

DRAM 4000/6000: Playwriting: Spring Semester, 2003, MWF, 2:30-3:20 p.m.
Prerequisites: DRAM 3020, Basic Dramatic Writing, or its equivalent.

Instructor: Stanley V. Longman (Office FA 203B; hours MW, 11:00 a.m.,
Th 10:00 a.m.)

Objectives: The course is intended to give you the experience of working in the manner of a professional playwright. It will entail doing all those things professional playwrights do: maintaining notebooks, accomplishing dramatic sketches and exercises, planning plays with the use of a scenario or treatment, and completing one short play or film script through its polishing draft. Graduate students must also carry out at least an initial draft of a second short play.

Specific Requirements:

Exercises:

1. "Self-statement" - This should be a short (4-5 page) free-form presentation of yourself. It might take the shape of a mini-autobiography, a detailing of personal convictions or prejudices, a single episode of your life that accounts importantly for what you are, an interview, a dream, a stage play starring you. It may be expository, narrative or dramatic. The option is yours. The exercise is due January 12.
2. "Who-What-Where" - You will be provided with a series of places, characters and activities and asked to write a brief stage scene using any combination of the three you see fit. Due January 17.
3. "Doris-Milly scene" - Starting with this scene (to be provided) do one of the following: continue the scene from its present last line, start over in a different locale, or create a scene between Harold and Jack. From now on, exercises may be for stage or screen. Due January 22.
4. "Situation sketch" - A group of very bare dramatic situations will be provided. Using one of them, write a sketch. It need not be a sketch that completes itself; it may be simply an opening scene but long enough to establish a line of action. Due January 29th.
5. "Opening scene" - An exercise in establishing dramatic tension or irony that could be sustained for an one-act or short film. The situation is of your own choosing. Due February 5.
6. "Opening scene or scenario or treatment" - The play or film script you will write over the remainder of the semester should now have

sufficient shape to permit writing either the opening scene or the scenario or treatment. If the opening scene already done as Exercise #4 or #5 will serve, continue writing the succeeding scene or do the scenario or treatment for the entire script. Due February 12.

Drafts:

The one-act play or film script for the semester should be taken through three drafts and a final typed version. First draft is due March 19, second draft on April 16, and third on April 25. A final, typed manuscript is due the last day of class, April 30.

Commonplace Book:

You are to maintain a writer's notebook during the semester. It would contain observations, dramatic sketches, character descriptions, possible settings, titles for plays, pieces of dialogue, notes on other plays or movies or novels or stories, newspaper clippings--in short, anything that strikes you as having dramatic potential. Class exercises also go into the Commonplace Book. The book is turned in three times: February 5, March 23, and again at the end, April 25.

Record Book:

A portion of the Commonplace Book will be set aside for notes relative to the play or film script you choose to complete for the semester.

Examination:

There will be one one-hour exam on principles of playwriting, scheduled for Monday, February 26. There is no formal final examination, but students will meet at the scheduled time for the final for a general assessment of work done during the semester. That time is 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 2.

Attendance Policy: This course depends heavily on classroom work and so requires regular attendance. Students are expected to be present at all class meetings, in accordance with stated University of Georgia policy. Understandably, there may be occasions when an absence is unavoidable. Unexplained, undocumented absences will lower the overall score in the class and FIVE (5) or more such absence can result in a student's being withdrawn from the class.

Academic Integrity: The University of Georgia has a strongly worded statement on academic dishonesty found in the Student Handbook. The Department of Drama insists that all work assigned as an individual project be done entirely by the individual to whom the assignment is made. Joint projects must be accomplished entirely by the group to whom the project is assigned. If in the judgement of the instructor, the student violates the above policy, he or she will be reported

immediately to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The outcome of such action may result in the student's suspension, failing the course or facing other disciplinary action.

Final Grade Will Be Based On The Following Factors:

- 1.(20%) The quality of written work.
- 2.(20%) Performance on the written examination.
- 3.(25%) Demonstrated improvement through grasping and applying dramatic principles.
- 4.(15%) Class participation in providing and submitting to class criticism of works-in progress.
- 5.(20%) Maintaining the practice of writing, not just thinking about, dramatic material.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO MEET ESTABLISHED DEADLINES.
THERE WILL BE NO INCOMPLETES.