



Instructor: Cassandra Silver

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Course Number: DRE/ENG122H5S (L0201)

Course Title: Modern and Contemporary Theatre
and Drama

Course description: This introductory course surveys plays and performance techniques from the late 19th century to the present. We will study a number of theatrical forms and movements, including Realism, Modern Comedy and Tragedy, Epic Theatre, Theatre of the Absurd and Postcolonial Theatre. We will study plays by Ibsen, Brecht, Mamet, Albee, and others. We will consider the conditions in which these plays were originally performed and received, as well as their social and political impact. Special emphasis will be placed on developing critical thinking and close-reading skills, as well as the application of these skills to the creation of staged readings and the analysis of performance.

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

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First Three Texts/Authors to be Studied: Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*; Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*; Alfred Jarry's *Ubu the King*.

Method of Instruction: Each week will include lectures, class discussion, and small group exercises. We will undertake staged readings of scenes from plays as we explore our core texts and will learn from each other as groups of students present on key topics and plays to the class.

Method of Evaluation:

Close Reading/Performance Analysis Assignment 15%

Mid-term test 10%

Final paper 20%

Group presentation & written report 20%

Participation (in-class activities/discussions &
attendance) 10%

Final exam 35%