

# THE DRAMA CONCENTRATION

The Drama Concentration Program offers a course of study in the liberal arts that is unique within The University of Michigan: the study of drama as an independent academic discipline. The Program regards drama as art form that is both literary and theatrical, drawing on these and many other arts for its expression, but claiming methods and purposes which are finally its own. A proper appreciation of drama requires the recognition and study of several stages in the making of a play, primarily those of the playwright and his conditions of work, the text and form of the play, the performance of the play, and the audience and society from which the play arises and to whom it is addressed. This demands a practical as well as a theoretical encounter with all the components of the dramatic experience. Accordingly, the method of study employed by the Drama Program combines active experiment and dynamic presentation with critical analysis and appropriate conditions for interpreting, enjoying, and evaluating the living work of dramatic art.

The principles and practice of this "direct method" of drama are established in an introductory course, Introduction to Theatre and Drama (Humanities 280). The theatre experience is at the heart of the matter: What happens in the theatre during performance of a play? Through a variety of experiential and academic activities, students acquire the preliminary discipline of identifying with author, actor, director, and spectator. They develop a specifically dramatic perception and understanding of the play text. They learn to distinguish between the play and the production, while appreciating their inter-dependence. They practice using their eyes and ears while reading, to "see" and "hear" the action on a stage; they develop sense of decor and music in the theatre; and, they increase their knowledge of acting and dramatic style, of how characters behave in the fictitious dramatic situation, of how spectators respond to the dramatic experience. Ultimately they are able to assess the aesthetic and social significance of the play in its own time, in its own theatre, before its own audience; and then to explore how it is "revived" for another time and audience, possibly in another medium.

The "direct method" encourages the use of the voice and body in direct experiment with the play text, to complement the exercise of the basic intellectual skills in discussion, writing and study. This is a "show-and-tell" method, a mixture of demonstration and explanation, which suits the mixed form of the drama.

# R C DRAMA CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

<u>Level</u>	<u>Required Courses</u>	<u>Home Dept.</u>	<u>Credit total</u>
<u>Entry</u>	Intró to Theatre & Drama Hums 280	Theatre with RC	4
*****			
	Theatre History I	Theatre	3
	Theatre History II	Theatre	3
	3-4 RC Drama Courses	RC	12
	<u>OR</u>		
<u>Middle</u>	approved Dramatic Literature courses in other departments	English, etc.	
	Actor & Text – Hums 282	RC	4
	(Director & Text recommended, but required for all Senior Projects) – Hums 482		
*****			
	Theory & Criticism- Hums 480	RC	4
	<u>OR</u>		
	Senior Honors Thesis	RC	
<u>Upper</u>	Play Production Seminar Hums 481	RC	4
	<u>OR</u>		
	Senior Project (in Directing, etc)	RC	
	<b>MINIMUM TOTAL</b>		<b>34</b>

## RC DRAMA COURSES

Most of the following courses are offered on a three-to-five-semester rotation. Consult with the concentration advisor for frequency of offering.

- Hums 380** **Ancient Drama** (selected from Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus, Terence, or Seneca)
- Hums 386** **Comparative Medieval and Early Renaissance Drama** (Liturgical drama to Machiavelli, et al. and early Tudor playwrights.)
- Hums 381** **Shakespeare on the Stage**
- Hums 387** **Masterpieces of Renaissance and Baroque Drama** exclusive of Shakespeare (to be drawn from Jonson, Middleton, Webster, Ford, Calderon, Lope de Vega, Corneille, Racine...)
- Hums 382** **Moliere and Restoration Comedy** OR *Commedia dell'arte* to Moliere
- Hums 388** **Masterpieces of 18th- and 19th-Century Drama** (to be drawn from Goldsmith, Sheidan, Marivaux, Beaumarchais, Goldoni, Gozzi, Goethe, Schiller, Hugo, Gogol...)
- Hums 383** **Pioneers of Early Modern Drama:** Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekov
- Hums 389** **Currents in Modern Drama** (the -isms: Naturalism, Expressionism, Symbolism, Futurism, Dadaism and Surrealism)
- Hums 385** **Brecht and the Brechtian Tradition**
- Hums 483** **Theater of the Absurd**
- Hums 390** **Other Select Modern Drama Courses** (ex. "Period & Place" courses: Post-War British, English Language Colonial Drama, Post-War German and Eastern European, The Irish Dramatic Movement, and Thematic courses: Exploring Gender, Drama of War, etc.)
- Hums 484** **Minicourses:** Stratford Festival Field Trip; minicourses related to special projects, etc.

As the courses testify, the discipline of drama study is also broadly comparative and interdisciplinary. Thus, the Program encourages the pursuit of study in allied fields such as literature, music, art, theatre, dance, foreign languages, social sciences, history, etc., and invites application of various proficiencies to the activities of any given drama course. (In addition to the naturally employed skills of literary interpretation, acting, theatrical design, and directing, RC drama courses have incorporated dual-language presentations, translations, original plays, musical performance and composition, choreography, political demonstrations, psychological experiments, and graphical art projects.) As there is hardly a field of human endeavor that is foreign to the drama, the discipline of drama study can exploit every kind of accomplishment, be it acrobatics, carpentry, or rhetoric.