English & Drama
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
MISSISSAUGA

Instructor: Dimitry Senyshyn

~ dimitry.senyshyn@utoronto.ca

Course Number: DRE121H5F (L0201)

Course Title: Traditions of Theatre and 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, Behn, 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 discuss their contemporary significance to explore the reasons why they continue to be produced and adapted today. Special emphasis will be placed on developing critical thinking and close reading skills. Students may have the opportunity to assist with or participate in the performance 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* (2009); additional plays and readings will be distributed on Blackboard.

First Three Texts/Authors to be Studied: Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*; Euripides, *The Bacchae*; Plautus, *Pseudolus*.

Method of Instruction: Each week we will have two informal lectures, with much opportunity for class discussion. During the third class of the week we will study in detail specific scenes from the plays we are reading, with the aim of honing close reading skills and to think through the scenes with a view to staging possibilities. These workshops may also present the opportunity for students to assist with or participate in the performance of these scenes.

Method of Evaluation: Short paper/close-reading assignment (1000 words) (15%); Mid-term test (10%); Essay outline (5%) and final paper (2000 words) (20%); Participation (in-class discussions and staging/close reading workshops) (15%); Final exam (35%)