



# COPY

## Request for Curriculum Council Action

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SEP 07 2011 GW I

TO: Zahia Drici, Associate Dean of Curriculum

DATE SUBMITTED: 8/30/11

(Please submit 1 double-sided copy of your proposal)

FROM: (Name) Kathleen O'GORMAN (Department) English

Email address: KOGORMAN@iwu.edu

1. Proposed Action (Please check all that apply):

	Title	Number	Units
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Course (No Gen Ed)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Course (Gen Ed)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gen Ed for Existing Course:	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deletion	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change title from	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	to	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change number from	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	to	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	May Term Course	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Major/Minor		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revised Major/Minor		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify) <u>New GATEWAY: The DRAMA of</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>It All</u>		

2a. Please check the category, if any, for which you are requesting General Education unit credit:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of Values               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gateway Colloquium | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Science Lab        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Arts                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Traditions       | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Science Issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary Social Institutions | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Science Lab    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural and Historical Change   | <input type="checkbox"/> Second Language               | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal Reasoning                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Science Issues           | <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness                 |

2b. Please check the flag(s), if any, you are seeking:

- Writing Intensive       Global Diversity       U.S. Diversity

2c. In what way will you assess how this course has met the goals of the Gen Ed category and/or flag(s) for which you are applying?

Use the Gen Ed Student Survey

(go to <http://www.iwu.edu/melloncenter/support/intra/General-Education.shtml> to find out if one is available)

Use a different tool/method (please explain)

<Over>

3. Please insert here the proposed catalog course description. Course descriptions should be limited to no more than 50 words, not counting (a) title; (b) prerequisites; (c) General Education category; and (d) when offered.

N/A

4. Please list any prerequisites: NONE

5. When will this course first be offered? FALL, 2011

6. Please indicate how often course is offered. Check only the single item that best describes this course. Because these are the only intervals used in the University Catalog, please do not edit or alter the list to fit a particular course. For example, if your course is offered every third year—an interval that does not appear in the Catalog—you might choose "Offered as needed" or "Offered occasionally" instead.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each semester                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years, Spring   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each Fall Term                | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years, May Term |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each spring                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered annually                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each May Term                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered every third semester         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each semester and May Term    | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered as needed                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered occasionally                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered on request                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered by arrangement               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years, Fall Term |   |

7. Is/are any other department(s) affected in any way by this request (e.g., course is cross-listed, team-taught, etc.)?  
 No.       Yes. In what way?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of the Head(s) of the Affected Department(s), School(s) or Program(s)

8. **WRITTEN RATIONALES:** If this proposal presents a new course (whether for General Education credit or not), an existing course for which General Education credit is now being sought, a May Term course, or a new major, minor or concentration, please attach a written rationale, following the guidelines found in the *Curriculum Development Handbook*. Please note that CC cannot evaluate incomplete proposals, so to expedite consideration of your submission, you are encouraged to read and follow the guidelines carefully.
9. The Curriculum Council assumes that the faculty members of your department have seen and approved of this request. Please sign below if this assumption is correct:

Kathleen O'Sorman  
 Signature of Faculty Member Primarily Responsible for This Proposal

Woo Jr  
 Signature of the Head of the Department

**Course Proposal: New Section of Gateway Colloquium  
Kathleen O’Gorman**

**Course Description: Gateway 100: The Drama of It All**

This section of Gateway will use drama as the basis for discussions of contemporary as well as universal social concerns such as violence, identity, family, and societal roles, even as we consider the literary and artistic elements of individual plays. We will read traditional plays of the twentieth or twenty-first century as well as texts in contemporary documentary theatre style (possibly **The Laramie Project**, by Moisés Kaufman, and/or **Fires in the Mirror** or **The Arizona Project**, by Anna Deavere Smith) to ground our discussions and to prompt critical thinking and writing about the artistic portrayal of social concerns. If possible, we will read plays that will be in production during the semester at Illinois Wesleyan and at Illinois State.

**Rationale:** While drama lends itself readily to the kinds of inquiry that Gateway Colloquia seek to consider, this Gateway’s use of traditional plays as well as documentary theatre broadens the range of topics and approaches the class can engage. So, for example, a study of Lillian Hellman’s **The Children’s Hour**, which concerns the social dynamics at a private girls’ school in 1934, might raise questions about social class and power as well as about family relationships, sexual identity, categories like “moral behavior,” the law, and so forth. At the same time, the pacing of the play, the division into acts and scenes, the selection of incidents, the use of realistic dialogue, set, and motivation of characters and other such elements all contribute to the creation of a dramatic world that the audience enters as a collective experience of art. Moisés Kaufman’s **The Laramie Project** stages some of the same issues and concerns surrounding communities and how they treat those perceived as “other,” though this time grounded in a recent historical event: the brutal murder of a young man in Wyoming for being gay. Kaufman’s text defines the events of the play as “Moments,” though it still retains the more traditional division into acts, and it situates these “Moments” within the context of an investigation into what happened in Laramie by Kaufman’s own theatre group. As I trust these examples indicate, the class will consider a variety of ways in which theatre stages social concerns, examining artistic structures and strategies as they help elucidate the issues at hand.

The course is arranged around a series of assignments designed to meet students where they are in their writing and critical thinking and then refine and advance the strategies they use to express themselves. We begin with students’ jotting down some ideas about what constitutes good writing, interviewing one another, and then introducing their partner to the rest of the class in terms of those ideas. Students then bring to class samples of what they consider good writing, explaining what about their chosen pieces merits our consideration. We proceed through discussions and exercises on thesis statements, organizing strategies, and strategies for thinking and writing specifically about drama, developing a sense of the ways in which playwrights raise important concerns for their audiences. Students write a brief response paper by week two, and subsequent response papers precede our discussion of each of the four texts we study (at approximately 3-week intervals). Each response paper is 1 – 2 pages in length, with a focus for discussion specified in advance. Each is worth 25 points, for a total of 100 points possible from response papers. Class discussions of the texts begin with our determining what a text is about, what it’s trying to do, and how it’s trying to do that—questions whose answers will lead us into

more refined critical thinking about the plays. Students usually offer different answers to the second and third questions: so, for example, all may agree on the first—that **The Laramie Project** is about the murder of a young man because he is gay—while they may differ in their sense of what the play is trying to do: elicit compassion, illustrate the extent to which people deceive themselves into thinking they're tolerant of others, indict a town and its citizens, demonstrate the inadequacies of church and government in defining morally and legally acceptable behavior, etc. Their answers to the second question will obviously condition their answers to the third. In any case, students will have to formulate a claim about what the text is trying to do, support it with evidence, break into component parts ("How does it do so?"), argue logically, consider competing claims (the analyses of the other students), and develop other critical thinking abilities which they will then have to translate into written arguments about the texts. In that shift, they will have to consider the audience (whether or not the reader will have seen the play or not, for example), formulate a thesis, synthesize material effectively, and construct a compelling argument, anticipating the objections of others even as they strengthen their own voice in making their case. For each text, students will not only produce a response paper to generate some ideas for discussion; they will also write a 4 – 5 page draft of a longer essay, which we will workshop in class, in consultation with the Writing Center, and/or in individual appointments with me. Each of these essays is worth 100 points. In addition to essays that will ask students to analyze the plays and argue for a position in relation to what they consider each one's most important concerns, they will write a brief introduction to one of the plays grounded in research on its history, properly acknowledged and documented. The introduction will specify that the piece is for a playbill, providing background information to a general audience, as opposed to an academic one, and students will write a letter about the experience of writing the introduction to a friend and another letter to a potential employer, using the experience as a basis on which they ought to be hired for a job. That exercise for one of the documentary-style texts would also lend itself to their determining the differences between reporting in a newspaper on an event and the transformation of that event into a work of art. The total page count for written work will easily exceed the 30-page target, as students will be doing brief in-class writing on a regular basis in addition to the assignments listed above.

**The class will meet the category goals for Gateway in the following ways:**

**Goal # 1: *Introduce students to the process of intellectual inquiry and develop students' critical thinking skills:*** In distinguishing between what a particular play is about and what it is trying to do, students will develop their skills at speculation and analysis, while their examination of the texts in terms of how the plays accomplish what they attempt will strengthen students' ability to synthesize and use evidence to support a claim. The research assignment designed around writing an introduction to one play (described above) will insure that students learn proper protocols for documentation and crediting sources.

**Goal # 2: *Develop students' ability to evaluate competing ideas:*** Once students have formulated their own individual responses to the question of what a play is trying to do and the follow-up concerning how it is trying to do that, they will have a chance to work in groups to analyze and evaluate others' claims about the same text. Such exercises will strengthen their reading skills. When they research the history of how a particular play has been received, they will need to consider the different critics' and audiences' responses to the play, evaluating

competing ideas at a different level. When we discuss the treatment of similar social issues by different playwrights, students will refine analytical skills as they consider how the same issues may be represented with different emphases through different strategies towards different ends. They will need to consider differing experiences that require different treatment in the plays we read and watch on stage.

**Goal # 3: *Develop students' skills in the conventions and structures of presenting knowledge in written academic and public discourse, and on strategies for effective revision:*** As the assignments structured into the course as described above indicate, the primary focus of the class is on writing. Students will do less formal writing in the letters and response papers they write, while their research and writing of an introduction for one play and production in draft form and then final copy of four additional papers will satisfy the need for more formal writing. There are eight class sessions scheduled for revision workshops, and even the early course activities—indicating what constitutes “good writing” as an initial introduction to one another and to the class—will set the priorities from the start.

**Goal # 4: *Engage students in learning activities that prepare them for academic life in the University:*** Individual student's discernment of each play's purpose will promote independent thinking, while small group discussions to compare their findings with those of the other group members will encourage active listening and synthesizing of analyses. Our discussions of the social issues the plays address—violence, class, power, etc.—will refine students' reading abilities.

**Assessment:** The course will use the assessment instrument developed by the Associate Dean of Curriculum in consultation with the Curriculum Council to be administered at the same time students complete the Course Evaluation forms.

