THE 201: Script Analysis  
MWF 9:20 – 10:20 AM *** PH205

Instructor: Karen M. Dabney, MFA, Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre  
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*Subject to Change**

Course Description (from course catalog):  
A basic study in interpretation: How does a script “mean?” Fundamental skills in “discovering meaning” are developed by examining different models for analysis and synthesis, exercises in interpretation, and the directing of short scenes.

Westminster Student Outcomes:  
1) To reason logically and evaluate critically  
2) To communicate effectively  
3) To think creatively, and appreciate aesthetic expressions  
4) To demonstrate intellectual curiosity  
5) To acquire knowledge of self, society, human culture, the natural world, and human relationships to God  
6) To apply our knowledge to contemporary issues  
7) To demonstrate moral and ethical commitments to neighbor, society, and the natural world  
8) To demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning and the acquisition of skills for careers and responsible service as world citizens

Course Objectives:  
1) To read and analyze representative plays from ancient Greek to contemporary theater (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)  
2) To apply various methods of play analysis and to discover the different results that each type of analysis will yield. (1, 3, 4, 8)  
3) To contemplate how various analytical discoveries might translate, or have translated, into the design, direction, and performance of a play. (3, 5, 6, 7, 8)  
4) To understand essential differences between pre-realistic, realistic, and non-realistic (post-modern) modes of dramatic expression, such as classicism, neo-classicism, expressionism, symbolism, surrealism, and absurdism. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)  
5) To understand the distinguishing features of tragedy, comedy, drama, melodrama, and tragicomedy. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)  
6) To compare non-Western plays and forms to dramatic structure typical of Western drama (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8)

Texts: Backwards and Forwards by David Ball

The following plays can be found online, in the library, or thru online booksellers:  
*Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles (any translation)  
*Hamlet* by William Shakespeare  
*Tartuffe* by Moliere (any translation)  
*Woyzeck* by Georg Büchner (any translation)  
*A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen (any translation)  
*Machinal* by Sophie Treadwell  
*The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams  
*Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett  
*What the Butler Saw* by Joe Orton  
*Venus* by Suzan-Lori Parks  
*Anna in the Tropics* by Nilo Cruz  
*Next Fall* by Geoffrey Nauffts

Additional text and play excerpts will be provided in class or on D2L as assigned.
Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>A: 930-1000</th>
<th>D+: 665-694</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term essay exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>A-: 895-929</td>
<td>D: 630-664</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final creative group project</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>B+: 865-894</td>
<td>D-: 595-629</td>
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<td>Research project</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>B: 830-864</td>
<td>F: 0-594</td>
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<td>2 (of 3) Live production response papers</td>
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<td>6 (of possible 10) writing exercises</td>
<td>210</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 (of possible 12) online forums</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>C+: 765-794</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playwriting Activities</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>C: 730-764</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>150</td>
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Grading Scale

Assignments

Mid-Term Essay Exam (100 points)
This blue book in-class mid-term will ask you to synthesize knowledge from in-class discussions, live productions, and assigned readings. This exam will be a series of short essay questions.

Final Creative Group Project (150 points)
In groups of 2-3 students, you will work together on these projects which will be presented during the class final (Thursday, December 13, 8:00 – 10:30 AM). You will come up with a complete production concept for one of the plays assigned for this class. You should have a central idea/spine/image that unites your idea, a set design, basic costume ideas, and examples for casting. You are welcome to also discuss lighting, sound, multi-media, choreography, marketing, and anything else that is pertinent to your concept.

Research Project (100 points total)
You will sign up for one of the following dates to launch that day’s discussion with a 25-30 minute research presentation on an assigned comparative play and playwriting, including a staged reading of an important scene from that play. This research project allows you to discover another play outside the course syllabus and compare dramatic structure of different periods, genres, etc.

| F 9/14 – Percy Mtwa, Mbongeni Ngema, & Simon, Wozá Albert! & Molière’s Tartuffe |
| F 9/28 – Nijinsky & Stravinsky’s Le Sacre du Printemps & Ibsen’s A Doll’s House |
| F 10/5 – Maurice Maeterlinck, The Intruder & Treadwell’s Machinal |
| F 10/12 – Kanami, Matsukaze & Williams’ The Glass Menagerie |
| F 10/19 – Gao Xingjian, Bus Stop & Beckett’s Waiting for Godot |
| F 11/2 – Dario Fo, Accidental Death of an Anarchist & Orton’s What the Butler Saw |
| F 11/9 – Bernard Pomerance, Elephant Man & Parks’ Venus (& The Octoroon) |
| F 11/16 – David Henry Hwang, The Dance and The Railroad & Cruz’s Anna in the Tropics |
| F 11/30 – Tony Kushner, Angels in America & Nauffts’ Next Fall |

2 (of 3) Live Production Responses (50 points each for 100 points total)
You are required to attend, or participate in, Theatre Westminster’s fall production of Love’s Labour’s Lost, the musical (October 11-14, paper due Oct 16). In addition, you are required to attend (or participate in) either this fall’s senior capstone production of Hamlet (December 6-9, paper due Dec 9, 11:59pm). OR Kinetic Theatre’s production of Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins’ An Octoroon (runs in Pittsburgh, Nov. 1-18, paper due Nov. 19) and write a 2-3 page (double-spaced) analysis and response paper on 2 of those 3 shows. Writing prompts will be available on D2L. These assignments should be uploaded to D2L for plagiarism checks before the start of class on its due date. Tickets are free with Titan ID.
6 (out of 10) Writing Exercises (35 points each for 210 points total)
These assignments should be completed before coming to class and will be based on the reading and analysis of one of our assigned plays. Only the top 6 scores will count towards this portion of your grade (you are welcome to submit more than 6 in efforts to maximize your grading potential). Each play will be accompanied by a specific writing prompt. These assignments should be uploaded to D2L for plagiarism checks.

9 (of 12) Online Forum Questions/Responses (90 points)
Throughout the semester, you will be asked to engage in conversations about the course material online in a D2L discussion board. Treat these dialogues as an opportunity for people to come together and discuss ideas and questions about topics of similar interest. Students will be required to post one question and respond to one question each time a Forum is open. Please make sure to participate before the Forum closes to get credit. There are 12 Forums relating to the 12 plays we will be reading and/or watching in class. Each Forum is worth 10 points and the top 9 scores will count towards this portion of your grade (you are welcome to submit all 12 to maximize grading potential).

Playwriting Activities (100 points total)
Throughout the semester, you will be asked to participate in a variety of playwriting and/or brainstorming activities. Each of these will count towards your total points in this category. As part of this unit, you will each be asked to write a two-minute play (in class). The activities help build up ideas, characters, and dialogue to aid you in your playwriting.

Attendance/Participation (150 points total)
A major part of this seminar lies in the success of the class discussions. Because the class is small and learning is rooted in the back-and-forth between students, attendance and participation are extremely important. You will be allowed up to 2 absences (excused or unexcused). After that, you will lose ½ letter grade per day absent. Similarly, tardiness affects the flow of discussion. You will lose ¼ letter grade each time you are late to class. After 5 absences, you will be dropped from the class. If you need to miss class due to university-sponsored events such as field trips and sports, please see the professor as far in advance as possible. You will be required to complete the assigned work on or before the due date.

In addition to tracking attendance/lateness, your ability to contribute to discussion is vital. However, not everyone is as comfortable with verbal communication as they are with written (or other forms) of communication. Therefore, there will be weekly in-class free-write assignments to get students to engage with class material without the pressure of grades or judgment. These spontaneous responses will allow the instructor to assess students’ understanding of key concepts and to appreciate students’ individual interests and aspirations.

Mature and Controversial Subject Matter
Theatre is about depicting and exploring human experiences. Therefore, this course includes content and characters that may conflict with the opinions and beliefs of certain individuals. Remaining enrolled in this course means that you understand that you may encounter what you consider mature and/or controversial subject matter, and that you agree to be civil and professional in discussions and assignments involving such material. If you encounter material which makes you personally uncomfortable to the extent that you do not feel you can adequately engage with this material, you should discuss this with the instructor.
Course Schedule

**Week One**
Monday, August 27\(^{th}\) – Introduction to course & syllabus
Wednesday, August 29\(^{th}\) – Ball p3-11, Rush on Play Analysis (D2L),
Friday, August 31\(^{st}\) – *Oedipus Rex*, online forum due, select Research Projects

**Week Two**
Monday, September 3\(^{rd}\) – Rush on Classic Tragedy (D2L), *Hamlet* Act 1
Wednesday, September 5\(^{th}\) – *Hamlet* Acts 2 & 3,
Friday, September 7\(^{th}\) – *Hamlet* Acts 4 & 5, online forum due

**Week Three**
Monday, September 10\(^{th}\) – Ball p39-59, Rush on Classic Comedy (D2L), *Tartuffe* Acts 1&2
Wednesday, September 12\(^{th}\) – *Tartuffe* Acts 3-5, *Tartuffe* (1 of 10) papers due
Friday, September 14\(^{th}\) – Moliere & Mtwa, Njema, & Simon, online forum due

**Week Four**
Monday, September 17\(^{th}\) – Ball p60-78, Rush on Epic Theater (D2L), *Woyzeck*
Wednesday, September 19\(^{th}\) – *Woyzeck* (cont.), *Woyzeck* (2 of 10) papers due
Friday, September 21\(^{st}\) – Büchner & O’Neill, online forum due

**Week Five**
Monday, September 24\(^{th}\) – Ball p81-96, Rush on Realism (D2L), *A Doll’s House*
Wednesday, September 26\(^{th}\) – *A Doll’s House* (cont.), *Doll’s House* (3 of 10) papers due
Friday, September 28\(^{th}\) – Ibsen & Nijinsky/Stravinsky, Ibsen adaptations, online forum due

**Week Six**
Monday, October 1\(^{st}\) – Rush on Expressionism (D2L), *Machinal*
Wednesday, October 3\(^{rd}\) – *Machinal* (cont.), *Machinal* (4 of 10) papers due
Friday, October 5\(^{th}\) – Treadwell & Maeterlink, online forum

**Week Seven** (*Love’s Labour’s Lost* runs October 11-14)
Monday, October 8\(^{th}\) – *The Glass Menagerie*
Wednesday, October 10\(^{th}\) – *The Glass Menagerie* (cont.), *Glass Menagerie* (5 of 10) papers due,
Friday, October 12\(^{th}\) – Williams & Kanami, online forum

**Week Eight**
Monday, October 15\(^{th}\) – *Waiting for Godot*, Rush on Absurdism (D2L), *LLL* paper due
Wednesday, October 17\(^{th}\) – *Waiting for Godot* (cont.), *Godot* (6 of 10) papers due
Friday, October 19\(^{th}\) – Beckett & Xingjian, online forum due

**Week Nine**
Monday, October 22\(^{nd}\) – *Mid-term Essay Exam*
Wednesday, October 24\(^{th}\) – Branding & Advertisements, Scenography handout (D2L)
Friday, October 26\(^{th}\) – Rush on Farce (D2L), *What the Butler Saw*
**Week Ten**
Monday, October 29th – **NO CLASS TODAY** **FALL BREAK OCT 27-30**
Wednesday, October 31st – *What the Butler Saw, What the Butler Saw (7 of 10)* papers due
Friday, November 2nd – Orton & Fo, *online forum due*

**Work Eleven**
Monday, November 5th – Rush on Post-Modernism (D2L), *Venus*
Wednesday, November 7th – *Venus* (cont.), *Venus (8 of 10) papers due, The Octoroon*
Friday, November 9th – Parks & Pomerance, *online forum due*

**Week Twelve**
Monday, November 12th – *Anna in the Tropics, An Octoroon paper due*
Wednesday, November 14th – *Anna in the Tropics, Anna in the Tropics (9 of 10) papers due*
Friday, November 16th – Cruz & Hwang, *online forum due*

**Week Thirteen**
Monday, November 19th – Dramaturgy handout (D2L), Adapptions & Translations, Devising
Wednesday, November 21st – ***NO CLASS TODAY*** ***THANKSGIVING BREAK***
Friday, November 23rd – ***NO CLASS TODAY*** ***THANKSGIVING BREAK***

**Week Fourteen**
Monday, November 26th – *Next Fall*
Wednesday, November 28th – *Next Fall, Next Fall (10 of 10) papers due*
Friday, November 30th – Nauffts & Kushner, *online forum due*

**Week Fifteen**
Monday, December 3rd – Playwriting activity
Wednesday, December 5th – Playwriting activity
Friday, December 7th – Group Project work day

**Week Sixteen**
Thursday, December 13th *FINAL* 8:00 – 10:30 AM Final Creative Group Project Presentation

**Note:** I will keep papers/projects not picked up at the end of the semester for 45 days, at which point they will be destroyed. Any grade disputes must be initiated by that time.

**Religious Observances:** Please notify the instructor at least one week in advance of any conflicts with religious observances so arrangements can be made to accommodate any work that needs to be made-up.

**A few words before starting Writing Assignments**
- ALL written work MUST be typed, using 12pt, Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and with 1-inch margins.
- Please double check your work for spelling and grammatical errors.
- Please READ and RE-READ your work before turning it in.
- Emailed papers will NOT be accepted.
- Titles of plays, films, and other full-length works must be *italicized*.
- NO LATE WORK will be accepted. All assignments are due at the BEGINNING of class.
- I am available during my office hours and by appointment to help you with your written work.
Other important policies:
Submission Format Policy: You may not submit a paper for a grade in this class that already has been (or will be) submitted for a grade in another course, unless you obtain the explicit written permission of me and the other instructor involved in advance.

Accessibility Statement: Westminster actively strives for the full inclusion of all our students. Students who require access solutions for environmental or curricular barriers should contact Faith Craig, Director of Disability Support Services, in 209 Thompson-Clark (x7192, craigfa@westminster.edu). If you have a condition that qualifies you for reasonable accommodation under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), you must have ADA documentation on file with the Student Affairs Office to receive that accommodation.

Safe Zone Statement: The professor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being - regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

***By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand & accept all the policies listed herein.