



EN 235

Tragedy and Comedy

Semester: Winter 2015
Days: W F 11:15 am – 12:30 pm
Room: A2210

Number of credits: 3

Prerequisite:
EN 115

Instructor: Dr J. Goossen
Email: jgoossen@ambrose.edu
Phone: 403-410-2000 x5960
Office: L2065
Office hours: T Th 2:00 – 3:00 pm

Course Description:

The dramatic genres of tragedy and comedy originated in Ancient Greece, yet continue to populate theatre stages and screens to our time. This course will survey the long history of these genres by studying seminal representatives of each and important theoretical accounts of the formal conventions that define them.

Important Dates:

First day of classes: January 7, 2015
Registration revision period: January 18, 2015
Last day to request revised examination: March 2, 2015
Last day to withdraw from course: March 20, 2015
Last day to apply for time extension for coursework: March 30, 2015
Last day of classes: April 10, 2015

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Diligent students of this course will:

- gain understanding of the major recurrent traits and types of tragedy and comedy over the long history of each genre.
- gain understanding of central theoretical accounts of the form, effect, and significance of tragedy and comedy.
- consider the differences and similarities between these

Final Exam: April 17, 2015
Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Room: A2141

two primary narrative modes.

- consider the relationship of Christian theology to the tragic and comic visions of human life.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **Readings** must be completed **before** the class for which they are assigned.
- Class sessions will be largely devoted to considering the assigned texts. Therefore, **always bring your textbook** to class.
- All assignments are **due at the beginning of class** on the date specified.
- **Extensions** may be granted on written assignments in exceptional circumstances, but must be arranged in advance. The **late penalty** is one refined letter grade per class day (T-F) late.
- This is not high school: **all assignments** must be submitted to receive a passing final grade.
- In addition to the assigned readings, **you are responsible for the content of all lectures** on these readings, including their historical and literary backgrounds. In other words, attend class.
- The most **current version of this syllabus** will always be available on Moodle. You are responsible for any changes to it announced in class.
- Additional assigned readings and texts discussed in class will be available on Moodle.

Participation & Reading Quizzes – 10%

Participation is your visible engagement with the class and the texts: look alert, ask questions, share your thoughts, and visit the professor's office when you need help (or just for good, old-fashioned conversation). It goes without saying that such participation requires **regular attendance**: skip classes and your grade will suffer. **Short reading quizzes** will occasionally be inflicted at the beginning of class to ensure that you are keeping up with the course readings.

Précis of Theoretical Text – 2 x 5% = 10%

Write a précis of Aristotle's *Poetics* and Hegel's *Aesthetics* that demonstrates your comprehension of their arguments. **Due January 14** and **February 4**. Submit a hard copy in class *and* a digital file to Moodle.

Essays – 15%, 25%

Topics will be assigned for each of two papers. Each essay must treat a different genre. For the first essay, you must submit a **thesis statement** (via Moodle) for preliminary approval by day's end on **February 25. Essay 1 (4 pp.) due March 4; Essay 2 (6 pp.) due April 1**. Submit a hard copy of each essay in class *and* a digital file to Moodle.

Midterm examination – 10%

This will consist of definitions and quotation-based questions about the plays and theorists we've read. **In class, February 25.**

Final examination – 30%

The final will be comprehensive of the entire course. **April 17.**

Further directions for these assignments will be given well before they are due.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Aristotle. *Poetics*. Trans. Richard Janko. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987. ISBN 9780872200333.

Jonson, Ben. *Volpone*. 2nd ed. Ed. Robert N. Watson. *New Mermaids*. London: Methuen, 2003. ISBN 9780713654332.

Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman: Text and Criticism*. London: Penguin/Viking, 1996. ISBN 9780140247732.

Shakespeare, William. *Julius Caesar*. Ed. Arthur Humphries. *The Oxford Shakespeare*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0199536122.

Shaw, George Bernard. *Major Barbara*. Ed. Dan H. Laurence. London: Penguin, 2000. ISBN 978-0140437904.

Sophocles. *Oedipus the King*. In *The Three Theban Plays*. Trans. Robert Fagles. London: Penguin, 1984. ISBN 9780140444254.

Rubin, Danny. Screenplay for *Groundhog Day*. Unpublished.*

**This and several other required texts will be made available digitally on Moodle. Students are expected to print these digital copies and bring them to class on the days specified.*

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

In order for each of us to get the most out of this class, please observe the following points:

- Arrive on time. Attendance will be taken. If you arrive after a quiz begins, you may not write it.
- Do not talk compulsively. Be self-aware and leave space for others' voices.
- Do not be silent. Speaking is a crucial aid to formulating your thoughts on a topic.
- Eating in a formal venue like a classroom is barbaric; since university education is meant to civilize you, don't do it. Unslurped beverages are fine.
- Despite frothy claims to the contrary by those addicted to it, technology rarely aids learning. Thus, students may not use any devices more advanced than pen and paper in our classroom. Beeping and rumbling mobile phones, like eating, are barbaric and will be confiscated.

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	96-100	Excellent
A	91-95	Excellent
A-	86-90	Excellent
B+	82-85	Good
B	75-81	Good
B-	72-74	Good
C+	68-71	Satisfactory
C	63-67	Satisfactory
C-	60-62	Satisfactory
D+	56-59	Poor
D	50-55	Minimum Pass
F	0-49	Failure

In order to discourage plagiarism, papers submitted for this course will be subjected to an originality analysis by *Turnitin* software. For more information, see http://turnitin.com/en_us/features/originalitycheck.

Policies:

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (Cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, it is highly recommended that they forward all messages from the Ambrose account to the other account.

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may to enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a Request to Withdraw from a Course by the **Withdrawal Deadline**, please consult the List of Important Dates. Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. A grade of "W" will appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a **Revised Examination** Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Please do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "**Course Extension**" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control".

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Other

Any added features in the syllabus are optional. You may or may not wish to include elements such as a bibliography, reading list, schedule of lectures/topics, or reporting form.

Course Schedule – EN 235 – Winter 2015

* indicates texts available on Moodle. Please print and bring to specified classes.

Wednesday	Friday
January 7 Course Introduction	January 9 The Origins of Tragic and Comic Theory Janko, Introduction to <i>Poetics</i> , pp. ix-xxiv Aristotle, <i>Poetics</i> pp. 1-25 (Chapters 1-19)
January 14 Ancient Greek Tragedy Aristotle, <i>Poetics</i> Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i> Précis of Aristotle due (Moodle and Hard Copy)	January 16 Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i>
January 21 Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i>	January 23 Old Comedy Aristotle, <i>Poetics</i> , pp. 5-7 (review) Incongruity and Superiority: Excerpts on Laughter* Jonson, <i>Volpone</i> Acts 1-2
January 28 Jonson, <i>Volpone</i> 3-5	January 30 Jonson, <i>Volpone</i>
February 4 Ethics in Tragedy Hegel, <i>Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art</i> (excerpts)* Précis of Hegel due (Moodle and Hard Copy)	February 6 Renaissance Tragedy William Shakespeare, <i>Julius Caesar</i> Acts 1-2
February 11 Shakespeare, <i>Julius Caesar</i> Acts 3-5	February 13 Shakespeare, <i>Julius Caesar</i>
TERM	BREAK
February 25 Midterm Exam Essay 1 Thesis due (via Moodle only)	February 27 The Structure of Comedy Frye, <i>Anatomy of Criticism</i> (excerpts)*

Wednesday	Friday
<p>March 4 Romantic Comedy Rubin, <i>Groundhog Day</i>* (a screening of the film will be arranged in advance of this class) Essay 1 due (Moodle and Hard Copy)</p>	<p>March 6 Rubin, <i>Groundhog Day</i>*</p>
<p>March 11 Ancient Greek and Modern Tragedy Nietzsche, <i>The Birth of Tragedy</i> (excerpts)* Miller, "Tragedy and the Common Man"</p>	<p>March 13 Modern Tragedy Miller, <i>The Death of a Salesman</i> Act 1</p>
<p>March 18 Miller, <i>The Death of a Salesman</i> Act 2</p>	<p>March 20 Miller, <i>The Death of a Salesman</i></p>
<p>March 25 New Comedy Readings TBA</p>	<p>March 27 Shaw's New Comedy of Ideas Shaw, <i>Major Barbara</i> Acts 1-2</p>
<p>April 1 Shaw, <i>Major Barbara</i> Act 3 Essay 2 Due (Moodle and Hard Copy)</p>	<p>April 3 Good Friday – classes cancelled</p>
<p>April 8 Shaw, <i>Major Barbara</i> Last Class – Course Review</p>	<p>April 10 Professor away – class cancelled</p>
<p align="center">Final Examination: Friday, April 17, 9:00 am, Room A2141</p>	