

Common Course Outline
ENGL 154/THTR 154
Writing for the Stage
3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

ENGL 154/THTR 154 – 3 credits – Writing for the Stage explores the writing process, development of a personal voice, and alternative forms; focuses on the playwright's craft and creative process, from the initial stage of ideas and first draft to the revision stage of a final draft.

3 credit hours; 3 lecture hours per week.

Prerequisite: ENGL 101 with a grade of C or higher

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. initiate an understanding of playwriting technique and the principles of writing for the stage;
2. explain the steps of a well-made play;
3. implement the concepts of the Aristotelian Form;
4. apply into the written medium the emotional, psychological, physical and intellectual connections of character;
5. incorporate the structure of action and conflict within a written text;
6. discuss, prepare, and present own theatrical text;
7. analyze and critique own (and others) theatrical text(s);
8. assess, analyze and peer critique a staged reading of original work produced in class;
9. present, pitch and defend ideas and rewrites of own play to peers;
10. recognize the application of written skills in personal development and growth;
11. journalize personal development in a written journal detailing growth in the playwriting process, and other discoveries and revelations discovered;
12. synthesize elements of playwriting process to write a ten minute scenario/play;
13. synthesize elements of playwriting process to write a one act play;
14. identify and demonstrate several playwriting techniques explored in various theatrical writing (and performance) styles, theories and philosophies;
15. apply techniques of improvisation while exploring direction and possible dramatic choices for self-written play;
16. analyze success of rhythm, tension, structure, dialogue, character, image and semiotics within own work and others;
17. promote an understanding on how to market own work;
18. promote a better understanding of one's self, recognizing the student as central to the learning process;

19. engage in art, literature and process that promotes a learning environment and embraces and values diversity; and
20. increase communicative skills.

Major Topics

List of major topics in outline form.

- I. Aristotelian Forms of Writing and Longinus' Theory of Sublime
- II. The Well-Made Play and Use of Plot, Character and Action
- III. The One Act Play
- IV. Verse Plays and Use of Rhythm and Melody
- V. The Naturalistic Approach
- VI. Alternative Forms (Expressionism, Surrealism, Dada, Absurdism, etc.)
- VII. Creating through Improvisation and Working with the Actor's Voice
- VIII. Creating and Constructing Dialogue
- IX. Creating the Environment, Setting and the World of the Play
- X. Comedy
- XI. The Structure and Tension of Conflict
- XII. Revision Process
- XIII. Marketing Your Work

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and active participation in class.
2. Individual and group exercises on writing and critical analysis.
3. Reading assignments.
4. Rehearsal and performance assessment of work in progress.
5. Write and share at least one ten minute scenario/play (approximately 10 pages).
6. At least one class presentation detailing and/or marketing the play you will/are write(ing).
7. Write and share a one act play (approximately 25-35 pages).
8. Written critiques and journal entries on own writing process.
9. Weekly rewrites and improvements on own work.

Other Course Information

THTR 154 / ENGL 154 satisfies partial completion of Suggested Pattern Electives required for Departmental Certification in Theatre.

Date Revised: 03/2011