



**Instructor:** Justin Blum

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**Course Number:** DRE/ENG122H5S (L0101)

**Course Title:** Modern and Contemporary Theatre  
and Drama

**Course description:** This introductory course surveys plays and performance techniques from the 19th and 20th centuries. We will study a number of theatrical forms and movements, including Melodrama, Realism, Modern Comedy and Tragedy, Feminist and Post-Colonial Theatre. Playwrights will include, among others: Boucicault, Ibsen, Brecht, Wole Soyinka, Suzan-Lori Parks, and Caryl Churchill. We will consider the conditions under which these plays were originally performed and received, as well as their social and political impact. We will pay special attention to the relationship between plays that have achieved status as part of the literary canon and popular forms of theatre and entertainment. Emphasis will be placed on developing critical thinking and close-reading skills. Students will also participate in staged readings of excerpts from the plays and present on production aspects.

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**Required Reading:**

The required textbook for this course will be *The Norton Anthology of Drama, Volume Two: The Nineteenth Century to the Present*. It will be available at the UTM campus bookstore. Other plays and readings will be distributed as photocopied handouts in class or electronically through blackboard.

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

Dion Boucicault, *The Poor of New York*; Henrik Ibsen, *Hedda Gabler*; Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

**Method of Instruction:**

For each play we will have lectures, pair or small group exercises, and class discussion. We will also do staged readings of scenes from the plays and presentations about past performances, with the aim of honing close reading skills and considering staging possibilities.

**Method of Evaluation:**

Students will be evaluated on the basis of a written Close Reading assignment (15%), a Midterm Test (10%), a Final Paper (20%) and Final Exam (35%), a group Stage Reading assignment (10%), and Participation/ Attendance (10%).