

**TPS 3500: Introduction to Dramaturgy**  
**Spring 2019, M/W 1:25-2:50 PM**  
**Wilson Building Rm. 231**

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“Art benefits from examination on the parts of both artist and audience, and that creative inspiration accompanied by analysis and reflection is most likely to lead to productions and projects that fulfill the spiritual, social and personal potential of the theatrical event.”

Kennedy Center,  
*American College Theatre Festival*

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**Professor:** Dr. Angela Farr Schiller  
**Email:** afarrsch@kennesaw.edu  
**Office hours:** M/W 3-4:30pm or by appointment  
**Office Phone:** 470.578.4441

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### **Required Texts:**

**This course has no required texts. Any required reading will be posted on D2L.**

### **Suggested Texts:**

- *The Poetics* by Aristotle
- *Dramaturgy In The American Theatre* by Susan Jonas & Geoff Proehl
- *The Empty Space* by Peter Brook
- *Ghost Light* by Michael Mark Chemers
- *The Process of Dramaturgy* by Scott R. Irelan & Anne Fletcher

### **Course Description:**

This course explores the role of the dramaturg in developing a production from the page to the stage. The dramaturg's function within the craft of bringing dramatic stories to life is vast and more than what can be covered in a single semester but for the next 15 weeks we will consider the job of a "production dramaturg" and the tasks associated with this role, such as but not limited to season selection, script adaptation, concept and audience development. Based on the approach of creating true artist/scholars, this class is a hybrid theoretical and practice-based course that will provide hands-on opportunities while pushing you to think critically about dramatic work as a vessel for creating art that *does something* in the world. In the words of the writer, activist, and scholar James Baldwin, "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." Dramaturg's use their artistic craft of consciousness raising to help us learn to face ourselves as human beings in order to make work that makes a difference and has lasting impact.

### **Course Objectives:**

- You will be able to articulate what a dramaturg is and what a dramaturg does.
- You will develop the ability to research, read, and create for a repertory season.
- You will be able to develop the skills to give literary advice.
- You will develop skills around audience development
- You will develop dramaturgical editing skills.
- You will develop skills as a New Works Dramaturg
- You will be able to demonstrate the ability to think critically about the relevance of Theatre as an art, and how art functions as a response to culture—reinforcing, shaping, contradicting, and/or revealing societal structure.
- You will develop the skills to give a scholarly based public dramaturgical talk

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will demonstrate professional **protocol** appropriate to theatre, performance, and scholarship.
- Students will **collaborate** effectively with others.
- Students will **communicate** with effectively with clarity, cogency, and rhetorical force.
- Students will **analyze** creative works from multiple cultures, genres, styles, and perspectives.
- Students will **practice critical thinking skills**.
- Students will **produce original work**.

**GRADING BREAKDOWN**

Each student’s final grade for the class will be determined by dividing the total number of points earned over the course of the semester by 1000 (the total possible points).

***A Note on Grading:** C indicates work that meets the course requirements in every way. B and A are honors grades indicating work beyond the basic requirements, with an A denoting outstanding achievement.*

Participation & Attendance	100 pts	10%
Demonstration of Scholarly Viewing Skills	20pts	2%
Demonstration of Scholarly Reading Skills	260 (13x20 points each)	26%
<i>This is America</i> Meaning Making Project	70 pts	7%
Notable Dramaturg Presentation	50 pts	5%
Literary Advice & Presentation: <i>In The Next Room</i>	100 pts	10%
Editing Project & Presentation: <i>Woyzeck</i>	100 pts	10%
Season Selection Project & Presentation	100 pts	10%
Online Educational Packet & Presentation: <i>Rent</i>	100 pts	10%
New Works Project	100 pts	10%
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TOTAL	1000 points	100%

<b><u>Total Points Grade</u></b>	
<b>900-1000</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>800-899</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>700-799</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>600-699</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>00-599</b>	<b>F</b>

**Course Itinerary:**

M 1.7

**Introduction to Dramaturgy**

**Discuss:** Syllabus/Course Overview

**Watch in Class:** *This is America* (Video by Childish Gambino)

**Prompt:** Breakdown and provide in-depth meaning for a one-minute section of the video for the next class. Use whatever tools you think will be helpful for a viewer to understand the micro and macro historical, social, and any relevant contextual meanings in the video via a power point presentation and any additional tools that you deem useful. You will give a ten-minute presentation on your one-minute section of video.

**A)** Provide a thesis that argues the meaning that you believe the overall video and your section is making.

**B)** Use your presentation to support your thesis.

**C)** Craft: *A Demonstration of Scholarly Viewing of This is America video*

**What is:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Viewing Skills* (for videos)—A) Write down in your own words what you believe the scholar’s thesis is. B) Two examples from the video that demonstrate why and how this thesis works. C) Speak to what is significant about the author’s perspective.

W 1.9

**Support Class:** Meet with me and Work on *This is America* presentation

M 1.14

**Presentation and Discussion:** *This is America*, give your presentations for the class, discuss the ways that a dramaturg contributes to a performance process via unpacking meaning.

**Due in Class:** Presentations and *A Demonstration of Scholarly Viewing for: This is America* video

**What is:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Reading Skills* (for articles and essays)—practicing reading and reading through. Turn in a version of the reading that demonstrates a critical engagement with the reading including: A) underling what you believe the thesis is and explain why in the margins, B) writing in the margins that pinpoint ideas of notes for you and your critical thinking based response to those idea throughout the entire article, C) provide a paragraph at the end of the article that speaks to what is significant about the author’s perspective for you.

W 1.16

**Discuss:** “Dramaturgy: An Overview” by Anne Cattaneo, “Dramaturg Help or Hindrance?” by Dan Friedman, and “Introduction” by Anne Bogart

**From the Reading Be Able to Answer These Questions for Class:** What is dramaturgy? What is a dramaturg? What does a dramaturg do? What does a dramaturg add?

**Due in Class:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Reading for above discussion articles*

**Prompt:** *Showcase of Notable Dramaturg:* Research a notable dramaturg and create a five-minute power point presentation on them and their work. Be able to speak to why you think their contribution to the field of dramaturgy is significant.

**M 1.21**      **No Class: MLK Jr. Holiday**

**W 1.23**      **Lecture, Presentation, & Discussion:** *A Brief History of Dramaturgy* and *Showcase of Notable Dramaturg.* Share your presentations with the class.

**M 1.28**      **Dramaturg as Literary Advisor**

**Lecture & Discussion:** *Aristotelian, Ovidian, and Epic Forms of Theatre* and discuss *Ghost Light: “The Climatic Plot”* (pg. 82-85) and “Form Follows Function (pg.93-101)

**Due in Class:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Reading for above discussion articles*

**Prompt:** A director would like your literary advice and expertise on an aspect of the next play that she is directing *In The Next Room, or, The Vibrator Play* by Sarah Ruhl. She asks, “Can you script and present a 10-minute in-depth dramaturgical talk addressing: How Does *In The Next Room* Fit Into an Ovidian Structural Form, How Does Sarah Ruhl Use The Ovidian Structure To Create Meaning About Gender, and Why this play now?” Be prepared to take questions from your audience.

**Project Readings on D2L:**

**Blog:** *Ovid vs Aristotle:*

<https://winterfodder.wordpress.com/2012/05/09/ovid-v-aristotle/>

**Articles:** *The Surreal Life: The Plays of Sarah Ruhl* from *The New Yorker* and “Feminism, Gender Theory, and Queer Theory” from *Ghost Light* (pg. 54-57)

**Play:** *In The Next Room, or, The Vibrator Play* by Sarah Ruhl

**W 1.30**      **Support Class:** Meet with me and Work on *In the Next Room* project

**M 2.4**      **Support Class:** Work on *In the Next Room* project

**W 2.6**      **Presentation and Discussion:** *In The Next Room, or, The Vibrator Play* by Sarah Ruhl, Gender, and the Significance of the Ovidian Form  
**Due in Class:** A scripted 10-minute talk for a director: How Does *In The Next Room* Fit Into an Ovidian Structural Form and How Does Sarah Ruhl Use This Form To Create Meaning About Gender?

- M 2.11**      **Dramaturg as Editor**  
**Discussion:** *Woyzeck* by Georg Buchner and “Marxism” from *Ghost Light* (pgs. 47-50)  
**Due in Class:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Reading for above discussion article*  
**Prompt:** A director would like your help with an edited contemporary version of *Woyzeck* from a Marxist perspective and an Aristotelian form that emphasizes the feeling of catharsis for the audience.
- W 2.13**      **Support Class:** Meet with me and Work on *Woyzeck* editing project
- M 2.18**      **Support Class:** Work on *Woyzeck* editing project
- W 2.20**      **Support Class:** Work on *Woyzeck* editing project
- M 2.25**      **Present** *Woyzeck* editing projects in class.
- W 2.27**      **Dramaturgy and Season Selection**  
**Discussion:** The Politics of Selecting A Season and discuss “How do theatres choose their plays each year?” by Catey Sullivan from the Chicago Tribune, “Season Planning: Challenges and Opportunities” by Edward Sobel, and “Guthrie Theater’s debt to women and diversity” by Marianne Combs both are from *The Routledge Companion to Dramaturgy*  
**Due in Class:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Reading for above discussion articles*  
**Prompt:** You are the dramaturg team for Synchronicity Theatre in Atlanta and as such for the next meeting with the board of directors and artistic director you have been asked to put together a suggestion for four play season for their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary 2017-2018 season.
- M 3.4**      **Support Class:** Work on *Season Selection* project
- W 3.6**      **Support Class:** Work on *Season Selection* project
- M 3.11**      **Support Class:** Work on *Season Selection* project
- W 3.13**      **Support Class:** Work on *Season Selection* project
- M 3.18**      **Present:** Synchronicity Season Selection 2019-2020
- W 3.20**      **Dramaturgy and Audience Development**  
**Discuss:** “The Dramaturg’s Role In Diversity and Audience Development” by Julie Felise Dubiner and “Audiences” from *Ghost Light* (pg. 161-169) and look at online dramaturgical packets

**Due in Class:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Reading for above discussion article*

**Prompt:** Next year Actor's Express is producing *Rent* the musical and has asked you to implement an online audience development project that encourages diversity and inclusion around the issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, healthcare, and/or the 90s HIV/AIDS crisis for the show's audience. Craft an engaging online website that will serve as an "educational packet" for local high school and college students.

**M 3.25 Support Class:** Meet with me about your *Rent* project

**W 3.27 Support Class:** Work on *Rent* audience development project

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**Spring Break**  
**March 30<sup>th</sup>-April 7th**

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**M 4.8 Support Class:** Meet with me about your progress on your website

**W 4.10 Support Class:** Work on *Rent* audience development project

**M 4.15 Present:** *Rent* Online Audience Development Project  
*\*Bring laptops to class*

**W 4.17 Dramaturg as New Works Collaborator**  
**Discuss:** From *Workshopping the New Play* "First Things" (pg. 79-90) and an additional reading TBA  
**Due in Class:** *A Demonstration of Scholarly Reading for above discussion articles*  
**Prompt:** Working Title Playwrights has hired you to work as a new works dramaturg for one of their member/playwrights. The playwright would like for you to look at a recent draft of their new play in development, give them feedback, and direct prompts for how to move forward with their work. Give a 10-minute presentation about how you would help them move their work further and a closer to being able to submit it to a theatre company.

**M 4.22 Read: The Play (D2L) and have an in-class discussion about the work and ways of moving the work further.**

**W 4.24 Support Class:** Work on New Works project

**M 4.29 Support Class:** Meet with me individually for support New Works project.

**M 5.6 Final: Present a Strategy Forward for Your Playwright**

*As of 1.6.2019 the final exam date has not been posted by the university so this is an approximate date based on previous years and may be subject to change.*

*The instructor reserves the right to alter this itinerary at any time during the semester. Please ask if you have any questions.*

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Attendance Policy:** Regular attendance is required, and students are responsible for any material discussed in class. You are allowed to miss *two classes without penalty*. I understand that over the course of the semester you may get sick, you may have transportation issues, or you may need to miss class in order to attend an important event. *This is why you get two freebies – use them wisely!* Absences occurring after this quota has been met will cost points off the student's final grade (see chart below). Students absent on a day when in-class assignments are scheduled will not be allowed to make them up.

0-2 absences = 0 points  
3 absences = 50 points  
4 absences = 75 points  
5 absences = 100 points  
6 absences = 150 points  
7 absences or more = 300 points

**\*Tardies = ½ absence, this means if you are late 6 times then you will have the equivalent of 3 absences or 50 points subtracted from your grade total**

All absences (except officially documented by the university) are considered UNEXCUSED. This policy includes all personal illnesses, deaths in the family, and so on.

Class will begin promptly and I will take attendance at this time by sending around a sign-in sheet, once the sheet has gone around once a line will be drawn after the last name written and any names written below the line are considered tardy. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign your name on the sign-in sheet. If your name does not appear on the sign-in sheet for a given date you will be considered absent. It is your responsibility to verify my attendance list – if you are tardy, check to see that I counted you present that day. Students who are 15 or more minutes late to class, or who leave 15 or more minutes early (without my permission) are considered absent for the day.

**Participation (15%):** All students are expected to participate actively in the community of this course – by that, I mean that I expect each student to have read the assigned material before class begins, to contribute to class discussions and activities in ways that are

constructive to your fellow colleagues, and to demonstrate openly your learning process with the material.

## **COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:**

### **The Syllabus:**

Our success in this course will depend largely on your adherence to the policies outlined in this document, and on your close attention to the assignment parameters and deadlines listed herein. Sometimes I will remind you about assignment deadlines in class, and sometimes I may not. **Regardless, if it's on the syllabus, you are responsible for it.** "You didn't remind us!" is not an acceptable excuse for missed work. Furthermore, if you have a question about an assignment listed here, it's your responsibility to ask for clarification well in advance. "I didn't understand the assignment!" is not an acceptable excuse for incomplete work. (Nor is, "I emailed you at 11:30pm last night asking for clarification, and you didn't respond!"). Basically, if you follow the syllabus and ask questions whenever the syllabus is not clear you should be fine.

That said, our course schedule is a living document, and as such, it is subject to change. I will do my best to avoid changes to the schedule, but in the event that changes become necessary, it is my responsibility to notify you in class of any scheduling shifts in a timely manner.

### **Late Work:**

Written work, presentations, and other assignments are due regularly and frequently in this course, and it is imperative that you stay on top of all deadlines. ***No late work will be accepted.*** Personal illness, inclement weather, transportation issues, computer/printer malfunctions, conflicting work schedules, oversleeping, etc. are NOT acceptable excuses for failing to turn in assignments on time. **There is no way to make up in-class work or presentations; it is your responsibility to check on due dates and notify me well in advance of potential conflicts so that alternate arrangements can be made.** If you are struggling with an assignment at the time that it is due, please remember that it is always better to turn in what you have and receive partial credit than to take a zero for the assignment, in this case, perfectionism, though tempting, will not serve you. If you are having an issue with anything in the class reach out to a colleague or make some time to come and see me. I am more than happy to assist you in whatever way I can, and if I cannot help you, we will work together to find someone who can.

### **Technology in the Classroom:**

Unless I have specifically granted permission for you to use them in class, you are expected to put away all cell phones, tablets, laptops, headphones, etc. when you enter my classroom – they should remain *silenced and out of sight* for the duration of each class. If you require a laptop for note-taking, let me know ASAP so that we can find a workable solution. We only have a limited time together each day and I want us to be able to take full advantage our time together as a classroom community.

### **Codes of Conduct and Academic Honesty Policy:**

“Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an ‘informal’ resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may be subject to the Code of Conduct’s minimum of one semester suspension requirement.” (Faculty Handbook 3.30)

**Disability Policy:**

In accordance with the University policy, if the student has a *documented* disability and requires accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, he or she should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester and make this need known. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the office of Disabled Student Support Services. Please note that the process takes at least a month to complete; thus, students are urged to seek accommodations immediately.

[http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu\\_dev/dsss/dsss.html](http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/dsss/dsss.html)

**Religious Holidays:**

It is my policy to make every reasonable effort to allow students to observe their religious holidays without academic penalty. In such cases, it is the obligation of the student to provide the instructor with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which he or she will be absent. Absence from classes or exams for religious reasons does not relieve the student of responsibility for completing required work missed. Following the necessary notification, the student should consult with the instructor to determine what appropriate alternative opportunity will be provided, allowing the student to fully complete his or her academic responsibilities. *Please note:* If you anticipate missing class for religious holidays, you must notify me of your religious affiliation and dates of potential absences at least two weeks in advance.

**Departmental Writing Policy:**

The Department of Theatre and Performance Studies encourages student development as articulate scholars as well as creative artists. To assist students as emerging scholar-artists, the Department requires the use of current MLA style throughout the major.

**A Message From the Writing Center:**

"The KSU Writing Center helps students in all majors improve their writing. Experienced, friendly writing assistants help with topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment, visit [writingcenter.kennesaw.edu](http://writingcenter.kennesaw.edu) or stop by English Building, Room 242 (Kennesaw campus) or Johnson Library, Room 121 (Marietta campus)."

**Cell Phones:**

All phones are to be turned off. Failure to comply will result in loss of Class Participation

points. If the problem persists, you will be asked to leave the class for that day and counted absent.

**Human Relations Statement:**

Kennesaw State University is an educational community comprised of individuals from different ethnic, racial, and religious groups and of different genders, political beliefs, ages, abilities, and sexual orientations. In light of this diversity, KSU is resolved to contribute to the development of an integrated, pluralistic society in which individuals' model and support humaneness and respect for the individual.

The University is committed to providing quality education which is enhanced by the perspectives provided by individuals and groups with varying backgrounds and views. Racism, sexism, and other discriminatory attitudes and behaviors impede learning and working. Conversely, respect for differences enhances educational and work experiences. KSU is dedicated to creating an environment that cherishes and nourishes this diversity.

**The Academic Resource Center for Students**

The Academic Resource Center for Students (ARCS) is a unique service that's available to students in the College of the Arts. Located in room 209 of the Wilson Bldg., the ARCS is a place you can go for help with a variety of issues. KSU is getting to be a very large institution, so sometimes just knowing where to go to get answers to your questions can be difficult to determine. The staff in the ARCS can help point you in the right direction if they can't answer your question directly. The ARCS also has a Career Services counselor who works there two days a week. They can also make referrals to many of the student services around campus, including Counseling & Psychological Services, Student Disability Services, the Collegiate Recover Program, and many others. The ARCS also has a student lounge that is available for quiet study or relaxation, and a computer and printer for student use. Contact Assistant Dean Samuel Robinson (srobin50@kennesaw.edu/678-574-2349) or Ms. Christine Collins (ccolli61@kennesaw.edu/678-574-6614) for more information.