CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Reading in-depth of the works of one or more major American writers.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To expose the students to classics in the American canon.
- To encourage critical thought.
- To inform the student about production history.
- To acquaint the students with the playwright's life.
- To foster improved skills in oral presentations.
- To enhance writing and editing skills.
- To offer creative options to the traditional critical paper.
- To develop an appreciation for the American theatre.
- To learn basic research skills in the use of the library.

TEXTS:
The Iceman Cometh, Eugene O'Neill
Death of a Salesman, Arthur Miller
A Raisin in the Sun, Lorraine Hansberry
Getting Out, Marsha Norman
The Glass Menagerie, Tennessee Williams

Mon. - June 28--Introduction of ourselves, filling out of bio cards, course expectations, starting The Glass Menagerie
Tu. -- June 29--The Glass Menagerie
Wed. - June 30--The Glass Menagerie for the first half of the hour; 2:45--library orientation at a room to be announced.
Th. - July 1--Cushion for Glass Menagerie and a 5 minute, per student, review of a production of the play or a report on a critical or theoretical essay. The latter must be found in the MLA Bibliography or JSTOR, but in the case of JSTOR, you must check only the Language and Literature section, please. (Extra points may be negotiable.)

Mon. - July 5--UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY
Tu. - July 6--Getting Out
Wed. - July 7--Getting Out
Th. - July 8--Getting Out the first half of the class period; then, two-minute reports on productions or actors or a report on a critical essay.

Mon. - July 12--FIRST PAPERS/CREATIVE PROJECTS DUE. (10 students)
Tu. - July 13--Two more students present papers/projects. Begin The Iceman Cometh.
Wed. - July 14--The Iceman Cometh
Th. - July 15--The Iceman Cometh

Mon. - July 19--cushion for Iceman and very brief (two-minute) reports on a production of the play, an actor (Jason Robards, and/or literary criticism). Some of you may well enjoy researching O'Neill's fascinating life.

Tu. - July 20--A Raisin in the Sun, Lorraine Hansberry

Wed. - July 21--A Raisin in the Sun

Th. - July 22--A Raisin in the Sun (conclude) and give brief reports (two-minute) on a production of the play or the film or the playwright. Also, you may opt to share a critical paper.

Mon. - July 26--Ten PAPERS/CREATIVE PROJECTS (6 minutes each) on Raisin or Iceman.

Tu. - July 27--Two more papers/creative projects on Death of a Salesman (begin)

Wed. - July 28--Death of a Salesman

Th. - July 29--Death of a Salesman

Mon. - Aug. 2--conclude Death of a Salesman and give brief (two-minute) reports on an actor, the playwright, a production or a critical paper on the play.

Tu. - Aug. 3--Papers/Creative projects on Death of a Salesman (six students)

Wed. - Aug. 4--Papers/creative projects (six students) on Death of a Salesman

Th. - Aug. 5--Cushion/possible exit interviews in my office in Walker 327.

I do not discuss final grades, please. I do turn in my grades immediately so that you may call the Office of Student Records and Registration.

GRADING POLICY: I will weigh the three major papers/projects equally. In the case of borderline students, I will consider the quality of a report, but a report is not the same as an analysis or a project in which you have invested considerable effort.

NATURE OF PAPERS/CREATIVE PROJECTS:

You have choices of:

1. a critical paper, supported by one article found in a refereed journal, generally indexed in the MLA Bibliography or JSTOR (Language and Literature section, only).
2. a performance analysis of an actor's work. Here, you will need three reviews from quality newspapers or magazines.
3. a historical or social analysis of a play, informed by three sources which I must approve.
4. a creative project, often, but not always, with a scholarly narrative. You may use music, puppetry, a website (complicated), a drawing, a painting, photography, an original poem, films that you make, costume design, sound design, or scene design. You are not limited to these suggestions.

I MUST APPROVE ALL TOPICS, HOPEFULLY NO LESS THAN TWO DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE PRESENTATION. ALL PAPERS AND PROJECTS MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE THE CLASS!

Please turn the page for grading criteria and classroom policies. Thanks.
CLASSROOM POLICIES

ABSENCES: In the real world, employers expect regular attendance. Classroom attendance is vital and it is training for the rest of your life. Students in my classes have three unexcused absences, summer and during the regular year. Thereafter, on a case by case basis, I reserve the right to lower your final grade by 1/4 a letter grade. (for each absence beyond three) On the fifth absence for summer school (and on the tenth for the regular year), I reserve the right to give the student an F regardless to what grades may be earned on papers/projects. This will be an F for the course.

WHY? Eighty per cent of college students, nationwide, according to Newsweek, work 20 hours a week. A number of students at Michigan Tech appear to work 30 to 40 hours a week. Some students holding full-time jobs sign up for as many as 18 credits per term and participate in extra curricular activities. For most human beings, this is an absolute impossibility, so they have heavy absences from class. In recent years, excessive absences have gone beyond all reasonable bounds, straining relationships and severely jeopardizing the student’s grade. Students with major illnesses are encouraged to drop and not "hang in there at all costs." I understand brief absences for weddings, funerals, court appearances, job interviews, and short-term illnesses. I also do not normally require any form of documentation. I will: when the problem becomes excessive. Discipline is key!

GRAMMAR: Few successful people in life in any field thrive with poor language skills. If a pilot for a major airline said over the loud speaker: "Ladies and gentlemen, we now been over the Mississippi," he or she would, under the best case scenario, be transferred to Siberia, if not fired. It makes no difference how well he or she can drive the plane. So it is with virtually all other jobs where one is upwardly mobile. One will not be excused because this form of speech is their dialect. Dialect is generally accepted in limited social circles and on stage/screen.

GRADES AFFECTED BY GRAMMAR: I often give dual grades, such as an A/F, the former for content and the latter for grammar. This is not something I must do, or even feel strongly about. I do it: in order to help students who have made some effort, but still have a paper that is problematic. If you are uncomfortable with this and we cannot work on trust, I will happily give you one grade; it will, generally, lock you into a grade which is final. The double or dual grade is flexible, but never to be used against a student. As you present, you may say, "I prefer only one grade, please."

LATE PAPERS: Late papers are a hassle. I reserve the right to lower your grade by one letter grade for each day it is late.

RESPECT: I am very strong on mutual respect. I prefer to be called Professor Gill or Dr. Gill and I will give you the same courtesy. An attitude of respect must prevail in any classroom where learning is to effectively take place.

LENGTH OF PAPERS; Format: Under the ADA, I do respectfully request that all papers be in a size 14 font and that they be double-spaced. I will return papers that do not comply with this request. All pages should be numbered, except page one. I generally ask for five page papers, but this may be negotiable, especially when one does a creative project.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS: Please bring an extra copy of your paper. All work must be presented before the class. Thanks.
GRADING CRITERIA
Glenda E. Gill

No set of criteria can include all the characteristics of every forceful and convincing piece of writing or speaking. However, the purpose of this form is to help you learn to incorporate certain elements of effective communication in all your papers and speeches.

CONTENT

Central idea: clear; limited; implications of situation carefully considered? adapted to audience?
Support: sufficient, relevant? specific? sources attributed as needed?

ORGANIZATION

Beginning engages interest? indicated purpose? Development: thoughtful analysis apparent?
Purpose and relationship of sections clear? paragraphs coherently structured?
Ending: significance maintained? Is there a sense of closure?

EXPRESSION

Tone: indicates involvement with subject? (I hold that tone is the single most important element in writing.) Appropriate to purpose and audience? Appropriately maintained?
Sentences: clear? concise? varied? patterns suitable for reading and/or listening?
Word Choice: accurate? appropriate to audience?

DELIVERY

Conveys involvement with audience and subject: animation? (Is your delivery alive and enthusiastic?) Are gestures appropriate? Do you have too many gestures? Are they overdone? Eye contact? Too much reliance on notes? Are you familiar with the piece you are presenting?
Voice: articulation clear? appropriate projection? intensity? rate?

MECHANICS (Writing and speaking)

Punctuation? Spelling?
Usage: tense? subject-verb agreement? (This can be very serious.)
Do you write in fragments? (This is a serious problem.)
Documentations: form correct? We use the MLA Handbook as our guide. It can be purchased. I recommend the Fourth Edition. It is also available on the World Wide Web. It is in the library and in The Writing Center.