

Course: ENG-311, Classical and Renaissance Drama

Credit Hours: 3

Level: 5th Semester

Course Introduction

The purpose of this course is to explore the nature, function, and themes of Classical Greek, Roman and Elizabethan drama in their theatrical, historical and social contexts comprehensive and critical background to mythology, drama and society is given in the beginning of the course to prepare students to undertake close reading and analyses of the selected texts.

The first section of the course will focus on representative classical plays which have influenced the development of drama as a genre. It will introduce students to the history of Classical Greek and Roman drama and motivate them to explore how selected texts can be interpreted in a modern context. A comprehensive and critical background to Greek drama and society is given in the beginning of the course to prepare students to undertake a close reading and analysis of the selected texts. Special emphasis will be given in the seminars to examine the role and significance of mythology in Greek drama, the importance of festivals in Greek society, the structure of Greek tragedy, and the difference between tragedy and comedy.

The second section focuses on the selective plays of William Shakespeare, and Christopher Marlowe. Through a critical scrutiny of the recommended plays, students will be made to appreciate the variety and imaginative exuberance of drama written in the age that popularized cultural profundity, humanist tendencies, philosophical excavations and artistic excellence. Qualities such as the poetic richness, absorbing plots, and vivid portrayal of characters will be highlighted to catch the true spirit of Renaissance. Through a selection of plays, this section highlights the characteristic features of various dramatic forms like tragedy, comedy, and history, and their variations.

Course Objectives

Students will be taught to demonstrate:

- Knowledge of the myths, history, conventions, and major personages of classical theatre through readings of the plays and secondary sources.

- An insight into the culture, society and political events of the classical periods under study.

CLO No	Course Learning Outcomes	Bloom Taxonomy
CLO 1	to understand the main objectives, themes and ideas underlying Classical Drama	C2 (Understand)
CLO 2	to relate the primary texts to their socio-cultural and historical contexts.	C2 (Understand)
CLO 3	To assess the inherent nature of the human condition - its paradoxes, complexities, and conflicts.	C5 (Evaluate)

Course Contents

S. No	Weekly Course Distribution
Week 1	Aeschylus – Prometheus Bound
Week 2	Aeschylus – Prometheus Bound
Week 3	Sophocles – Oedipus Rex
Week 4	Sophocles – Oedipus Rex
Week 5	Euripides – The Bacchae
Week 6	Euripides – The Bacchae
Week 7	Aristophanes – The Birds
Week 8	Aristophanes – The Birds
Week 9	Mid Term
Week 10	Shakespeare – King Lear; As You Like It
Week 11	Shakespeare – King Lear; As You Like It
Week 12	Seneca – Hercules Furens (The Mad Hercules)
Week 13	Seneca – Hercules Furens (The Mad Hercules)
Week 14	Marlowe – Tamburlaine the Great (Parts I and II)
Week 15	Marlowe – Tamburlaine the Great (Parts I and II)
Week 16	Students' Presentations
Week 17	Review Week
Week 18	End Semester Exam

Recommended Readings

- Aeschylus. (1961). *Prometheus Bound, The Suppliants, Seven Against Thebes, The Persians*, translated by Philip Vellacott. Penguin Books.
- Aristophanes. (1962). *The Complete Plays of Aristophanes*. Edited by Moses Hadas. A Bantam Skylark Book.
- Bloom, Harold. (1987). *John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi*. Chelsea House Pub (L).
- Bloom, Harold. (1999). *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*. London: Fourth Estate.
- Cheney, Patrick. (2004). *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Dover, K.J. (1972). *Aristophanic Comedy*. University of California Press.
- Eagleton, Terry. (1986). *William Shakespeare*. New York: Blackwell.
- Erikson, Peter. (1991). *Rewriting Shakespeare, Rewriting Our- selves*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Frazer, James G. (1922). *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*. MacMillan.
- Gregory, Justina. (2005). *A Companion to Greek Tragedy*. Blackwell.
- Hackett, Helen. (2012). *A Short History of English Renaissance Drama*. I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd.
- Herington. (1986). *Aeschylus*. Yale.
- Kitto, H. D. F. (2005). *Greek Tragedy*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kuriyama, Constance B. (2002). *Christopher Marlowe: A Renaissance Life*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Ley, G. (1991). *A Short Introduction to the Ancient Greek Theatre*. University of Chicago Press.