

ENGL 103W
INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA
Fall 2015

Instructor Contact Info:

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1:00-3:00 pm, or by appointment

Lecture Times and Location:

MW 11:30-12:20 pm, WMC 3520

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the study of dramatic literature via a selection of plays that deal with themes of family and forgiveness, compassion and community difference, romance, religion, and retribution. We begin with a discussion of two contemporary plays centred on imaginative young women dealing with the weight of family secrets. The warring Capulet and Montague families in William Shakespeare's romantic tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* serve as our transition to a final pairing of plays that examine the fallout of neighbours turning upon neighbours to commit unspeakable acts of violence. In analyzing these works, our focus will always be dual: what we are reading on the page; and how the text might be produced on stage. Thus, as a complement to attending lectures and tutorials, students are required to view and write about a performance of one of two plays on the reading list playing in Vancouver this fall.

Prerequisites: None

Required Texts:

Jessica Dickey, *The Amish Project* (Samuel French)

Michael Redhill, *Goodness* (Coach House Books)

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (Pearson Custom Library)

Kristen Thomson, *I, Claudia* (Playwrights Canada Press)

Paula Vogel, *How I Learned to Drive* (Pearson Custom Library)

Course Requirements:

10% Attendance, tutorial participation, and in-class writing assignments

10% Reading quizzes

25% First essay, including outline and draft: textual analysis (4 pages)

20% Second essay: production analysis (4 pages)

35% Final exam

To receive credit for this course, students must complete all requirements.

Week 1	Sept 9	Introduction to the course
Week 2	Sept 14	<i>I, Claudia</i>
	Sept 16	<i>I, Claudia</i>

Week 3	Sept 21 Sept 23	<i>I, Claudia</i> <i>I, Claudia*</i>
Week 4	Sept 28 Sept 30	<i>How I Learned to Drive</i> Discussion of first essay/Thesis statement speed-dating
Week 5	Oct 5 Oct 7	<i>How I Learned to Drive</i> <i>How I Learned to Drive</i>
Week 6	Oct 12 Oct 14	Thanksgiving: University Closed <i>How I Learned to Drive*</i>
Week 7	Oct 19 Oct 21	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> First essay due <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
Week 8	Oct 26 Oct 28	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
Week 9	Nov 2 Nov 4	<i>The Amish Project</i> <i>The Amish Project</i>
Week 10	Nov 9 Nov 11	<i>The Amish Project</i> Remembrance Day: University Closed
Week 11	Nov 16 Nov 18	<i>The Amish Project</i> Discussion of second essay
Week 12	Nov 23 Nov 25	<i>Goodness</i> Second essay due <i>Goodness</i>
Week 13	Nov 30 Dec 2	<i>Goodness</i> <i>Goodness*</i>
Week 14	Dec 7	Review

Notes on Course Policies, Procedures, Expectations, Assignments, and Grading Policies:

- This course makes active use of **Canvas** as part of its delivery and pedagogy: a copy of this course outline and syllabus have been posted online, along with instruction for assignments, style guides, and so on. To access Canvas, go to <https://canvas.sfu.ca>, and enter your SFU computing id and password. From your dropdown menu of courses, click ENGL 103W; this will take you to our course homepage. Follow the relevant links. **Students are also encouraged to make sure their SFU email addresses are active (or else forwarded to another preferred address) in order to receive broadcast messages related to this course.**

- I will also post the **Powerpoint slides** accompanying each lecture to the class Canvas site in advance of the relevant lecture (how far in advance may vary from week to week). Students are encouraged to print out these slides, and bring them to lecture in order to concentrate more fully on the substance of what I have to say, supplementing the slides as needed with more detailed notes. **Posted Powerpoint slides should in NO WAY be considered a substitute for regular attendance of lectures, and students should be wary about using the slides alone for study and review purposes.**
- Indeed, **attendance at lectures and especially tutorials is mandatory**. Frequent absences from class may result in exclusion from the final examination and an incomplete grade in the course. Assessment of participation grades is at the discretion of individual tutorial leaders, and you must attend the tutorial in which you are registered (no forced changes to students' tutorials will be authorized).
- One very important reason not to miss lectures is that throughout the semester we will be visited by a **repertory company** of SFU theatre students who will act out scenes from three of the plays on our reading list. Dates for the company's visits are indicated above, on the syllabus, with an asterisk (*).
- Five **reading quizzes**, one for each of the plays, will be administered in your tutorials the first week we are to begin discussing the relevant play in lecture: the week of Sept. 14 for *I, Claudia*; the week of Sept. 28 for *How I Learned to Drive*; the week of Oct. 19 for *Romeo and Juliet*; the week of Nov. 2 for *The Amish Project*; the week of Nov. 23 for *Goodness*. The quizzes will consist of five simple questions relating to each play, for a total of 5 marks each. Quizzes will be marked in class, and retained by your tutorial leaders, with your total out of 25 eventually accounting for 10% of your final grade. In other words, this is an easy way for all students to supplement their marks—all you have to do is read the plays on time, and show up to your tutorial on time on the appointed quiz day. **The catch is that missed quizzes cannot be re-written, even due to illness or other documentable circumstances.**
- For their **first paper**, students are required to write a formal 4-page essay critically analyzing some aspect of either *I, Claudia* OR *How I Learned to Drive*. Topics for this essay, along with instructions regarding the thesis statement speed-dating exercise and drafting workshops related to it that will be conducted in lecture and tutorials, have been posted to the course Canvas site. Students are encouraged to consult these topics early, and to speak with their tutorial leaders about their plans for the essay. Essays are due to be handed in **at the beginning of lecture on Monday, October 19th**, and must be accompanied by a copy of the draft workshopped in tutorial and the peer evaluation worksheet.
- For their **second paper**, students are required to write a formal 4-page essay critically engaging with some aspect of the local Vancouver theatre productions of either *Romeo and Juliet: Until the Stars Grow Old* (on at Langara College's Studio 58 from Oct. 1-18) or *The Amish Project* (in a production by Pacific Theatre on West 12th Ave. and Hemlock Street in Vancouver from Nov. 6-21). Full guidelines have been posted to the course Canvas site. Students are once again encouraged to begin their planning for this essay early; this means, in part, not delaying in seeing a performance of one or both of the plays. Students are

responsible for booking their own tickets to these shows; special discounted prices have been arranged for our class. In the case of *Romeo and Juliet*, I have secured a discounted price for our class of \$14.25; please note that this price is not valid for Friday and Saturday evening performances (and also that the regular Tuesday evening performance is even cheaper). Visit <http://ticketstonight.ticketforce.com/eventperformances.asp?evt=2901> to book your tickets; **you will need to enter the promotion code SFUIntrotoDrama** to unlock our special pricing, which will appear as part of a new drop down menu. In the case of *The Amish Project*, tickets for our class have been discounted to \$20, and can be booked online at <http://pacifictheatre.org/boxoffice/tickets>; **enter the promotion code SFUAMISH** in order to obtain your discounted ticket price. **Please be advised that nightly house capacity for each show is extremely limited; you are strongly encouraged to book your tickets early to avoid disappointment.** Finally, make sure to **retain your ticket stub**, as you will need to hand this in along with your essay, which is due **at the beginning of lecture on Monday, November 23rd.**

- A three-hour, closed-book **final exam** has been scheduled for **Thursday, Dec. 17, from 12-3 pm**. It will cover all of the material discussed in the course, and will consist of a series of short answer and essay questions. **There will be a compulsory question on *Goodness*.** The exact format of the exam will be reviewed by tutorial leaders during the last week of classes, and by the instructor during the final lecture.
- **Plagiarism or academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course.** Students are responsible for knowing the English Department's and SFU's policies on academic honesty. Consult the following website for more information: http://www.english.sfu.ca/documents/doc/academic_integrity_2010. **Ignorance of the standards set out by the department and university will not preclude the imposition of severe penalties for any instance of academic dishonesty.**
- **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED, UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION.** All written work will be assessed according to **content** and **expression**: that is, **what** you say and **how** you say it. All assignments will be given letter grades and will be assessed according to the following English Department standards:

Grade	Percentage Range	Evaluation Criteria
A+	96 -100	Outstanding performance. Represents work of exceptional quality. Content, organization, expression, and style all of a high standard. Comprehension of the subject and use of existing research and literature has been abundantly demonstrated. Uses sound critical thinking, has innovative ideas on the subject, argues the topic convincingly and presents sound evidence to back up claims. Shows personal engagement with the topic.
A	90 - 95	
A-	85 - 89	
B+	80 - 84	Good performance. Represents work of above average quality with no major weaknesses in argumentation or expression. Writing is clear and explicit and topic coverage and comprehension are more than adequate, although occasional lapses in reasoning or style may be present. Shows some degree of independent critical thinking and personal involvement in the work. Good use of existing knowledge on the subject.
B	75 - 79	
B-	70 - 74	
C+	65 - 69	Satisfactory performance. Represents work of competent quality. Shows some

C	60 - 64	comprehension of the subject, but has more frequent weaknesses and/or
C-	55 - 59	problems in content, style, argumentation, expression, or organization. Minimal critical awareness or personal involvement in the work has been demonstrated. Only adequate use of the literature and/or addressing of the topic.
D	50 - 54	Marginal performance. Represents work of a barely adequate quality. Serious flaws in content, organization, and/or style. Grammatical errors tend to be frequent and often reflect a lack of basic linguistic competency. Argument is mostly off-topic and/or evidence is contradictory or poorly marshaled. Poor comprehension of the subject and engagement with existing research and literature. Minimal critical/personal involvement in the paper.
F	0 - 49	Failing performance. Represents work of substandard quality. Either clearly does not respond to the assigned topic or contains errors in grammar, organization, and expression that do not meet the minimum acceptable academic standards. Work that has been plagiarized should automatically receive a failing grade.