



**Instructor:** A. Rich

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**Course Number:** DRE/ENG121H5F

**Course Title:** Traditions of Theatre & Drama

**Course description:** This introductory course surveys plays and performance techniques from the ancient Greeks to the late 18th century. We will study plays by Sophocles, Shakespeare, Molière, Racine, and others, with a focus on situating the works in their historical contexts. We will consider the theatrical and social environments in which they were originally performed and the theatrical conventions that would have informed their staging. We will also investigate how these plays speak to each other across many centuries, and why they continue to be produced and adapted today. Special emphasis will be placed on developing critical thinking and close reading skills. Students will have the opportunity to participate in staged readings of excerpts from the plays, providing us with a further opportunity to consider the plays in performance then and now.

**Required Reading:** Selections from *The Norton Anthology of Drama Vol. I: Antiquity through the Eighteenth Century* (2009); additional plays and/or readings will be distributed as hand-outs or electronically.

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**First Three Texts/Authors to be Studied:**

Sophocles' *Oedipus The King*, Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, Seneca's *Thyestes*

**Method of Instruction:** Each week we will have two lectures, which will include class activities and discussion. During the third class of the week we will study specific scenes from the plays we are reading, with the aim of honing close reading skills and considering staging possibilities. This will be done through scene readings and group presentations.

**Method of Evaluation:**

Scene Study/Presentation and Report (500 words) 10%  
Close Reading Assignment (1000 words) 15%  
Mid-term test 10%  
Final paper (2000 words) 20%  
Participation (attendance and in-class activities/discussion) 10%  
Final exam 35%