

**FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION 101 SEMINAR**  
**From Stage to Screen: Modern Drama and its Translation to Film**  
**Rutgers University—Camden Fall 2007**

Tuesday/Thursday 9:20AM-10:50AM

Instructor: Bryan H. Buttler

Email: [bbuttler@gccnj.edu](mailto:bbuttler@gccnj.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:15AM-1:15PM and by appointment

**OBJECTIVE/OVERVIEW:** Blanche DuBois, the tragic character of Tennessee Williams's A Streetcar Named Desire, says that she is "very adaptable—to circumstances." But could the same be said about the emotional and plot-driven elements of today's modern dramas as they are translated to film? This question will be examined in detail as we learn to think as literary, theater, and film critics. We will read Arthur Miller's The Crucible, Tennessee William's A Streetcar Named Desire, and Margaret Edson's Wit, examining the elements of character and plot as we discuss the techniques and challenges of staging a modern theater production. We will then watch the film translations of each play, paying particular attention to changes that deeply affect the thematic and dramatic elements of the initial stage production. We will develop our scholarly writing skills through a series of both formal and informal writing assignments, with emphasis placed on revision.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

The Crucible by Arthur Miller. ISBN 0140481389. Penguin Books

Wit by Margaret Edson. Dramatist Play Service

A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams. ISBN 0822210894. Dramatists Play Service

Writing With Style by John Trimble. ISBN 0130257133. December 1999. 2nd Edition

Chocolat (Summer Reading Novel)

Any Journal (see below)

**GRADING SCALE AND DISTRIBUTION**

<b>Essays (3)</b> Three essays at 16.5% each	50%
<b>Portfolio Project</b>	20%
<b>Journal</b>	20%
<b>Class Preparation and Participation</b>	10%

## Grading Scale For Essays

93 - 100 = A	90 - 92 = A-	
88 - 89 = B+	83 - 87 = B	80 - 82 = B-
78 - 79 = C+	73 - 77 = C	70 - 72 = C-
68 - 69 = D+	63 - 67 = D	60 - 62 = D-
59 and below		
= F		

## CRITERIA FOR PREPARING AND SUBMITTING ESSAYS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### Essays (We will discuss these aspects in detail)

1. All essays must be word-processed, double-spaced, on one side of standard-sized paper (8.5 x 11 inches) with top / bottom margins of 1 inch and left / right margins of 1.25 inches.
2. A title page is unnecessary. Instead, provide the MLA four-line, double-spaced header in the top left corner of the first page. This header includes the student's name, instructor's name, course number and section, and the date submitted. Then, on this first page, center the title below the header, and begin your essay below the title.
3. Pages must be numbered consecutively in the upper right corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.

**Essays:** The essay rubric is part of this syllabus packet. Rubrics provide a guide as to how students will be assessed or graded. You will be writing essays of various mode and length throughout the semester. Topics will be distributed in class in plenty of time before the essay is due. We will be discussing proper formatting of collegiate essays. Due dates will be discussed in great detail, and they are listed in the syllabus. It is your responsibility to keep track of assignment due dates.

**Portfolio:** *FROM THE RUTGERS UNIVERSITY FIRST-YEAR WRITING WEBSITE:* Each student in the writing program produces a portfolio to showcase his/her substantial course papers. These portfolios serve as final exams for the course and must be evaluated by two readers: the student's instructor and another instructor. Students should submit clean copies of their work in the portfolio and write an introductory cover sheet that provides an overview to their work, focusing on either the themes of their papers or their writing process. Drafts are not to be included in the portfolios; only final papers without instructor comments should be included. Students may present the portfolio in the way that they wish (color binders, visual images, labels/tabs or files, etc.).

Detailed information regarding this assignment will be distributed in advance. The final portfolio project is due on Tuesday, December 18.

**Journal:** Writing is more than completing long, tiresome research papers. Your ability to articulate your ideas is half of the battle. One way that we will practice this is through informal writing. Journal writing is a great way to open up your voice and warm up your mind. Find a journal that you will want to write in, one that is visually appealing and feels good in your hands. You'll use your journal to respond to some set prompts that I'll give either during class or for homework. Further, you'll be using your journal to openly respond to, well, just about anything that you want! I am a firm believer that the more you write, the better your writing will become. I will be checking journals periodically without notice, so be prepared with your assigned entries at any time. I will randomly ask people to read from their journals, so don't write ANYTHING that you wouldn't want to share with the class.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE/ASSIGNMENTS**

***(NOTE: SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP UP WITH READING AND ASSIGNMENT CHANGES)***

Week of:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 9/2/07   | Introduction/Expectations<br>Writing is like building a house lecture.<br>Bring journal on Thursday.   |
| 9/9/07   | Tuesday: Trimble, "Getting Launched," "Openings,"<br>"Middles," Closers" (pp.13-52)<br>Thursday: Discussion of <u>Chocolat</u> : How to take an<br>educated stance on a subject and defend it. |
| 9/16/07  | Tuesday: Trimble, "How To Write a Critical Analysis"<br>(pp.94-98)<br>Plagiarism Workshop<br>Thursday: Introduction to the theatre and drama.  |
| 9/23/07  | Miller, <u>The Crucible</u><br>Read pp. 2-81 by Tuesday; Read pp.83-146 by Thursday  |
| 9/30/07  | Film, "The Crucible"<br>Discuss film on Thursday.  |
| 10/7/07  | Discuss thesis statements for first essay.<br>Rough drafts of essay #1 due on Thursday for peer reviews<br>and instructor feedback/commentary.   |
| 10/14/07 | Essay #1 due on Tuesday!<br>Trimble, "Quoting," "Punctuation" (pp. 105-148)  |

One-on-one conferences on Thursday: Schedule to be announced.

- 10/21/07 Williams, A Streetcar Named Desire  
Read pp. 5-51 by Tuesday; Read pp. 52-103 by Thursday
- 10/28/07 Film, "A Streetcar Named Desire"
- 11/4/07 Discuss film and comparisons on Tuesday.  
Rough draft of essay #2 due on Thursday for peer reviews and instructor commentary/feedback.
- 11/11/07 Essay #2 due on Tuesday!  
Edson, Wit  
Will announced assigned pages.
- 11/18/07 Film, "Wit"  
No class on Thursday: HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
- 11/25/07 Finish film of "Wit"  
Discussion of possible thesis arguments for essay #3.
- 12/2/07 Rough draft of essay #3 due on Tuesday for peer reviews.  
Essay #3 due on Thursday!  
Revision hints, tips and strategies for portfolio.
- 12/9/07 Tuesday: Review cover sheet for portfolio. Please bring this to class, ready to roll, and ready to share!  
NO CLASS ON THURSDAY: READING DAY.

ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, PORTFOLIOS ARE DUE AT 9:00AM IN OUR NORMAL CLASSROOM!

## CLASS POLICIES

### **THE ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT FROM THE RUTGERS**

**UNIVERSITY WEBSITE:** *Academic freedom is a fundamental right in any institution of higher learning. Honesty and integrity are necessary preconditions of this freedom. Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses.*

*Maintenance of the standards of academic honesty and the successful administration of this policy depend on the mutual cooperation of faculty and students. Dissemination of the Academic Integrity Policy to all faculty, staff, and students will ensure that all members of the community are informed about academic integrity.*

*Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course. Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit.*

**PLAGIARISM:** Rutgers University academic honesty website defines plagiarism as "the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise." Essentially, this means **copying the words or ideas of another without the proper form of academic documentation.**

Linda DeFelice, a writer and collegiate writing teacher, defines the types of plagiarism as follows: "The most common act of deliberate plagiarism involves copying another person's work and passing it off as your own. The most common act of accidental plagiarism involves failing to provide the proper internal documentation for quoted, summarized and paraphrased ideas from another source."

In this class, deliberate and accidental plagiarism will be treated the same. All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean's office.

As a professional in the field of teaching writing, I have many, many ways to find out if you are not writing your own work, so do not even THINK about it! We will also be spending considerable time discussing plagiarism and what you can do to prevent it.

**LATE / MISSED WORK:** Here is the simple policy—it isn't accepted! One of the responsibilities of collegiate learning is to attend classes and submit work on time. It is your responsibility to be timely with your work. Do not miss class and expect to turn in an assignment. Essays and other assignments are DUE AT THE START OF CLASS. No emailed assignments or essays are accepted.

*The most important thing is that you keep an open-line of communication with me. Don't vanish for a few weeks and not inform me of why you are missing. If you are having problems with the course, talk to me. We will work something out.*

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** If you miss class, you miss out. You are allowed 3 absences for the semester. Anything more than 3 absences will result in the automatic failure of your attendance and participation grade, which is 10% of your final grade. ***In all seriousness, there is really no way for you to pass this class if you are continually absent.***

**LATENESS:** Get to class on time. Habitual failure to comply will lower your participation grade.

**ELECTRONICS:** Use of cell phones, including text messaging, MP3 players, pagers, and similar electronic devices is not permitted during class time. Keep them off! Habitual failure to comply will lower your class participation grade.

### **ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Library:** The Paul Robeson Library provides a wide range of materials and services to promote student learning and faculty instruction in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Your Rutgers Student ID also serves as your library card.

**Tutoring:** The college operates a free tutoring program for students seeking assistance in any course. The tutoring lab is located in the Learning Resource Center on the second floor of Armitage Hall. Students are encouraged to take advantage of this ***free*** service.

<i>Bryan Buttler Composition Grading Rubric</i>	<b>“A” Level Essay</b>	<b>“B” Level Essay</b>	<b>“C” Level Essay</b>	<b>“D” Level Essay</b>	<b>“F” Level Essay</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	Provides a clear thesis which directs the paper	Provides a clear thesis which attempts to direct the paper	Provides a clear thesis statement, but it may not control the paper	Contains a thesis statement which may lack focus	Fails to provide a thesis statement
	Incorporates a smooth transition to the paper’s body. Shows evidence of risk taking, and risk taking is successful.	Incorporates a transition to the paper’s body. Risk taking may be evident and minimally successful.	Attempts a transition from the introduction to the body paragraphs. Little to no risk taking, or risk taking is not successful.	Moves directly from the thesis statement to the support section of the paper	Essay is apt to lack divisions between ideas
<b>Body Paragraphs</b>	Follow the direction of the thesis statement with a clear connection in each paragraph	Follow the direction of the thesis statement with some topic sentences	Attempt to relate thesis statement to support, but is somewhat unsuccessful.	Lack clear organization	Lack organization
	Use appropriate specific and substantive examples as evidence. Evidence is articulately evaluated	Use an adequate amount of appropriate specific examples as evidence. Evidence is generally evaluated.	Use some examples as evidence, but they may be very general. Evidence may be evaluated, but on a surface level. Some hit-and-run quotes.	Contain insufficient evidence. Evidence is dropped with no evaluation. Lots of hit-and-run quotes.	May offer unsupported generalizations or unconnected lists in place of evidence
<b>Transitions Connections</b>	Provide smooth and effective transitions between ideas.	Provide transitions between ideas	May lack some transitions between ideas, or transitions may be somewhat primitive	Lack transitions between ideas	Generally lack connection between ideas
<b>Conclusion</b>	Returns to the central idea of the essay and effectively connects to other ideas.	Returns to the central idea of the essay	Makes a reference to the essay’s topic	Ends confusingly or ineffectively	Offers only personal opinion or fails to conclude
<b>Control of Language</b>	Uses mature vocabulary, diction and syntax.	Uses mature vocabulary, diction and syntax, but may not be consistent	Uses standard vocabulary, diction and syntax	Uses standard vocabulary, diction and syntax with some notable lapses	Uses simplistic vocabulary, diction and syntax, sometimes makes up words
<b>Grammar</b>	Contains few, if any, errors in mechanics or usage, and those are of a minor variety	Contains few, if any, errors in mechanics or usage	Contains a pattern of errors which do not seriously interfere with the reader’s understanding	Contains numerous errors in basic grammar that interfere with the reader’s understanding	Contains errors so severe that they detract from the reading of the paper

