

ENGLISH 460/560: TWENTIETH CENTURY DRAMA

Cr. 3

Sponberg:

This course studies the development of drama from 1890 to the present. It begins with plays by Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov, and Shaw. About ten additional plays make up the rest of the readings, usually by playwrights written in English, though occasionally translated plays are also used. The course concludes with at least two plays by present-day playwrights. There will be at least one theatre trip to Chicago. The course explores how dramatic plot, thought, and language differ from their fictive and poetic counterparts. It also studies how playwrights adapt their works to specific conditions of production such as audience expectations, acting styles, theatre architecture, aesthetic philosophies, and economic and political constraints. Grades are derived from oral reports, unit and final exams, and a 3000-4000 word essay contrasting the work of two of the playwrights.

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