

THR 202
Literary Management
Kristin Johnsen-Neshati
Tuesdays, 12:30-1:20 pm
Art & Design Building 2001
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Office: PAB A407-F

COURSE OUTLINE

This course will introduce students to the various duties of a literary manager, including season planning, synopsis evaluation, play reading, professional correspondence, and critical evaluation of a playwright's work. With its practical focus on evaluating new writing for possible production, this course should benefit playwrights, critics, and dramaturgs, in particular.

TEXTS

Required readings will be available online or provided by your instructor.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Regular attendance and enthusiastic participation. No unexcused absences (25%).
2. Regular assignments (25%):
 - (a) Short in-class, Blackboard or other homework assignments related to literary management, such as drafting sample correspondence, researching area theaters, etc.
 - (b) Play reading and script reports. Each student will be responsible for reading and evaluating up to four plays over the semester. Scripts will be provided to each student, along with the standard reader's format to be used for each written report. Each report should be about one page (split between play summary and analysis).
3. Season presentation (25%). Research a theater you know nothing about, find out its mission and production history, and plan its first three-play season. You will be required to explain your choices in a ten-minute oral presentation to the class and turn in a 2-3 page summary for your instructor's review. Your choices should be based on plays you've read *in their entirety* for this class or outside. All presentation material should be original work with bibliography and proper citations. *All Honor Code rules apply.* Choose a presentation date: either 2/21 or 2/28.

Note: There will be no class on 3/13 (Spring Break).

4. Interview project (25%). Contact a playwright, literary manager, dramaturg or agent and conduct a short interview about his or her experiences in the profession. 1,000-1,500 words. Due April 24. Our final class will include group reflections on this project.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Your grade will be based on your work in each of the four areas above. Each requirement represents 25% of your final grade. Occasional extra credit opportunities will be announced in class. *There will be no final exam.*

OFFICE HOURS

MTW 1:30-3:00 pm, or by appointment. Please schedule an appointment with me after class or by email.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is your responsibility. No unexcused absence will be permitted without a penalty to your grade. Arrival later than 12:40 will not count toward class attendance. NB: Chronic lateness and/or absences will substantially lower your grade. If an emergency arises and you must miss class, please call me at 3-1122 before class time. Please check with a classmate for material you may have missed.

•As part of your attendance grade, you will be required to attend all GMU Players mainstage and studio productions, and you should be prepared to discuss them in class. Please bring a ticket stub and program with your name on it to class. You are also encouraged to take advantage of the many arts events—including Theater of the First Amendment’s play readings, dance and music concerts, as well as gallery exhibits and artist lectures—available on campus and in the Washington area. For more information on the free student ticket policy for George Mason events, please see the Center for the Arts brochure, or call the CFA box office at 993-8888.

PARTICIPATION

Students can participate in a variety of meaningful ways, such as:

- 1) making original, well-informed and relevant comments on the material under discussion; quality of comments is more important than quantity.
- 2) raising focused questions in class and/or directly to me over email
- 3) volunteering to read parts aloud, when appropriate
- 4) offering constructive comments to students doing presentations
- 5) volunteering to do a short “capsule” presentations of 3-5 minutes on a topic assigned by your instructor

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As a courtesy to others in the class, and in accordance with George Mason University policy, please turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. Also, please refrain from using Instant Messenger, surfing the Web, or checking email during class.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Faculty, staff, and students have the right to be treated with respect and professionalism by students and peers in all classes and activities sponsored by the Theater department. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If, in the opinion of the responsible faculty member, a student becomes disruptive in class or rehearsal, faculty may exercise their judgment on how best to address the situation, be it by requiring the student to leave, calling Campus Police, or taking other steps deemed necessary for the safety and wellbeing of the class, rehearsal or group. Such action may affect the student's final grade and standing in the University.

MISSING CLASS FOR PRODUCTIONS

Under what circumstances is involvement with a Mason Players production justification for missing a class? Here are the general ground rules that we work with:

- 1) Students are never required to miss a class to participate in a Mason Players production. This includes rehearsals, load-ins, performances, etc.
- 2) Students are asked to provide their class schedule when auditioning or requesting an assignment as a designer, etc. When directors cast a show and assign production duties, they accept these conflicts.
- 3) Subject to the attendance policies of a given class, students may request permission of their instructors to miss a class or portion thereof to participate in critical activities. Such a request should be made rarely and is subject to the approval of each individual instructor. The syllabus policy on absences applies. Student academic success is our priority.
- 4) In the case of our Mainstage productions, including weekday matinees on Friday, because of the unique nature of the situation, the director of the production will provide an email confirming a student's participation in the performance (on stage, back stage, etc.). Excusing these absences remains at the discretion of each instructor. With at least 6 weeks' advance notice about production assignments, each student is responsible for confirming his or her availability to participate so that alternative arrangements can be made, if necessary.

Given the dual nature of our learning experience - in the classroom and

in production - it is not surprising that schedules sometimes conflict. In the end, we are an academic institution, and our first priority is students' academic success.

GRADING

Letter grades will be assigned based on the George Mason University undergraduate grading system in which a letter grade of "A" is equal to 4.00 grade points, "A-" equals 3.67 grade points, etc. See the Academic Policies section of the *University Catalog* (available online at www.gmu.edu) for more information.

GRADING STANDARDS

What makes a project or other assignment an "A"? (B, C, D, F)

- A grade of "A" is given for superlative work that demonstrates a profound commitment to the course material, and further, employs this material as a springboard for independent thought and work.
- A grade of "B" is given for very good work that completely fulfills all the requirements of the course in a conscientious and dedicated manner, and that demonstrates mastery of the course content.
- A grade of "C" is given for work that fulfills all the requirements of the course in a satisfactory manner, but that falls short of demonstrating rigor and mastery.
- A grade of "D" is given for work that is unsatisfactory in content, but meets the standards of submission.
- A grade of "F" is given for work that fails to fulfill the requirements of the course.

MIDTERM GRADES

Midterm grades posted online will reflect your grade for your season presentation assignment. Final grades will be calculated according to the grading breakdown below.

MASON'S ADD/DROP POLICY

The last day to drop this class with no tuition liability is **1/31/2012**. The last day to drop this class without Dean's permission is **2/24/2012, by 5 pm**. The selective withdrawal period is 2/27/2012 – 3/30/2012. It is the student's responsibility to check to verify that they are properly enrolled, as no credit will be awarded to students who are not.

HONOR CODE, COPYRIGHT & COMPUTER USE POLICIES

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater

academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

You are expected to adhere to all University policies and guidelines during your participation in this course. All work must be your own. Inappropriate use of the work of others is a George Mason University Honor Code violation. Please review the University's website for information on the following: Honor Code and Judicial Procedures; Copyright/Fair Use; and Responsible Use of Computing.

DISABILITY RESOURCES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Students must inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester, and the specific accommodation will be arranged through the Disability Resource Center.

MASON EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. The Mason email accounts are the official accounts for this class. All communications regarding this course must occur via Mason email accounts.

WRITING CENTER

Students in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of the Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). These services are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

OTHER MASON RESOURCES

<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/freshman/resources.html>

University Policies: University Catalog can be accessed catalog.gmu.edu
University Libraries "Ask a Librarian" <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) caps.gmu.edu or (703) 993-2380

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

MASON ALERT SYSTEM

You are encouraged to sign up for the Mason Alert System by visiting the website <https://alert.gmu.edu>. Emergency information is posted in each classroom explaining what to do in the event of crises. Further information about emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert>. **NOTE:** Cell phones, pagers and alarms must be turned off in class. Exceptions will only be made in advance or in case of emergency.

<i>January 1 Day of Week</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 16
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 23
Summer 2012 Graduation Intent Available via Patriot Web	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Tues Jan 31
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due	Tues Jan 31
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Tues Feb 14
Last day to drop with a 67% tuition penalty	Fri Feb 24
Last day to drop	Fri Feb 24
Last day to file your Spring 2012 Graduation Intent	Fri Feb 24
Immunization Record Deadline	Tue Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 20 - Fri Mar 23
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 27 - Fri Mar 30
Spring Break	Mon Mar 12 - Sun Mar 18
Incomplete work from Fall 2011 due to instructor**	Fri Mar 30
Incomplete grade changes from fall 2011 due to registrar**	Fri Apr 6
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline**	Fri May 4
Last day of classes	Sat May 5
Reading Days	Mon May 7 & Tue May 8
Exam Period (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 9 - Wed May 16
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	May 19, 2012