

Modern Theater

Spring, 2020

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Hours: My office hours may change due to other appointments. However, most weeks, I will be in my office during Mod 3 every day. I will also be available to meet during other mods by appointment (email me to confirm appointments). I want to be as accessible as possible. Don't hesitate to ask for help, run ideas by me, or just stop by. I can also meet on I days, middays and afterschool hours (with an appointment)

Course Description:

In this course, students will be challenged to read, analyze, perform, direct, critique, and even write texts for the stage, focusing especially on the unique characteristics of urgency, impermanence, and interpretation that make live theater a vigorous art form quite separate from film. By the end of the class, students will understand that the actor of live theater is both the medium and the agent of dramatic art, that the notion of "theater" and "performance" extends into virtually all human interactions, that a theatrical work is comprised of both its visible artists (the actor and writer) and the invisible (the director), and that great theater has certain enduring and recognizable elements no matter its genre or style.

Meeting Days, Time and Room(s)

Mod 1&2 B, Mod 1 D days

Mod 5&6 B, Mod 5 D days

Required Materials

· Your computers will be used frequently, so be sure to bring it and your power supply. I will frequently upload content to our Moodle page (IMSA's open source web-based course). Make sure you always have a copy (physical or digital) of our current reading. We will also be doing a great deal of in class writing. Always bring a pen and paper.

SSLs and Outcomes:

- Students will understand conventions of poetry, drama, and fiction as genres and be able to explain their uses and effects [English A.1-3, B.2-4, E.1; SSL IV.A-D].
- Students will evaluate the influence of historical context on form, style, and point of view [English A.4, A.7-8; SSL II.A].
- Students will work collaboratively to come to an understanding of readings [English A.5-6, C. 1-2, E.2, E.5; SSL I.A-B].
- Students will develop greater autonomy as readers and writers by generating and responding to their own substantive questions about authors and literary works [English B.1, D.1-3, E.3; SSL I.B].
- Students will experience writing as an incremental and recursive process by drafting, critiquing, and revising creative and expository works [C.3-5; SSL I.A, II.A, III.A, IV.A-D].
- Students will reflect upon literacy learning as a lifelong endeavor and set goals for themselves as literacy learners based on their strengths, needs, and aspirations [English E.3; SSL II.A, III.B, V.C].

Assessment Practices, Procedure, and Processes:

QUIZZES/ HOMEWORK/ IN-CLASS WORK 10% of final grade.

Quizzes are always in-class. Some quizzes will be announced. Others will not be announced. Be sure to keep on top of the reading assignments and come to see me BEFORE class if you are unable to understand the meaning of a reading.

PARTICIPATION: 10% of final grade

Our class will be highly discussion and performance based and we will frequently complete in class assignments with different groups. You must contribute to both the small group and large group discussions and performances. Occasionally, you will be asked to lead class discussion.

PRESENTATIONS: 20% of final grade.

Each quarter, one of your performances will be graded. In q1, you will perform a monologue. In q2, you will perform with a group in a one act play.

ESSAYS: 60% of final grade

Your essays (two to three per quarter) will be evaluated with a letter grade. Every assignment will have a specific due date and I will ask you to submit most essays on Moodle. Late essays will be marked off one letter grade (10 percentage points) per day.

Essay Revision Policy: You may revise most major essays (the exception being essays at the end of each grading period). **Remember, simply correcting mechanical errors or other such “polishing” is not sufficient to insure a higher grade; substantial revisions of content, style, focus and organization need to be undertaken.**

Most Essay Revisions will be due one week after you receive your graded first draft. You must complete an “Error and Comment Log” for each revision. I will discuss requirements for revision in more detail in class. The Error and Comment Log is available on Moodle.

At times, if the criteria for the essay is not met, students may receive a grade of “MUST BE REVISED,” which means you will receive a grade of “60” in PowerSchool until you have met with me (within a week of receiving your essay back from me). Once we have met, you will have one week to revise the essay. Failure to meet with me and revise will result in a permanent “60” (not passing) grade for the essay.

When you revise an essay I will average together the point value of the original grade and the subsequent revision grade for your recorded grade.

Remember to use all the resources this school makes available to help you do the best job you can when you first start writing: The Writing Center @ IMSA can provide one-on-one tutoring sessions, from brainstorming through proofreading; in addition to daytime hours in the Writing Center. Writing Center tutors will also be available in the IRC and one res hall during most evenings. Peer tutors will work with you on a one-to-one basis on a variety of activities and projects. These activities might include narrowing a topic, focusing a thesis, deciding on strategies, and revising.

Policies and Expectations

What I will require from you –

- Consistent attendance.

Whether or not you are present in class, you are responsible for class activities, presentations, and assignments. You may need to get the class notes from one of your classmates, and I would recommend emailing me as soon as possible after the absence to find out exactly what you missed. Class begins promptly and if you are late—even one minute—you will be marked tardy. Please strive to make it to class on time daily!

- Participation

My expectation is that, at least **once per class**, you **voluntarily** respond to a question or comment from your teacher or another student. You will also be required to act and participate in improve.

- Plan and Revise Your Work

Meeting with me outside of class and discussing your writing—both the process you go through as you write and your final product—is a key ingredient to improving your writing skills and can boost your grade. You will be able to give me written input on your participation grade each quarter.

- Respectful behavior.

The success of this class relies upon both you, the student, and me, the teacher, treating everyone in the class and their ideas with courtesy and respect. You should challenge each other and me. Don't be afraid to argue points, but remember to do so in a way that reflects your own dignity and intelligence.

- Timeliness.

All assignments should be turned in on time. Late essays (final drafts) will be penalized with the paper losing a letter grade for EACH day it is late. There are no extra credit assignments in this class and there are no make-up assignments. Computer glitches are no excuse for late work, so be sure to save your work OFTEN (I would recommend every 5 to 10 minutes) and save it in several places (the student server *and* a flash drive!).

- Academic Honesty

The academic honesty standards for all IMSA students apply in this class. Often, students and scholars accidentally take ideas from other sources without citing them. Do not be an accidental plagiarizer. **When in doubt, cite your source.** We will discuss plagiarism in more detail during class.

Remember to use all the resources this school makes available to help you do the best job you can when you first start writing: The Writing Center @ IMSA can provide one-on-one tutoring sessions, from brainstorming through proofreading; in addition to daytime hours in the Writing Center. Writing Center tutors will also be available in the IRC and one res hall during most evenings. Peer tutors will work with you on a one-to-one basis on a variety of activities and projects. These activities might include narrowing a topic, focusing a thesis, deciding on strategies, and revising.

I encourage you to seek and implement feedback on your drafts from a variety of readers— me, other teachers, classmates, tutors, parents, and peers. You must be the one to actually write your sentences, responses, and essays, though, so those readers should not implement changes directly in your documents. That is, it's great to have a parent or peer comment on errors in a Google Doc—but it's not OK to have them simply correct errors in a Google Doc. It's great to have a parent or tutor offer suggestions for how to improve your topic sentences—but it's not OK to have them write your topic sentences for you. Seek feedback and guidance from readers, but take ownership of your own writing.

- Laptops.

The default position for your laptop in this class is closed. This means, from the moment class starts, unless I ask you to use it, I don't expect to see it open. We may use the laptops for in-class work and research and even for online readings, but to the greatest extent possible, this will be a laptop-free class.

If you have a special need that requires accommodation in this area, please see me.

What you should expect from me –

- Help and Guidance. I want you to succeed in my class, and am willing to work with you both in and out of class to make that happen. If you are confused by an assignment or are struggling with something we are doing in class, stop by my office or email me. I am more than willing to help you with things you don't understand, but be sure to ask me for assistance **in advance**. Showing up to class with an incomplete assignment "because you didn't understand" is not a valid excuse for missing work. Plan ahead so if you need help, you have time to get it!

- Flexibility and respect. Just as I expect you to treat each other with interest, compassion, and civility, I strive to do the same for you. If, at any moment, you feel that I have failed to meet this goal, please let me know!

- High standards. Grades in my class are not "given," they are **earned**. At IMSA a "B" means that you have met expectations for a class. A "C" grade means that you did not meet expectations, and an "A" grade means you exceeded expectations. I am happy to spend time with you helping you improve your performance and meet the standards you set for yourself.

Sequence of topics

Unit 1: Reading/analyzing a script

Read: Mock Sides, selections of 10 minute plays, *Fences*, *Private Lives*,

Assignment: attend Private Lives production, write theater review

Unit 2: Production, direction, performance

Assignment: Monologue performance and paper

Unit 3: Political and Documentary theater

Read: *Los Vendidos*, *The Laramie Project*

Unit 4: Comedy and Drama

Read: *Eclipsed*, *The Wolves*

Assignment: Write 10 minute play

Unit 5: Progression of the Absurd

Read: *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, *Waiting for Godot*

Assignment: Scholarly Essay

Unit 6: Choose your own production

Assignment: Produce, perform, and analyze your own full length play