# Course Proposals

List of all proposals

Course Name:Dramaturgy and Criticism
Course Prefix: THEA
Course Number: 2330
             Submitted by (Name & E-Mail):  Jenny Kokai, jenniferkokai@weber.edu

Current Date:  1/3/2014
College: Arts & Humanities
Department:   Performing Arts
From Term: Fall  2014

Substantive

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| new  | Current Course Subject N/ACurrent Course Number |

### New/Revised Course Information:

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| --- | --- |
| Subject:  THEA            Course Number: 2330 | Check all that apply: *This is for courses already approved for gen ed.    Use a*[*different form*](http://documents.weber.edu/catalog/forms.htm)*for proposing a new gen ed designation.*DV  CA  HU  LS  PS  SS EN  AI  QL  TA  TB  TC  TD  TE |

Course Title: Dramaturgy and Criticism

Abbreviated Course Title: Dramaturgy

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| --- | --- |
| Course Type:  | LEC |

Credit Hours:  3  **or** if variable hours:    to

Contact Hours: Lecture 3  Lab    Other

Repeat Information:  Limit 1   Max Hrs 6

Grading Mode:  standard

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| --- | --- |
| This course is/will be: | a required course in a major programa required course in a minor programa required course in a 1- or 2- year programelective |

Prerequisites/Co-requisites:

Course description (exactly as it will appear in the catalog, including prerequisites):

This course will be a practical study of the role and duties of a dramaturg in a production as well as a critic reviewing a finished work. Work will include all facets of dramaturgy: historical research, script analysis, audience outreach, and lobby displays. A completed Dramaturgy workbook for a proposed play or practical work on a department play will be the final assignment.

**Justification**for the new course or for changes to an existing course. (Note: Justification should emphasize academic rationale for the change or new course. This is particularly important for courses requesting upper-division status.)

Dramaturgy and literary management is a fast growing field in the world of theatre. Many theatres are hiring dramaturgs to work on both new and existing productions. On an existing work, a dramaturg functions as the "scholar" for a production, providing the director and cast with historical research on the time period of the play, the author of the play, and the play's production history. This works helps the play be both historically accurate and to address any re-occuring issues with the play on stage. On a new work, a dramaturg works with a playwright as a sort of editor. He or she reads drafts of the play and asks the playwright questions to help them refine and perfect the script.

Importantly, a dramaturg also works on audience outreach. It is the dramaturg's job to create a study guide for audiences to help them have context for the production. It is also their job to create a lobby display that informs audiences about the production or the work that went into it. In this way the dramaturg serves as a bridge between the world backstage and the world of the audience. Finally, a dramaturg often hosts talkbacks where he or she facilitates the audience in asking questions about the play and the process and allows the cast to ask the audience what was clear or was not clear. All of these make for a more informed audience and build audience theatre relationships.

Weber State University does not currently have a class that covers dramaturgy. This class will first be a benefit for our students academically and professionally. It will offer them experience in another theatrical career path and it will be beneficial for future directors, historians, writers, and actors in examining the play from a different perspective and continuing to work on their research and communication skills. Secondly and more immediately, it will also benefit our productions. If we had trained dramaturgs in the department working on productions, they would gain in richness and depth. We will also work on audience development and connecting with the local community to improve our attendance.

In addition to dramaturgy, students will also use critical thinking, research, and writing skills to look at theatrical criticism. Though theatres depend upon reviews, reviewers are often untrained or unskilled. A good review understands the play and the time period it was from and analyzes whether the play was successful or not at doing what it is attempting to do. Reviews in local newspapers or blogs often consist more of whether or not the reviewer "liked the performance." As reviews are crucial for giving theatre practitioners valuable feedback and for providing an archive of a production, it is important to train future critics to be effective and skilled at their jobs.

This class has been taught once as an experimental course and was very successful. The students who took the class went on to work on productions and to do much better and more useful dramaturgy. In addition, one student who took the class secured employment as the resident dramaturg for a theatre company.

**INFORMATION PAGE**for substantive proposals only

1. Did this course receive unanimous approval within the Department?

true

If not, what are the major concerns raised by the opponents?

2. If this is a new course proposal, could you achieve the desired results by revising an existing course within your department or by requiring an existing course in another department?

This is an area of theatre production that can currently not be covered in any other class. Because jobs in theatre are specialized, there would be inadequate time to cover the many duties of a dramaturg and how they function in the theatre in another class. As we have separate classes for the technical and creative work required in acting, direction, costuming, playwriting, etc this is a separate job and skill set in the theatrical world.

3. How will the proposed course differ from similar offerings by other departments? Comment on any subject overlap between this course and topics generally taught by other departments, even if no similar courses are currently offered by the other departments. Explain any effects that this proposal will have on program requirements or enrollments in other department. Please forward letters (email communication is sufficient) from all departments that you have identified above stating their support or opposition to the proposed course.

Although there is overlap in critical thinking, analysis, research, and presentation skills that are the core of a theatre degree, there is not currently a class that teaches dramaturgy or theatre criticism. As dramaturgs look at the construction and creation of new plays, the course will be of use in conjunction with Playwriting. As the course looks at the "scholarly" aspects of a production, it will be of use to directors and actors in fully examining plays for production. In this way it overlaps with Script Analysis. However, because the specific functions on a production are unique, it uses those skills to a different end.

4. Is this course required for certification/accreditation of a program?

no

If so, a statement to that effect should appear in the justification and supporting documents should accompany this form.

5. **For course proposals**, e-mail a syllabus to Faculty Senate which should be sufficiently detailed that the committees can determine that the course is at the appropriate level and matches the description.**There should be an indication of the amount and type of outside activity required in the course (projects, research papers, homework, etc.)**.

**Please mail a signed**[**approval page**](https://portalapps.weber.edu/lcourseproposal/SignaturePage.PDF)**to the Faculty Senate Office, MA 210J, MC 1003.**