**English 391: Playwriting**

**Spring 2024**

**Dr. Maria Mackas**

**Course Time: MW 12-1:15 p.m.**

**Classroom:** **Gordy 201**

**Office Location: Lawson 124-E**

**Email: maria.mackas@reinhardt.edu**

**Office Hours: By appointment**

**Required Text**

***the 90-day play* by Linda Walsh Jenkins**

**Student Learning Outcomes**

**Learning Outcome 1:** Students will become familiar with playwriting terminology, elements, and history.

Means of assessment: Writing assignments, discussions

**Learning Outcome 2:** Students will demonstrate sound skills in developing the appropriate generic structures of drama, specifically the structure of the short play.

Means of assessment: Play

**Learning Outcome 3:** Students will develop skills in brainstorming and conceptualizing play ideas.

Means of assessment: Play, writing assignments, journal

**Learning Outcome 4:** Students will become adept at incorporating creative sensory imagery in their writing assignments.

Means of assessment: Play, writing assignments, journal

**Learning Outcome 5:** Students will become knowledgeable, astute theater critics.

Means of assessment: Play reviews, discussions

**Grading**

Play 30%

Presentation 20%

Personal/Play Journal (4 grades) 15%

Writing Assignments 20%

Attendance/Participation 15%

**Plays**

Use this template for your play:

http://playwrightscentersf.org/submissions/docs/PCSFPlayFormat2012.pdf

(Add your name and the date centered on the title page.)

Plays should be at least 10 minutes.

**Personal/Play Journal**

See page 6 of our text for a description of how to keep a personal journal and a play journal. Ideally, write in your journals every day, but at least twice a week outside of class. We’ll start class by taking about 10 minutes to write in our journals. The journals will help you generate ideas for your play and make the writing process simpler. I will check your play journal four times for a grade. The personal journal is strictly for you.

**Presentation**

Choose a play for us to study together. We can watch the play in class or read the script aloud in class. First, prepare us by giving a presentation about the play. Include:

* Information on the playwright
* Historical info – timeframe of play, run history
* Brief synopsis
* Critical reviews
* YouTubes/videos about and/or interviews with playwright
* Personal perspective – why you love it/favorite scene/what you think makes it work

After we watch or read the play, you’ll lead a discussion about it. You may choose to guide us through a writing exercise.

**Writing Assignments**

Writing assignments will include play reviews and creative writing exercises/prompts. We’ll do a lot of these in class, some out of class.

**Attendance/Participation**

During our first class, we’ll discuss dates/times of the plays/readings I’d like us to attend and decide if the plan is feasible. Attending plays, coming to class, and discussing plays will be an important part of this course.

**Course Calendar – this is a general guide that’s subject to change to accommodate class needs**

**READ THE ASSIGNMENTS BEFORE YOU COME TO CLASS ON THE DAY THEY ARE LISTED.**

**Week 1**

**Mon., 1/8:** Intro to class; syllabus; theater attendance planning

**Wed., 1/10:** Textbook: Intro – page 13; stream-of-consciousness prompts p 10-11 in class

**Week 2**

**Mon., 1/15: NO CLASS – MLK DAY**

**Wed., 1/17:** 16-31; the “where” and “when”; in-class: writing exercises – p 21, 23

**Week 3**

**Mon., 1/22:** 32-57; in-class: writing exercises; journals due

**Wed., 1/24:** Guest speaker: Dr. Tanya Caldwell, Georgia State University – The Role of the Audience in Western Playwriting from Ancient Times Through the 18th Century

**Week 4**

**Mon., 1/29:** Dr. Caldwell review due; *Our Town* intro/background; watch play; 58-77

**Wed., 1/31:** Watch *Our Town* (or no class if we attend College Night – *Furlough* – Thurs., 2/1)

**Week 5**

**Mon., 2/5:** Alliance Kendeda Week – if we attend readings – no class; 77-96; *Our Town* review due

**Wed., 2/7:** If we attend readings and/or *Furlough* (Sat., 2/10, 2:30), no class; journals due

**Week 6**

**Mon., 2/12:** Reviews of readings/play due; 97-122; Presentation 1

**Wed., 2/14:** Presentation 1 continued

**Week 7**

**Mon., 2/19:** Review of play from presentation 1 due; 122-147

**Wed., 2/21:** Presentation 2

**Week 8**

**Mon., 2/26:** Presentation 2 continued; 148-168

**Wed., 2/28: In-class essay – review of play in presentation 2; journals due**

**MARCH 4-8 – NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**

**Week 10**

**Mon., 3/11:** Presentation 3; 169-192

**Wed., 3/13:** Presentation 3 continued

**Week 11**

**Mon., 3/18:** Review of play in presentation 3 due; 193-215; Presentation 4

**Wed., 3/20:** Presentation 4 continued

**Week 12**

**Mon., 3/25:** Review of play in presentation 4 due; 216-247

**Wed., 3/27:** Play plan due – present in class; journals due

**Week 13**

**Mon., 4/1:** Presentation 5

**Wed., 4/3:** Presentation 5 continued

**Week 14**

**Mon., 4/8:** Play readings

**Wed., 4/10:** Play readings

**Week 15**

**Mon., 4/15:** Attend *Fat Ham* on Saturday, April 13, 2:30 pm – no class

**Wed., 4/17:** *Fat Ham* review due; Play revisions

**Week 16:**

**Mon., 4/21: Last day of class**

**TBD: Final Exam: Play readings**