view, etc.) Here is a resource of various literary devices: <https://blog.reedsy.com/literary-devices/> [+5]
* The essay must include citations from the play and at least three additional sources, including author/historical background. (This is worth 30% of the grade of this paper. Papers without citations will be marked down up to 30%.) [+30]
* The students should apply their own critical thinking to the text by questioning it, analyzing it, evaluating it, arguing for or against a particular idea, or extending its argument (+10)

Note: *Plagiarism will not be tolerated. There should be less than 25% citation. (Formula to consider: For every quoted sentence, student must write three sentences of his or her own.)*

**\**Example of Thesis:***

**If my play was Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Cinderella*, my thesis could go a few ways:**

**Thesis Idea #1:Cinderella *is a classical story that transcends all cultures and time due to its powerful message of hope.* (Then my topic sentences should point to *hope*.)**

**Thesis Idea #2: *Rodgers and Hammerstein’s classic tale of* Cinderella *is a powerful reminder that good can come to one who is kind to others.* (Then all my topic sentences will show the reminders or ways she was kind.)**

# **SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1—**

**Reading:** Hart, Moss & George S. Kaufman. *The Man Who Came to Dinner*.

**Assignment:** Write a review (see instructions above)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer by Thursday by midnight. Then respond to at least two people by Sunday at midnight.*

*Entertainment Weekly* gave the production of The Man Who Came to Dinner a B+, calling it "as fresh a send-up as an SNL sketch and [with] an even more inspired plot" and singling out Smart's "swanning demonstration of ultimate showbiz phoniness" for praise. In *The New York Times*, however, Ben Brantley disliked the production, writing that "What should be a buoyant balloon of an evening [is] more often an exercise in deflation." Brantley found most of the acting, "a series of flourishes that sell individual jokes and epigrams without being anchored to character.” Do you agree with the critics? Did you enjoy the production of this play? Why or why not? When you read the play, did you visualize the characters different? Explain. Then write a question for your fellow students to answer.

**WEEK 2—**

**Reading:** Norman, Marsha. *‘Night Mother.*

**Assignment:** Write a review (see instructions above)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer by Thursday by midnight. Then respond to at least two people by Sunday at midnight.*

This is a tough story. It is clear that Jesse has feelings of dependency, isolation, and hopelessness. The only exit from the constricting living room is the bedroom door of “absolute nothingness.” Given this information, should the reader excuse or understand Jesse’s decision to commit suicide? Please explain your answer. What is gained or lost by having only two characters in this play? Is there a clear antagonist or hero? Explain. Give your fellow students a question to answer.

**WEEK 3—**

**Reading:** Simon, Neil. *Fools*.

**Assignment:** Write a review (see instructions above)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer by Thursday by midnight. Then respond to at least two people by Sunday at midnight.*

In this play, what is the close relationship between intelligence and stupidity? What are some themes and/or the overall message of this play? Did you enjoy it? Why or why not? Is isolation important to this plot? Explain. Be sure to leave a question for your fellow students to answer.

**WEEK 4—**

**Reading:** Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*

**Assignment:** Write a review (see instructions above)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer by Thursday by midnight. Then respond to at least two people by Sunday at midnight.*

In the end, John will not give up his name. Why does his name matter more than his life? Why does his wife not try to convince him to sign? Do you agree with her reasoning? How does this message show up in our own world? Explain. Be sure to give a question to your fellow students to answer.

**WEEK 5—**

**Reading:** Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie.*

**Assignment:** Write a review (see instructions above)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer by Thursday by midnight. Then respond to at least two people by Sunday at midnight.*

This entire play is chalked full of symbolism. Explain what the various symbolism and how it applies to the different characters. This is a tragedy—why? Do you agree with the brother’s response at the end? Explain. Leave a question for your fellow students to answer.

**WEEK 6—**

**Reading:** Start readingHansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun. (Act 1); Read this article:* [*LINK*](https://sites.google.com/site/shadowsofmeandyou/essays---higher-education/what-is-american-modern-drama)

**Assignment:** None (just the discussion and reading of the play)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer by Thursday by midnight. Then respond to at least two people by Sunday at midnight.*

Read the article listed above and then define “modern drama.” Do you like this genre? Why or why not? What has been your favorite play so far? Explain. What is something you picked out from the article worth discussing? Post a question for your fellow students.

**WEEK 7—**

**Reading:** Finish Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun. (Act 2)*

**Assignment:** Write a review (see instructions above)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer by Thursday by midnight. Then respond to at least two people by Sunday at midnight.*

How are stereotypes being challenged in this play? Why is Mama’s little plant so important to her and what does she mean by “it expresses me?” This play was written over 40 years ago. To what extent do you think that the conflict and issues presented in the play are still relevant today? Explain. Be sure to include a question for your fellow students.

**WEEK 8—**

**Reading:** None assigned, but find research articles for your research paper**.**

**Assignment:** Final Research Essay (see instructions above)

**Discussion:** Click into the Discussion Forum and answer the question. *Please read and watch the assigned play for this week, then write an initial post of 10-sentences or longer.*

Final reflection of this class. If you were to write a play, what would be the topic? Explain. Of all of the plays read in this class, which is the most relevant? Which playwright would you want to read/see again? Explain. Which playwright did you not enjoy (if applicable)? Do you think these older plays can really be labeled “modern” drama? Explain. Did you enjoy this class? Why or why not? Is there a playwright you wished we had studied? Explain. Leave a question for your fellow students. DUE BY SATURDAY THIS WEEK, DUE TO THE CLASS CLOSING AT MIDNIGHT ON SATURDAY!

***NOTE: No late work accepted this week.***