

USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 593A M.F.A. Project 63225D

Fall 2014—As Noted

Location: Project-determined

Instructor: Velina Hasu Houston, MFA, PhD

Office: Massman Drama Center, 1029 Childs Way

Office Hours: M 10-12 via appointment utilizing email

Contact Info: greentea@usc.edu

Course Description and Overview

Credit awarded upon completion of project. The course focuses on dramaturgical preparation leading toward workshop-staged reading process in spring 2015.

Learning Objectives

This course is designed for 3rd-year students in the USC School of Dramatic Arts' Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Writing program. Students will focus on organic enhancement of their thesis plays utilizing dramaturgical experience. Students will be required to serve as a dramaturg for a play in development in The Pasadena Playhouse's Hothouse series (see assignments below). The student will meet in advance of the Hothouse assignment with the Hothouse playwright and/or director to ascertain the dramaturgical needs and expectations in relation to the respective assignment. The student will attend rehearsals and performances of the Hothouse readings. This will be groundwork for the student experiencing a similar process for his or her own play in Spring 2015 as part of the USC School of Dramatic Arts' New Works Festival at the Carrie Hamilton Theatre at The Pasadena Playhouse.

Recommended Readings

Ghost Light: An Introductory Handbook for Dramaturgy (Theater in the Americas), Michael Mark Chemers, http://www.amazon.com/Ghost-Light-Introductory-Handbook-Dramaturgy/dp/0809329522/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1407733199&sr=1-1&keywords=dramaturgy

The Process of Dramaturgy: A Handbook, Scott R. Ireland, http://www.amazon.com/Process-Dramaturgy-Handbook-Scott-Ireland/dp/1585103322/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1407733346&sr=1-2&keywords=dramaturgy

The Art of Active Dramaturgy: Transforming Critical Thought into Dramatic Action, Lenora Inez Brown, http://www.amazon.com/Art-Active-Dramaturgy-Transforming-Critical/dp/1585103519/ref=sr_1_4?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1407733346&sr=1-4&keywords=dramaturgy

Letters To A Young Poet, Rainer Maria Rilke (Available On-line), http://www.carrothers.com/rilke_main.htm

Blackboard <https://blackboard.usc.edu/> (Means of communication and continuation of curriculum in the event of an emergency) (If you do not know how to use Blackboard, visit the site and follow links to USC Blackboard Help.)

Supplementary:

Poetics by Aristotle

The Penguin Book of International Women's Stories, Ed. Kate Figes

The Vintage Book of Latin American Stories, Ed. Carlos Fuentes

Breaking Ice: An Anthology of Contemporary African-American Fiction, Ed. Terry McMillan

The Oxford Anthology of Modern Indian Poetry, Eds. Vinay Dharwadkar and AK Ramanujan

The Ways of White Folks: Stories, Langston Hughes

The Oxford Book of Short Poems, Eds. P. J. Kavanagh and James Michie

Readings in the Philosophy of Language, Ed. Peter Ludlow

Japanese Death Poems: Written by Zen Monks and Haiku Poets..., Ed. Yoel Hoffman

Burnt Sugar Cana Quemada: Contemporary Cuban Poetry, Eds. Carlson/Hijuelos

Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

Academic integrity is important to the University. The student is urged to remember that professors do not “give” grades; students *earn* grades. Thus, a final grade is entirely up to the student with regards to the effort he or she chooses to expend to meet course requirements. You are expected to:

1. Read *An Accident* by Lydia Stryk, attend the 09/11/2014 Hothouse reading of her play, and submit an analysis of your reading and viewing to your instructor via email (3-5 pages single-spaced, 12 pt. Times or Helvetica font) by 09/18/2014
2. Provide a draft of your proposed spring New Works Festival @ the CHT @ The PPH play to your instructor by 09/15/2014 in hard copy to her mailbox
3. Complete all Hothouse dramaturgical responsibilities with positive intention and skill, including having a pre-event meeting with your Hothouse playwright and/or director
4. Provide an end-of-semester report on your Hothouse dramaturgical experience to your instructor via her mailbox in hard copy (3-5 pages single-spaced, 12 pt. Times or Helvetica font) by 12/05/2014, 12 noon
5. Provide a revised draft of your New Works Festival @ the CHT @ The PPH play to your instructor via her mailbox in hard copy by 12/05/2014, 12 noon.

If these expectations are met and met well, you will receive a grade of CR for this course. If you do not complete these expectations with proficiency, then you will receive a grade of NC. Please apply yourselves, including with regard to behaving with effective professional etiquette.

In keeping with SDA guidelines on grading:

- There shall be no unexcused absences.
- No late assignments, projects, exams, papers, or exercises shall be accepted unless advance extensions have been arranged between the student and the teacher or unless exceptional circumstances occur.

Course Schedule: A Breakdown

8/26 – Introduction and overview of process, 10:30 am, site TBD.

8/26-9/22 – Pre-Hothouse meetings with Hothouse playwright and/or director

9/11 – Read *An Accident* by this date and attend Hothouse reading at 8 pm

9/15 – Provide draft of NWF III play to instructor as noted above

9/18 – Submit analysis of *An Accident* reading/viewing as noted above

9/22-25 – HOTHOUSE DRAMATURGICAL ASSIGNMENT. Victoria Moy: "Noms de Guerre" by Jacqueline E. Lawton, Directed by Diana Rodriguez

10/20-23 – HOTHOUSE DRAMATURGICAL ASSIGNMENT. Lena Ford: "The End Times" by Jesse Mu-En Shao, director TBA

11/10-13 – HOTHOUSE DRAMATURGICAL ASSIGNMENT. Tylar Pendgraft: "From Under the Tree" by David Myers, Directed by Nataki Garrett

[11/27-30 Thanksgiving Holiday]

12/5 – Submit end-of-semester report as noted above

12/5 – Submit revised draft of NWF III play as noted above

[12/18-1/11 Winter Break]

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP:
http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.