

Writing 100 — Drama — Fall 2010

Class time & location: 11.30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Mon & Thurs – Sept 9 – Oct 21, CLE A307

Instructor: Karen Lee Pickett

Office: FA 245 **kaleepi@uvic.ca**

Office Hours: Monday 12:00 – 1:30pm (or by appointment)

Whenever possible please set up appointments with me during class. If the above time is not suitable for you we will schedule another time to meet. Feel free to use email to set up appointment times, clarify course requirements and other details. Please don't use email to submit assignments or discuss grades.

PLEASE NOTE There is an excellent section on WRIT100 on the department website:
<http://finearts.uvic.ca/writing/writ100/faq.html>

*

OVERVIEW

Writing 100 is a year-long course where you will develop and improve your skills in writing drama, fiction, creative non-fiction and poetry. This session is the drama portion of Writing 100, and will provide you with a practical foundation in the basics of dramatic writing. Through lectures, in-class exercises, written assignments and an in-class exam we will examine the fundamental elements of what makes good drama. Classes will be directed at writing for both stage and screen, and we will be looking at a diverse array of work from the national and international repertoire.

You will be assigned as a peer editor/dramaturge to another student before your first assignment is due for marking. You will complete an edit sheet on that student's assignment and receive an edit sheet on your assignment to assist you with revisions.

Your second assignment will be workshopped in class. You will be part of a group of students who will offer thorough and respectful critique of each other's work.

*

TEXTBOOK

The course pack designed for the drama portion of Writing 100 is your only text, and is available at the University bookstore. Outside of class, you are required to attend either a live performance of a play, or to see a film other than a first-run, mainstream film. You will give a one-minute oral report on the play or film to the class. (A non-comprehensive list of what's playing in Victoria is attached to this course outline.)

The use of electronic devices (cell phones, laptops, Blackberries etc) is not allowed in this class, except when required by students with disabilities (documentation required).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ASSIGNMENT #1, worth 25% due for marking September 23

STAGE: This four-page assignment is to write an opening scene for a stage play. There should be no more than four and not fewer than two characters, and no monologues longer than half a page. You must not go over or under the four-page limit, and you must use the format for dramatic writing that we will review in class.

You will be graded on your ability to create vital characters and to create dialogue that is original, inventive and active. Pay attention to how character, dialogue and action are intertwined. You will be graded on your ability to create a strong dramatic premise and to create the beginnings of a plot which springs from that premise and establishes and maintains a sense of dramatic tension. You are expected to incorporate a minimal amount of design elements into your script including set, lighting and, as required, costumes and sound.

You will exchange writing with another student, and write a peer edit of that student's work. You are expected to follow and comment on the categories outlined in the peer edit worksheet. Your comments should not be less than 300 words.

ASSIGNMENT #2, worth 35%, first draft due for workshop October 14 final revised draft due for marking October 18

SCREEN – This five-page assignment is to write a complete screenplay, and employ the elements of dramatic structure to tell a short, visually-based story. Write a concise, complete story with a beginning, middle and end. Pay special attention to how visual language (image, metaphor, symbol) helps convey your story. Remember that, in film, character is best revealed through action. What interesting choices does your protagonist make?

You will be graded on your ability to tell a story visually with or without dialogue. You will be graded on your ability to construct a clear and vivid story with a set-up, climax and denouement. Remember that compelling films portray characters who want something, meet resistance and overcome obstacles in the film's climax. Yes, you can do this in five pages! A list of on-line films (five minutes or less) will be provided during the first screen lesson.

EXAM, worth 30% October 21

This hour-long in-class exam will be based on course pack readings, lectures, and classroom exercises and discussions. You will not be able to use your course pack during the exam.

PARTICIPATION, worth 10%

Your participation grade is determined by your peer edit of another student's play, your report on a play or film, your in-class exercises and quizzes, and your careful reading of all course pack material as assigned. In other words, you must come to class prepared.

*

MECHANICS

All assignments must be word-processed using a 12-point font. They must adhere to the prescribed length of the assignment with your name and page number on every page.

When submitting an assignment to me for marking, make two copies. I will give a graded copy of your work back to you and will keep one on file for my records.

Please bring in two copies of your peer editing comments. These must be word-processed and not less than 300 words. One copy will go to the student writer and I will keep one copy for my records. You are also expected to make editing comments directly on the scripts.

Late assignments will be reduced one mark for each day late, to a maximum of three days. After three days, late assignments are not accepted. Your assignments for grading and workshop are due at the beginning of the class. If you find yourself falling behind do feel free to come and talk to me.

Please review the department guidelines regarding attendance, grading, disability documentation and plagiarism. Please also review the grading grid, developed by our department, to help clarify how student writing is evaluated. The department web site has a link for WRIT 100 that is a great resource for information.

GRADES

ASSIGNMENT #1	25% of final grade
ASSIGNMENT #2	35% of final grade
EXAM	30% of final grade
PARTICIPATION	10% of final grade

*

I look forward to working with all of you!

Proposed Schedule (subject to change)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
Sept 9	Welcome, photos Intro to Drama	
13	Creating Character Discuss dialogue exercise, format sheet partners for peer edit	Heidi Chronicles, Pink and Two Headed Roommate
16	Moving Into Dialogue	Genie
20	Premise and Conflict Reminder first assignment due next class	Problem Child
23	Elements of Dramatic Structure First assignment due Discuss second assignment	Problem Child
27	Page to Stage Form workshop groups	
30	Introduction to Screen guest lecturer; screen <i>Inja (Dog)</i>	
Oct 4	Cinematic Language	TBD
7	Three-Act Structure Drafts due to workshop partners	Dead Man Walking
11	THANKSGIVING – no class	
14	Workshop	
18	Exam Review Second assignment (revised draft) due for marking	
21	EXAM	

WRIT100
Upcoming plays in Victoria:

Phoenix Theatre 721 – 8000 <http://finearts.uvic.ca/theatre/season/>

Death Of A Clown by Sebastien Archibald
October 14 – 23, 2010

Previews are \$6; For regular performances, students with valid ID pay \$12 (excluding Friday and Saturday nights)

Belfry Theatre 385-6815 www.belfry.bc.ca

The Trespassers by Morris Panych
September 14 – October 17, 2010

Check the website for showtimes. To receive your **25% student discount** present your student ID at the Box Office up to 45 minutes prior to the performance or, to ensure you get a seat, you can book over the phone by calling 385-6815. Discounts are not valid on Opening Nights, Fridays or Saturdays at 8 pm.

Theatre Inconnu 250-360-0234 <http://www.islandnet.com/~tinconnu/>

Love Kills by Kyle Jarrow
October 4-30, 2010
Wednesdays through Saturdays @ 8pm

Little Fernwood Hall, 1923 Fernwood Rd. (across the street from the Belfry Theatre); \$10 for students; Half price preview Oct 4th (\$7); Pay-what-You-Can Oct 13th

Langham Court Theatre 384-2142 <http://langhamcourtheatre.bc.ca/>

The Odd Couple (Female version) by Neil Simon
September 29 - October 16, 2010
Tues – Sat, evening performances at 8pm; matinees at 2pm

Tickets for Preview & Opening Night (first Wednesday and first Thursday) are 2 for 1
All Tuesday shows are 2 for 1 for students; \$15 student tickets all other performances

FILMS

Cinecenta www.cinecenta.com
The UVSS's film theatre, showing Hollywood films, world cinema, and indie and 'art' films.
UVSS Students: \$5.60; only \$2.75 for 9pm shows (or later)

Short Canadian dramatic films can be viewed online at
National Screen Institutes On-line Film Festival: http://www.nsi-canada.ca/film_festival.aspx.
The National Film Board of Canada: <http://www.nfb.ca/>