

HZ9204/HZ204 Creative Writing: Playwriting

Course Co-ordinator: Jean Tay

This course invites students to explore the craft of playwriting through a critical understanding and practical application of basic playwriting elements such as plot, character, dialogue and so on. Students will participate in creative writing exercises as a means to finding their playwriting voice as well as honing an ear for the spoken word onstage. Critical analyses of stage play excerpts, peer critiquing of fellow students' work-in-progress scripts and a final dramatised play reading showcase will also be key components of the learning process. This course prepares students towards the completion of a shorter 5 minute play, as well as a longer final 10-15 minute stage play.

Method of Instruction

Workshop : 3 hours per week

Course Assessment*

	Weightage
Class Participation and Short Writing Exercises	25%
Short Monologue (approx 1-2 pages)	15%
Short Play (approx. 5 pages)	20%
Final Stage Play (approx. 10 to 20 pages)	40%

**Please note that the submission of any late assignments will lead to the deduction of one letter grade in the respective assignment mark. Unless otherwise stated, students are also expected to attend ALL weekly workshops and to engage actively in classroom explorations for the successful completion of this course. More than 3 unaccounted absences will lead to the overall grade for the course being adversely affected.*

Proposed Workshop Schedule

Week No.	Topics	Readings
Week 1	Introduction What is a play? What makes a stage play work? Free Writing Exercises	Excerpts from "Emily of Emerald Hill" by Stella Kon
Week 2	Character How to build compelling and convincing characters Objective or Through Line	Excerpts from "Off-Centre" by Haresh Sharma "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" by Tennessee Williams
Week 3	Character/Dialogue Character Traits Point of View Assignment 1: Short Monologue	Excerpts from "Oleanna" by David Mamet "Charged" by Chong Tze Chien
Week 4	Dialogue Listening to the spoken word Rhythm Sounds	Excerpts from "Mama looking for her cat" by Kuo Pao Kun "Cooling off Day" by Alfian Sa'at
Week 5	Plot and Structure Who, When, Where, What	Excerpts from "Doubt" by John Patrick Shanley
Week 6	Plot and Structure Backstory, Progression, Structure/Shape Assignment 2: Short Play – Interrupted Ritual	Excerpts from "Betrayal" by Harold Pinter
Week 7	Plot and Action Internal/Psychological Action External/Physical Action Beats, Subtext	Excerpts from "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf" by Edward Albee

Week No.	Topics	Readings
Week 8	Recess	
Week 9	Setting Exploring site-specific plays Theatricality Final Play Proposals due	Excerpts from “Psychosis 4.48” by Sarah Kane “Act Without Words I” by Samuel Beckett
Week 10	Revision	
Week 11	Script Consultation: Work-in-progress sharing	
Week 12	Script Consultation: Work-in-progress sharing	
Week 13	Dramatised Play Reading Showcase & Feedback	

Further Readings

To be recommended in class