

Course Code: BBN-ANG-114/k

Modern English and American Literature and Art (for teacher trainee students)

Shifts in Modern Anglo-American Drama: From Realism to Surrealism

Spring 2025/2026, Wednesday 13:45-15:15 a.m. Room 423/a

Hadeel Endewy

**Course Description:**

This course explores the evolution of Anglo-American drama from the principles of realism to the experimentation of surrealism. Students will analyze key texts, contexts, and figures that define these movements, assessing how artistic currents shaped theatrical expression from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-20th century. We will examine major movements in Modern Drama through reading plays and engage in discussion about themes, characters, and literary devices. In addition to reading the plays, we will also be screening select recorded theater performance clips of the plays understudy and engaging in discussions about the recorded performances.

**Course Structure:**

12 February **Introduction / Modern Drama**

19 February **Realism: Introduction to realist theatre**

26 February **Practice: *Widowers' Houses* by George Bernard Shaw**

5 March **Practice: *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller**

12 March **Leading Discussion: How realism & symbolism come together in *Widowers' Houses* & *Death of a Salesman***

19 March **The Rise of Avant-Garde Theatre / Epic Theatre: Introduction**

26 March **Practice: *Lear* by Edward Bond**

2 April **Absurdist Drama/ Minimalist Theatre: Introduction**

9 April **Practice: *Play* by Samuel Beckett**

16 April **Leading Discussion: How does minimalist theatre reflect existential concerns?**

23 April **Surrealism in Drama: *After Magritte* by Tom Stoppard**

7 May **In-Your-Face Theatre: Reality Vs. Fantasy: *4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane**

14 May **Leading discussion: How do Stoppard and Kane redefine or utilize surreal elements in their plays?**

*All texts can be found in the department library or online in a form of pdf. Reading the texts and preparation before the class is required*

### Requirements:

- Active presence (maximum 3 absences)
- Reading texts listed in the course schedule before class.
- In-class discussion and participation
- In-class presentation about 15 minutes
- In-class leading discussion for approximately 35 minutes per discussion, each student leads a class discussion on a specific play, providing context, asking guiding questions, and fostering dialogue among peers. Note: The topics of the **in-class leading discussion** can be adapted based on the students' interests, provided that it is related to the plays understudy.

### Assessment:

- 1). In-class work; participation & discussions (33%)
- 2). Presentations (33%)
- 3). Leading Discussion: (33%) for Approximately 35 minutes

### Recommended Readings:

Bogard, Travis, and William Irvin Oliver. *Modern Drama: Essays in Criticism*. London [etc.] : Oxford University Press, 1971.

Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968.

Hopkins D. *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press; 2004.

Kartiganer, Donald M. and Malcolm A. Griffith. *Theories of American Literature*. New York: Macmillan: University of Washington, 1972.

Krutch, Joseph Wood. *Modernism in Modern Drama: A Definition and an Estimate*. New York: Russell and Russell, 1962.

Marriott, James William. *Modern Drama*. London [etc.]: T. Nelson & Sons, 1934.

Styan, J. L. *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice: Volume 1, Realism and Naturalism*. Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Styan, John Louis. *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge UP, 1981.

Have a nice semester!