Course: English 310-01
Instructor: Nicole Garret
Office hours: T/R 7-8:30PM

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Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The London stage in the “long” eighteenth century was a place to see and be seen, a scene of riot and bad manners as well as a forum for political and social commentary. As the dominant form of public entertainment, eighteenth-century theatre culture produced giants like Aphra Behn, John Dryden and Richard Brinsley Sheridan who contended with aristocrats and lawmakers for political influence. It also brought to prominence talented actors who helped construct a notion of celebrity that persists in our own time. This course will cover the literature and history of the stage in Britain and Ireland from 1660-1777. As our theme, we will take up the way dramatists responded to the common indictment that drama perpetrated deceptive fictions, and we will study the ways in which they show the power of performance and disguise to unmask the deeper truths of an often superficial and dishonest society. Special attention will be paid to the various unique subgenres that emerged in the period, including heroic drama, the comedy of manners, and sentimental comedy. The course will feature close examination of plays from the Broadview Anthology, filmed performances, aesthetic and moral critiques, and prologues and prefaces. Assignments include frequent writing assignments and a term paper.

COURSE GOALS/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Throughout this course, students will learn to

- Read texts closely with attention to nuances of language, content, and form; such texts include peer-reviewed articles and multi-genre works from eighteenth-century writers.
- Locate, evaluate, synthesize and incorporate relevant primary and secondary source materials into thesis-driven, interpretive essays of increasing length and complexity.
- Understand conventions of literary study, including: familiarity with literary terms, genres, devices; knowledge of poetic, dramatic, and rhetorical forms; awareness of literary criticism and theory.
- Understand history, structure, and dialect variations of the English language as they appear in eighteenth-century literature.

POLICIES:

Late Assignments and Extensions: Late assignments will lose one letter grade for every class day the assignment is not submitted; assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. Granting extensions is the prerogative of the instructor. Serious illness that warrants extra time to complete assignments must be documented in writing by a health care professional.

Other policies: I ask that you bring the text to be discussed to each class meeting. All essays must be typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. Papers and citations must be in MLA style. Final essays must be submitted to Safeassign on the due date. Failure to adhere to submission procedures will
result in a delay in grading. For the university’s Minimal Instructional/Student Responsibilities, see 

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS) STATEMENT:

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services (631) 632-6748 or http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/dss/. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT:

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instance of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT:

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, and/or inhibits students' ability to learn.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING:

Class participation and group work: 15%; 10 Journals (1 page each): 20%; Short paper (3-5 pages): 25%; Term paper (6-8 pages): 40%. Journals are due in class on the date listed.

Grading standards: A-F. Please keep in mind that academic grades do not reflect the amount of time or effort put into the work but the overall quality of the final product. A grade of A: indicates that the student’s performance in satisfying the objectives far exceeded the expectations course or assignment. B: indicates that the student’s achievement in satisfying the objectives of the course or assignment was distinctly above that required. C indicates that the student’s academic performance fulfilled the objectives of the course or assignment. A grade of D+ or lower indicates that the student’s performance was below the minimally acceptable level for meeting the objectives of the course or assignment.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth-Century Drama, Canfield. 9781551115818
WRT 102—Schedule of Assignments

**WEEK 1: 1/28**: Introduction to the course: anatomy of drama; Restoration history and theatre; Short film screening. 

**WEEK 2: 2/4 and 2/6**: Subversive Comedy: *The Country Wife* (1675); film screening.

**WEEK 3: 2/11 and 2/13**: Aphra Behn: *The Rover* (1677). **Journal #2 due.**

**WEEK 4: 2/18 and 2/20**: *The Rover*; introduction to Restoration Tragedy.


**WEEK 7: 3/4--3/6**: Tragicomedy; Southerne, *Oroonoko* (1695). **Journal #4 due.**

**WEEK 8: 3/11 & 3/13**: Short Essay due 3/11: Group Discussion; Short film on eighteenth-century history.

**WEEK 9: 3/18 & 3/20**: Spring Break


**WEEK 13: 4/15 & 4/17**: Screening and discussion of *The Beggar’s Opera.***


**WEEK 15: 4/29&5/1**: Laughing Comedy: Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773). **Journal #9 Due.**

**WEEK 16: 5/6 &5/8**: Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The School for Scandal* (1777); **Journal #10 due.**

**WEEK 16: 5/13 & 5/15**: Screening and discussion of *The School for Scandal.***

**WEEK 17: 5/20**: Review of the course and paper workshop. **Term paper due 5/22 on Safeassign.**

**Assignment Guidelines:**

**Journal reports: 20%**: The journal report should be a short, informal but critical response to a passage or scene in the reading. Journals should be 1-2 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font.
• Choose a passage and analyze its importance to the work as a whole. Does it relate to a particular concern in the text? Does it pose a problem of interpretation? Does help to contextualize or bring insight to our knowledge of the period or text?
• Do not respond with general impressions. Be very specific about why you chose this passage and what it helps you to see, how it guides or complicates your interpretation of the work.
• Do present research if you have done any. A journal that presents outside research on a topic raised within the literary work is very acceptable.
• Do present alternative interpretations of the same passage if you think that it can be read rewardingly in more than one way.
• Do think about ways this play could be updated for a 21st century audience or to a contemporary setting.

Short Essay: 25%

The short essay is an analysis of an article of scholarship in the field of eighteenth-century literature or theatre research. Choose one of the articles from the bibliography on Blackboard. Summarize the article, restate its main points, explain its methodology, and discuss its major assumptions. Discuss what contribution you think this article makes to the understanding of the work, the period, or the genre as a whole and which pertinent questions it leaves unanswered. Do not simply summarize, but rather think critically about the work. You may quote the article to illustrate your discussion, but the summary should be in your own words. You will be asked to present your findings informally to the class. The short essay should be 3-5 double spaced pages long.

Term Paper: 40%: The term paper is on a topic of your choice. It should be 6-8 pages long and include a works cited list with theoretical, critical, and historical sources. You are encouraged to develop one of your journals for the term paper and to bring a draft to class for workshop.