CASPER COLLEGE COURSE SYLLABUS
THEA 2030 – Beginning Playwriting

Semester/Year: 2016
Lecture Hours: 2  Lab Hours:  Credit Hours: 2
Class Time: 2-4pm  Days: Friday  Room: KT119
Instructor’s Name: James Olm
Instructor's Contact Information: Office Phone: 307-268-3716  Email: jolm@caspercollege.edu

Office Hours: Posted on office door – Rm 125

This course helps develop the student’s playwriting skills. It covers play formatting, and eight scene-writing exercises. Each exercise will be written outside of class. The student’s work will then be read and discussed in the following class.

Statement of Prerequisites: None

Goal: To develop clear and complete, dramatic, enticing, character-driven scenes.

Outcomes:
5. Appreciate aesthetic and creative activities

Course Objectives: The student will
- learn about different scene-writing techniques
- develop clear, complete, dramatic, enticing, character-driven examples of those scenes.
- develop an ear for disseminating scenes read out loud and to articulate their positive and negative attributes in class discussion.
- learn and apply correct, professional play formatting

Methodology: Every two weeks, the instructor will give the students a different, unique scene-writing exercise to work on outside of class. The following week in class, the students will read each others’ scenes and then critique them for their effectiveness. Discussions will follow. The student will be responsible for writing a total of seven scenes for the course. All scenes must be word processed, one-sided, Times New Roman, 12 font, and a copy printed off for each student and instructor in the class. The student will also be expected to read script examples of scenes.

Attendance: Since this is a one-day-a-week course, missing class is not an option. New exercises and concepts are introduced every week. You will be given 250 attendance points at the beginning of the semester, and will lose 50 points per class per absence.

Evaluation Criteria: The student’s grade for this course is through the instructor’s evaluations of the student’s scene writing. Each scene exercise will be graded on the following criteria for a total of 100 points:
1. Following the guidelines of that particular scene exercise
2. Creativity
3. Grammar and spelling
4. Scene effectiveness
5. Manuscript presentation – readability, formatting

Work is due at the beginning of each class.

**Assignments and Projects – Point Value:** No late assignments accepted and will be given a 0. Assignments are handed in at the beginning of each class period. EVERY SCENE ASSIGNMENT MUST HAVE COPIES FOR EVERY PERSON IN CLASS, INCLUDING THE INSTRUCTOR. FOR THE ACT 1 PROJECT, ENOUGH COPIES MUST BE MADE FOR EACH CHARACTER READING AND THE INSTRUCTOR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Secret Moment Scene</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Ugly Secret Moment Scene</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Nightmare Scene</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Beginning Act 1 scenes</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Obstacle Scene</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>6. Ultimate in Life Scene</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>7. Evil Person and Foiled Scene</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Burning Bridge Scene</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Act 1 Project</td>
<td>500</td>
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**Total:** 1300 Points

**College Grade Percentage Scale:**
- 90 – 100% A
- 80 – 89 B
- 70 – 79 C
- 60 – 69 D
- 59 or lower F

Casper College may collect samples of student work demonstrating achievement of the above outcomes. Any personally identifying information will be removed from student work.

**Required Text, Readings, and Materials:** Script examples, handouts. Computer and printer access. The student is responsible for the costs of copying scenes and Act 1 project.

**Class Policies:** Last Date to Change to Audit Status or to Withdraw with a W Grade: (college deadline or yours, if different) (Your attendance policy, exam, homework, assignment make-up policy, anything particular to your class)

**Student Rights and Responsibilities:** Please refer to the Casper College Student Conduct and Judicial Code for information concerning your rights and responsibilities as a Casper College Student.

**Chain of Command:** If you have any problems with this class, you should first contact the instructor to attempt to solve the problem. If you are not satisfied with the solution offered by the instructor, you should then take the matter through the appropriate chain of command starting with the Department Head/Program Director, the Dean, and lastly the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
Academic Dishonesty: (Cheating & Plagiarism) Casper College demands intellectual honesty. Proven plagiarism or any form of dishonesty associated with the academic process can result in the offender failing the course in which the offense was committed or expulsion from school. See the Casper College Student Code of Conduct for more information on this topic.

Official Means of Communication: Casper College faculty and staff will employ the student's assigned Casper College email account as a primary method of communication. Students are responsible to check their account regularly. This is also, where you will find course evaluation links during course evaluation periods.

ADA Accommodations Policy: If you need academic accommodations because of a disability, please inform me as soon as possible. See me privately after class, or during my office hours. To request academic accommodations, students must first consult with the college’s Disability Services Counselor located in the Gateway Building, Room 344, (307) 268-2557, bheuer@caspercollege.edu. The Disability Services Counselor is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting accommodations, determining eligibility for accommodations, and helping students request and use appropriate accommodations.

Schedule of Assignments and Classes

Jan. 22: Introducing play formatting. Talk about your three objects that best describe you. Introductory in-class writing exercise. Introducing the Secret Moment Scene AND the Ugly Secret Moment Scene, and reading only the Secret Moment Scene examples in class.

Assignment: 1. Write a Secret Moment Scene (4 page max)
2. Read Examples of Ugly Secret Moment scenes

Jan. 29: Read and discuss Secret Moment Scenes.

Assignment: 1. Write an Ugly Secret Moment Scene (4 page max)
2. Read Marsha Norman article – “Subject”
3. Read Nightmare Scene example

Feb. 5: Read and discuss the Ugly Secret Moment Scenes. Discuss Marsha Norman article. Introduce the Nightmare Scenes.

Assignment: 1. Write a Staged Nightmare Scene (4 page max)
2. Read Lanford Wilson article

Feb. 12: Read and discuss the Nightmare Scenes. Discuss Wilson article. Introduce discussions on first act of a play or musical.

Assignment:
1. Start work on first 20 pages of Act 1 of a play or musical. Write at least Scene 1 by next week to be read in class. (Final DUE DATE is Finals week Exam Period – 20 pages total needed)

Feb. 19: Read and discuss the first scenes of Act 1 projects.
Assignment:
2. Read Obstacle scenes
3. Write a minimum of one more scene for your Act 1 project.

Feb. 26: Read and discuss second scenes of Act 1 projects. Discuss four articles. Introduce the Obstacle Scene.

Assignment: 1. Write an Obstacle Scene (4 page max)
3. Read Ultimate in Life Scene example

Mar. 4: Read and discuss the Obstacle Scenes. Discuss articles. Introduce the Ultimate In Life Scene.

Assignment: 1. Write the Ultimate In Life Scene (4 page max)
2. Read Terrence McNally article
3. Read Evil Person & Foiled Scene example

Mar. 11: Read and discuss the Ultimate In Life Scenes. Discuss McNally article. Introduce the Evil Person & Foiled Scene. Drawing exercise in class, if time.

Assignment: 1. Write an Evil Person and Foiled Scene (4 page max)
2. Read Linda Woolverton article
3. Read Burning Bridge Scene example
4. Keep working on your Act 1 project

Mar. 14-18: NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Mar. 25: NO CLASS – SPRING HOLIDAY

Apr. 1: Read and discuss the Evil Person and Foiled Scenes. Discuss Woolverton article. Introduce the Burning Bridge Scene

Assignment: 1. Write a Burning Bridge Scene (4 page max)
2. Read Doug Wright article

Apr. 8: THIS IS ADVISING DAY. WE WILL HAVE CLASS. Read and discuss the Burning Bridge Scenes. Discuss Wright article

1. Assignment for rest of semester: Working on the first 20 pages of Act I project
2. Read Edward Albee article – “Faces the Critics”

Apr. 15: Read and discuss First Act projects – first half of students. Discuss Albee article.

Apr. 22: Read and discuss First Act project – second half of students
Apr. 29: Read and discuss First Act projects – first half of students again

May 6: Read and discuss First Act projects – second half of students again

May 9-13 – Finals – (Tuesday, May 10, 10:10-12:10) First Act Project DUE. Read all projects in class.