

American College Dublin

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CW231 WRITING FOR STAGE 1

Credits:	3 US credits / 6 ECTS credits
Credit level:	Stage two
Prerequisites:	None
Mandatory:	No
Contact hours:	40
Academic Year:	2016/17
Semester:	2
Lecturer:	Dr Carlo Gébler

INTENDED MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this module learners should be able to:

1. Recognize the general historical development of the practice of writing for the stage as a creative art form, and appreciate the imaginative and technical processes the writer for the stage goes through and applies in developing a script for spoken or sung performance on the stage;
2. Understand the main requirements for presenting and formatting a script for the stage;
3. Understand the relationship between the written word and performance;
4. Identify the basic elements required for creating an engaging character in drama;
5. Structure a script so that its plotting and narrative development are presented and paced effectively;
6. Produce dialogue that is interesting and entertaining, structured with due awareness of whether it is spoken or sung, and that progresses the development of character and plot;
7. Engage in constructive criticism of their peers' written work, and learn to receive and to apply such feedback in the development of their own work.

Learning outcomes 1-3 will be assessed by class exercises, 4-7 by class submissions and presentations, and 1-7 by the final project assessment.

MODULE OBJECTIVES

This course guides the student as an aspiring dramatist to write, edit and rewrite a series of monologues, duologues, sketches and scenes, for delivery in spoken or musical form. This is accomplished through submission, presentation and examination of regular writing exercises,

developed in a workshop format. Assigned exercises include: first monologue, first monologue rewrite, second monologue, second monologue rewrite, first duologue, first duologue rewrite, second duologue, second duologue rewrite, sketch, and sketch rewrite etc. Since dramatic writing only reaches fruition in performance, a substantial portion of class time will be spent on dramatic readings and rudimentary performance of the draft scripts. In light of this hands-on approach, course attendance and participation are essential.

MODULE CURRICULUM

Learners will realise the module objectives by completing a number of curriculum tasks and activities. These are planned to include the following topics:

- Introduction to the conventions of formatting and structuring texts for the stage;
- Introduction to the main aspects of creating credible and interesting characters for live performance on stage;
- Introduction to developing plot and narrative for the performance of interesting and engaging dramatic stories;
- The relationship of stagecraft and the limitations and possibilities of the live performance on stage to a dramatic text;
- Close reading and analysis of a dramatic text in order to refine and revise it to reach the optimal final draft;
- The history and development of dramatic writing and theory and their practical application in the writing of dramatic texts.

REQUIRED TEXT

Lajos Egri, *The art of dramatic writing*, BN Publishing, 2007.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST

Peter Brook, *The empty space*, Touchstone, 1968;

Marina Calderone, *Actions: the actor's thesaurus*, Drama Publishers, 2004;

Will Dunne, *The dramatic writer's companion: tools to develop characters, cause scenes, and build stories*, Chicago Guides, 2009;

David Edgar, *How plays work*, Nick Hern Books.

Jeffrey Hatcher, *The art and craft of playwriting*, F and W Publications, 1996;

Constantin Stanislavsky, *An actor prepares*, Routledge, 1936;

Richard Toscan, *Playwriting seminars 2.0: a handbook on the art and craft of dramatic writing*, Franz Press, 2012;

Verbatim, verbatim: contemporary documentary theatre, Will Hammond and Dan Steward (eds), Oberon Books.

INTERNET WEBSITES

www.artslynx.org

www.performingarts.net

www.talkinbroadway.com

www.theatre-link.com

www.theatrelibrary.org

MODULE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The physical structures of the module learning environment include lecturing classrooms supplied with integrated chairs and desks and a whiteboard, a Powerpoint system, overhead projector, television and DVD/video player. The learners also have access to an up-to-date computer laboratory (all computers are connected to the College's network; they are equipped with up-to-date software and are networked for printing and internet access).

The module learning environment also includes the College's library (the Rooney Library). In cooperation with the teaching staff and in association with Lynn University, Boca Raton, Florida, the Library is able to supply reading and research materials on all aspects of the module. There are networked computers and printers, with Internet access and power points for portable computers. The library management system, Voyager, provides an online catalogue. Learners are able to search the catalogue, extend their loans, and place holds on titles from home. An inter-library loan service is available for staff and learners.

MODULE TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

The module intended learning outcomes are achieved through a range of teaching and learning strategies. These include two and a half hours per week of class time which combines elements of a seminar and tutorial in a workshop format. Learners are expected to take appropriate notes in class and to do practical exercises and other classroom activities prescribed by the lecturer. Learners are also expected to dedicate at least two hours per week to self-directed study which includes reading, elementary research, home assignments, group assignment preparation, individual projects, and preparation of material for tests and final examinations. Self-study can be conducted in the College Library or at home. Learners can also contact their lecturer during office hours for further academic support. All these types of teaching provide a versatile opportunity to support and develop learner engagement with the programme.

MODULE ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

The extent to which students have achieved the intended learning outcomes is established by different kinds of assessment strategies. These include various forms of continuous assessment and a final assessment. Assessment instruments include evaluation of submitted scenes, in-class readings and exercises, short essays, class presentations, and live performances. The forms of assessment used in the module, together with their weighting, include the following:

- Short exercises and readings (40%);

- Participation in constructive critical discussion (10%);
- Completion and submission of a cumulative final project (50%).

The assessment requirements and the divisions of grades within these components will be discussed in class.

The grading scale used by the American College Dublin is the following: A (80-100%), B+ (70-79%), B (60-69%), B- (55-59%), C+ (50-54%), C (40-49%), D (35-39%), F (below 35%).

As class attendance and punctuality is essential for successful performing arts learning and career development, strict penalties will apply for any unexcused absence or tardiness: 5% will be deducted from the final grade for each instance of an unexcused absence; 2% will deducted for each instance of an unexcused lateness (up to half an hour after the scheduled commencement of class; any student arriving unexcused more than half an hour after the scheduled beginning of class will be counted as absent and will have 5% deducted from his or her final grade).

Learners will be instructed in academic techniques of source referencing to avoid plagiarism, that is, unacknowledged appropriation of someone else's ideas, words, and research results. Plagiarism is regarded by the College as a serious offence punishable by downgrading, failure in the course work, and possible dismissal from the College. The College's detailed Plagiarism Statement is included in the Quality Assurance Manual, sections 3.8.1-3.