

**Theatre Arts 157: PLAYWRITING**  
Summer 2020  
July 27 – August 28, 2020  
Synchronous meeting: 2pm – 4:00pm (PST)  
via Zoom (Mondays and Wednesdays)

**Kirsten Brandt**, lecturer

Office: Virtual

Office Hours: MW 1pm-2pm (PST) or by appointment via Zoom

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### **Course Description**

Students are given the opportunity to write their own scripts and refine them as the result of class discussion and presentation of scenes. Work is on specific problems involving such elements as the structuring of a plot or the development of characters.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Develop their individual approach to writing.
2. Analyze character and story structures as well as identify elements of dramatic writing.
3. Create a short play that contains actable characters within a dramatic structure using the language of the stage.
4. Critique and assess creative work using Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process.
5. Identify and apply industry standard playwriting formats to their own scripts.

### **Course Philosophy**

*"It matters whose stories tell stories."* – Donna Haraway

This class is designed to help you develop your unique voice as a writer and provide you with a toolkit for further investigation in performative writing.

### **Course Format**

This course will utilize UCSC's on-line learning system, **Canvas**, for course material and course assignments. We will use **Zoom** for synchronous instruction.

### **Grading and Assignments**

Scenes: 50% (500 points)

Canvas Discussion Responses: 20% (200 points)

Writing Prompts: 5% (50 points)

Participation: 10% (100 points)

Final Play: 15% (150 points)

**Scenes:** You will be asked to write five short scenes/monologues (3-7 pages Script Format). These assignments will be shared during synchronous meetings. *100 points each / 500 points total (50%)*

**Canvas Discussion Responses:** Each week you will be assigned to read articles, listen to podcasts, or watch videos. You will respond to posted discussion questions in Canvas. *40 points each / 200 points total (20%)*

**Writing Prompts:** There will be two-four writing prompts posted each week. Choose **one** prompt per week. Prompts are designed to get you writing, you should spend a *minimum* of 15 minutes on a prompt (keep writing if the ideas are flowing). Write without self-editing. These are *rough*, not polished. You will upload one prompt per week (the others you can save for later). *10 points each / 50 points total (5%)*

**Participation and Preparation:** Participating in synchronous class discussions and critiquing fellow students work is as important as hearing critiques of your own. Participation also means volunteering to have your work read as well as serving as an actor for another writer. This course follows Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process for critiques. Please contact instructor right away if you cannot attend a synchronous session for any reason. *10 points per class meeting / 100 points total (10%)*.

**Final Play:** You will write a one-act play (10 minutes to 30 minutes). You will be required to turn in an outline, a rough draft, and a final draft. Each writer's journey is different and your play can completely alter over the course the five weeks. Writing is re-writing. Your final draft is still a work in progress but must demonstrate growth by wrestling with the ideas, plot, structure and character. *25 points for outline; 25 points for rough draft; 100 points for final play / 150 points total (15%)*

### How the points breakdown:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>960 to 1000</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>930 to 959</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>900 to 929</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>860 to 899</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>830 to 829</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>800 to 829</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>760 to 799</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>730 to 759</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>700 to 729</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>660 to 699</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>630 to 659</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>600 to 629</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>0 to 599</i>	<i>0 to 59%</i>

## Course Schedule

*(instructor reserves the right to change)*

All items listed as **due** are due at the start of the synchronous session that day.

### **Week #1: Character**

7/27 Introductions. Canvas. Expectations.

*What is a play?* Writing for the theatre.

Dramatists Guild Format

Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process.

7/29 Building Character and Given Circumstances.

*Due:* Scene #1: Real Story

### **Week #2: Walking and Talking.**

8/3: Dialogue techniques

What a character says. Subtext.

*Due:* Scene #2: Character point-of-view monologues

8/5: Stage direction techniques

What a character does. Physical Action.

*Due:* Scene #3: Dialogue

### **Week #3: Plot and Theme**

8/10: Structuring plots

*Due:* Scene #4: Action Scene

8/12: Weaving in thematic ideas

*Due:* Final Play Outline

### **Week #4: Style**

8/17: How to say what you want to say

*Due:* Scene #5: TBA

8/19 Variations in form

*Due:* Rough draft of final play

### **Week #5: Rewriting**

8/24: Rough draft reviews. Breakout sessions.

8/26: Festival of plays: readings

**DUE:** Final play

## Important Dates

Session 2: Drop Deadline - August 3

Session 2: Withdraw Deadline – August 14

Session 2: Deadline to change grade – August 14

Summer is unique. **You will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment.** You must drop yourself. Dropping before the deadline results in a full-tuition reversal/refund. Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund).

For all dates and deadlines, including 'change of grade option' (P/NP) and grades due, here is the summer academic calendar:

<https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html>

For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email [summer@ucsc.edu](mailto:summer@ucsc.edu).

## Class Policies

### Emails and Office Hours

I check emails on the weekdays, and my goal is to answer your message as quickly as possible (within two days). I love helping you craft your work and brainstorm your ideas. I recognize that some of you will be in different time zones, so please do not hesitate to schedule an appointment with me outside of my listed office hours. If you want me to read something *before* our appointment, please send me the draft at least 24 hours prior to our meeting. Appointments are strongly suggested. If you simply want my comments on your play, share the doc with me on google and I will leave comments (I will do my best to comment within 48 hours).

### Class Discussion and Work

This is a space for creative exploration. As we explore, we may encounter subject matter that elicits strong feelings. Our goal is to cultivate and inhabit an atmosphere of respect. This begins with active engagement. It involves listening, questioning, and being honest. We don't have to agree on everything but we must respect disagreement and welcome it a part of the creative and learning processes. Please see the university policy on Mature Content below.

### DRC Remote Accommodations:

The Disability Resources Center reduces barriers to inclusion and full participation for students with disabilities by providing support to individually determine reasonable academic accommodations. Operations continue via remote appointments. If you have questions or concerns about exam accommodations or any other disability-related matter, email the DRC Schedulers at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu) for an appointment.

### Small Group Tutoring

Small Group Tutoring (SGT) supports students academically to advance educational equity by designing inclusive learning environments outside of the classroom. In SGT, you can expect the Tutor to facilitate cooperative group

activities designed to have students work together on the course content and develop study skills for the course. SGT is offered at least three times each week for the entire quarter. The Tutor is an undergraduate student who took the class, did well, and is trained to facilitate group sessions to focus on students' needs to succeed in the course. SGT is open to all students enrolled in the class and they must sign up on our online system: TutorTrac. When students sign up for SGT, they are committing to attend every week. For Summer 2020, students can begin signing up for tutoring on **Monday, June 22rd** and tutoring will begin **Wednesday, June 24th**. Students only have to sign up once for tutoring and their appointments will repeat weekly. Sign-ups will close on **Friday, August 14th** for all Summer Session Sign-Ups. This means that after **August 14th**, no new students can sign up for tutoring.

Want SGT to be successful for you? Bring your books, lecture notes, questions, and be open to working collaboratively with your peers. You can sign up using this link: <https://ucsc.go-redrock.com/tracweb40/NoAccess.4sp?errText=insufficient%20credentials%20to%20view%20content>

You can also find the link on our website: <https://lss.ucsc.edu/index.html>

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. Academic dishonesty diminishes the university as an institution and all members of the university community. It tarnishes the value of a UCSC degree. All members of the UCSC community have an explicit responsibility to foster an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. All members of the university community are expected to present as their original work only that which is truly their own. All members of the community are expected to report observed instances of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty in order to ensure that the integrity of scholarship is valued and preserved at UCSC.

In the event a student is found in violation of the UCSC Academic Integrity policy, he or she may face both academic sanctions imposed by the instructor of record and disciplinary sanctions imposed either by the provost of his or her college or the Academic Tribunal convened to hear the case. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript.

For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Integrity page](#) at the Division of Undergraduate Education.

## **Title IX:**

The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or

exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors.

The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct. [Information about the Title IX Office](#), the [online reporting link](#), applicable campus resources, reporting responsibilities, the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#), and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at [titleix.ucsc.edu](http://titleix.ucsc.edu).

The Title IX Office is actively responding to reports and requests for consultation. If you are not currently working with someone in the office and want to make a report/request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using our [online reporting link](#).

For more information please visit the [Title IX Operations under Covid-19](#) page.

### **GENERAL CONDUCT**

In this class we abide by the **UCSC Principles of Community**, so please familiarize yourself with these: <https://www.ucsc.edu/about/principles-community.html>.

### **MATURE COURSE CONTENT**

In university courses you may be assigned images, films or other material that could contain difficult ideas, uncomfortable language, or graphic depictions of sex or violence. You will be asked to treat these portrayals critically, to consider what is being expressed by the maker, or to examine the potential social impact, and to evaluate the works in a given context. Instructors are always happy to speak with you about the course content and/or your work, and might direct you to CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) at 831-459-2628 or the Disability Resource Center ([drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu), 831-459-2089) should you need additional support in order to participate and do your best work.

### **GRADE DISPUTES**

If you have questions about the grading of your work, please make arrangements to meet with your teaching assistant (TA) if the course has one. If the course does not have a TA, or if your questions are not resolved, please see the course instructor during office hours. If the matter still remains unresolved, you will be advised on further options.

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY**

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Acts of academic misconduct during the course, including plagiarism, can and usually do result in failure of the course, at the sole discretion of the instructor of record. Your case will be reported to the College Provost as per the Academic Integrity guidelines found on the web at: [https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic\\_misconduct](https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct)

