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CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

I. CONTACTContact Person Barbara Blackledge Phone 357-4450Department Theater**II. PROPOSAL TYPE (Check All Appropriate Lines)**TH 347 COURSEPlaywriting

Suggested 20 character title

XXX New Course* TH 347 Playwriting

Course Number and Full Title

____ Course Revision

Course Number and Full Title

____ Liberal Studies Approval +
for new or existing course

Course Number and Full Title

____ Course Deletion

Course Number and Full Title

____ Number and/or Title Change

Old Number and/or Full Old Title

New Number and/or Full New Title

____ Course or Catalog Description Change

Course Number and Full Title

____ PROGRAM: ____ Major ____ Minor ____ Track

____ New Program*

Program Name

____ Program Revision*

Program Name

____ Program Deletion*

Program Name

____ Title Change

Old Program Name

New Program Name**III. Approvals (signatures and date)**Susan Black 10/14/94
Department Curriculum CommitteeTher
College Curriculum CommitteeAnnie Laurie Wheat 10/14/94
Department ChairMyronie Amett 10/17/94
College Dean

+ Director of Liberal Studies (where applicable)

*Provost (where applicable)

SYLLABUS OF RECORD

I. Catalog Description

TH 347 Playwriting 3 Credits
 3 Class Hours
 (3C-01-3sh)

Prerequisites: TH 110 (or permission of professor)

This course is a practical exploration of the craft and process of playwriting. The primary focus of the course is the practical, "hands on" experiences approximating the "developmental process" currently in use in the American theater. The student will be guided from the initial concept through synopsis, outlines, working drafts, and culminating in the student's completion of an original one-act play and a "staged reading" of this project.

II. Course Objectives

1. Students will become familiar with the "developmental process" of playwriting, progressing from the idea, through initial readings, re-writes, and final staged reading.
2. Through the study of selected contemporary playwrights and through their own experimentation, Students will become familiar with techniques for communicating concepts, story, and characters.
3. Students will have their work read aloud and critiqued in class weekly, thereby receiving evaluation of their work on a regular basis.
4. Students will have completed the first draft of a one-act play and will have had it performed in a "staged reading" format.

III. Course Outline

A. "The Process" (3 hours)

A description of the developmental process currently being practiced by professional theaters and playwrights. Includes discussion of contemporary playwrights and their writing techniques and production experiences.

B. "The Concept" (2 hours)

Techniques for stimulating dramatic ideas and concepts described and demonstrated. Students write and read "stream of consciousness" scenes.

C. "The Physical Environment" (2 hours)

Discussion of importance of setting for the playwright. Includes discussion of floorplans and implementation of a basic floorplan by the student as well as references to costume and props considerations.

D. "The Characters" (2 hours)

Discussion of techniques for defining and differentiating characters. Includes the discussion and implementation of character descriptions by the student.

E. "The Plot" (2 hours)

Discussion of the relative importance of plot and dramatic structure. Includes implementation of a synopsis and dramatic outline by the student.

F. "Presentation of Ideas" (2 hours)

Students present their proposals for a one-act play for discussion and evaluation. Proposals include the concept, synopsis of dramatic action, and descriptions of the physical environment and characters.

G. "Writer's Block" (1 hour)

Defining and discussing writer's block, its causes, and methods of utilizing and then overcoming a creative block.

H. "In Class Writing" (4 hours)

In class writing on a variety of assignments.

I. "In Class Reading and Discussion of Student Works-in-Progress" (22 hours)

On a regular basis (a minimum of once a week), each student brings their work to class for reading, discussion, and evaluation by the instructor and their classmates. These sessions are essential for the development of the student's plays and make up the bulk of class time.

J. "Presentation of the First Draft of Original One-Act Play" (2 hours)

Each student will cast their play and will rehearse a "staged reading" of their play for presentation to the class and an invited audience.

IV. Evaluation Methods

The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

- 40% Satisfactory completion of first draft of an original one-act play. Play must be completed in approved format and submitted to the professor prior to its receiving a "staged reading" during the final exam period.
- 20% Timely completion of all writing assignments including synopsis of action, character description, description of settings, prop and costume lists, and floorplan(s).
- 40% Daily participation in the work of the class - including participation as a reader/actor and in the form of constructive criticism/feedback.

A grade scale will be provided by the individual instructor.

V. Required Textbooks, Supplemental Books, and Readings

Required Textbook:

Savron, David, editor. In Their Own Words: Contemporary American Playwrights. Theatre Communications Group, New York, N.Y., 1988.

Supplemental:

Simpson, Ed. The Battle of Shallowford. Samuel French, Inc., New York, N.Y., 1991.

Morrow, Lee Alan. Creating Theater. Vintage, New York, N.Y., 1986.

VI. Special Resource Requirements

Students are expected to provide their own writing supplies and are responsible for all duplication costs.

VII. Bibliography

Catron, Louis. The Elements of Playwriting.

Cohen, Edward M. Working on a New Play.

Griffiths, Stuart. How Plays Are Made.

Hull, Raymond. Profitable Playwriting.

Nelson, Victoria. On Writer's Block.

Richards, Gillian. Dramatists Sourcebook.

Sweet, Jeffrey. The Dramatists Toolkit.

Ueland, Brenda. If You Want to Write.

Course Analysis Questionnaire

Section A: Details of the Course

- A1. This course will be an elective for students in the BA in Theater program but will be open to any interested student.
- A2. This course does not require changes in any other courses or programs in the department.
- A3. This course has been offered as a Special Topic (TH 481) during the Spring 1992 and Spring 1994 semesters. In 1992, the course had an enrollment of 16 and, in 1994, an enrollment of 13. Student evaluations consistently rated the course highly.
- A4. This course is not intended as a dual-level course.
- A5. This course is not to be taken for variable credit.
- A6. Similar courses are offered at the following universities:
Carnegie-Mellon University
Temple University
- A7. The National Association of Schools of Theater encourages but does not require this course in its accreditation standards.

Section B: Interdisciplinary Implications

- B1. This course is not designed to be team taught.
- B2. This course does not overlap with any other course at IUP. EN 221 Creative Writing is the only course where there might be any slight overlap if a student in that class decided to pursue playwrighting as their focus for that semester. However, EN 221 clearly does not focus specifically on only one literary form and the choice to individually pursue playwrighting in the framework of a seminar class would be a decidedly different process in EN 221 as opposed to TH 347.
- B3. Provided the student has completed the pre-requisite or received permission from the professor, one seat in each section will be reserved for students in the School of Continuing Education.

Section C: Implementation

- C1. No new faculty are needed to teach this course.
- C2. Other Resources
 - a. Current space allocations are adequate.
 - b. The department's and university's computer labs can adequately provide for the student's needs.
 - c. The department budget is currently adequate for the purchase of any needed supplies.
 - d. Library holdings are adequate.
 - e. No travel funds are anticipated.
- C3. There are no grant funds connected to this course.
- C4. This course will be offered every other year.

- C5. One section of the course will be offered at a time.
- C6. Due to the nature of this course, a maximum of 15 students will be accommodated.
- C7. Currently no professional organization recommends enrollment limits.

Section D: Miscellaneous

No additional information is necessary.