

**COURSE DATA****DATA SUBJECT**

Code: 35335
Name: English theatre from the 19th to the 21st centuries
Cycle: Undergraduate Studies
ECTS Credits: 6
Academic year: 2025-26

STUDY (S)

Degree	Center	Acad. year	Period
1000 - Degree in English Studies	Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació	2	First quarter

SUBJECT-MATTER

Degree	Subject-matter	Character
1000 - Degree in English Studies	English literature	COMPULSORY

COORDINATION

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SUMMARY

English Theatre of the 19th, 20th and 21st Centuries (35335) is part of the module Literature in English and submodule English Literature in the English Studies undergraduate programme of the Universitat de València.

This course intends to familiarize students with the main periods, movements, modes, genres, authors and works of the English theatre of the late 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, and to guide them in the critical reading of these works paying special attention to social, ideological and gender equality issues.

There will be a list of set readings and of recommended readings that will be specified by the lecturer at the beginning of the course.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE SAME DEGREE**

There are no specified enrollment restrictions with other subjects of the curriculum.



OTHER REQUIREMENTS

COMPETENCES / LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Demonstrate, within the field of English Studies, an ethical attitude that focuses on aspects such as gender equality, equal opportunities, the values of the culture of peace and democracy and a sensitiveness regarding environmental problems and sustainability while, at the same time, knowing about and being able to appreciate linguist diversity and multiculturalism.

Demonstrate communicative and social competence in the English language (oral and written comprehension and expression, communicative interaction and mediation that includes correct grammar and style).

Develop a critical ability to explain literary texts in English and to identify aesthetic conventions, movements, periods, genres, authors and works in English language and their modes of production.

Have and apply general knowledge in humanistic areas related to this field of study.

Know and apply the currents and methodologies of literary theory and criticism.

Relate geographical and historical aspects and the most relevant institutions in the Anglophone world to contemporary society and culture.

Students must be able to apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and have acquired the competences required for the preparation and defence of arguments and for problem solving in their field of study.

Students must be able to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both expert and lay audiences.

Students must have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually in their field of study) to make judgements that take relevant social, scientific or ethical issues into consideration.

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction to Theatre Studies and key terms for play analysis

An introduction to key terms such as theatre, drama, audience, performance and the main dramatic genres.

2. From the late 19th-century comedy of manners to realism



The birth of Modern Theatre on the English Stage.

3. Theatre between the wars

The birth of a national theatre in Ireland and the rise of expressionist, political and poetic drama in the 1930s.

4. The Angry Young Men and the Kitchen-Sink Drama

A study of the plays by a new generation of young playwrights that in the 1950s developed social realist plays concerned with the lives of working-class characters and paved the way for the abolition of censorship on the British stage.

5. The theatre of the Absurd

An overview of the radical aesthetics, existential philosophy and tragicomic features of the so-called absurdist playwrights.

6. The theatre of the 70s and 80s

The rise of feminist theatre and the development of postmodern techniques on the stage.

7. Violence on stage at the turn of the century: in-yer-face theatre

An exploration of the reasons behind the use of extreme, confrontational violence on the stage in the 1990s.

8. 21st-century theatre

Challenges and new writing for a new century: an overview of how theatre addresses identity conflicts, climate threat and social discrimination.

By successfully completing the course students will be able to achieve the following **learning outcomes**:

- Recognize and explain the distinctive linguistic, literary and cultural features of the texts studied.
- Apply concepts and knowledge related with the aesthetic conventions, evolution, genres, movement, modes of production and the reception of plays of the English theatre in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.
- Identify authors and works in the contexts of the period, and passages from works they have read, and assess their meaning and significance.
- Explicate, interpret or criticize plays in English using various methodological approaches.
- Gather and synthesize printed and electronic information regarding the issues studied, value their



critical relevance, and quote it properly.

- Express and discuss their own reading experiences and critical responses in essays, projects, oral presentations or tests.

WORKLOAD

PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
Theory	60,00
Total hours	60,00

NON PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
Attendance at other activities	10,00
Individual or group project	10,00
Independent study and work	50,00
Preparation of lessons	0,00
Preparation for assessment activities	20,00
Resolution of case studies	0,00
Total hours	90,00

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Theory-based classes:lectures and case studies.

Lectures will focus on clarification and discussion of key concepts and techniques rather than on presentation of theoretical matter students can find in the bibliography.

Criticism and discussion of plays in which students are encouraged to put into use their critical competence.

Practical classes:problem solving and case studies.

Discussion of the plays dealt with, making use of the new technologies, followed by class debates.

Other activities:Tutorials for orientation in preparing papers and projects.

The following **Sustainable Development Goals** will be worked on in class:

4 - Quality education



5 - Gender equality

10 - Reduced inequalities

16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions

Some of the activities carried out by students in Group A of this subject are framed within the Teaching Innovation Project NAPCED 4.3. *Identidades culturales, sostenibilidad y territorio: aproximaciones literarias y audiovisuales en entornos digitales y colaborativos.*

EVALUATION

Assessment breakdown in the **First and Second Calls**:

- a) Individual written examination consisting of questions on the contents of the course: 50%
- b) Practical test on the contents and mandatory and optional readings: 30%
- c) Activities carried out during the course: 20%

In order to pass the subject students must pass the individual exam and practical test with a minimum average mark of 4 out of 8 points. Only then will the mark for the activities carried out during the course (up to 2 points) be summed up to calculate the final mark.

The marks obtained in the "Activities carried out during the course" will be carried over to the second call. These activities can only be done during the course and cannot be handed in for the second call.

The ability to communicate at the B2+ (CEFR level) is required to pass the course as a whole. Students whose written and/or oral communication display errors that are not consistent with the above level may fail the module regardless of their performance related to the course contents.

IMPORTANT: Plagiarism will not be tolerated; it is a serious academic offence and therefore will be penalized by failing the course. Intellectual honesty is vital to an academic community and for the fair evaluation of the student's work. All work submitted in this course must be originally authored by every student. No student shall engage in unauthorized collaboration or make use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software.

The general grading system will follow the regulations of the University of Valencia approved by the Consell de Govern on May 30, 2017. ACGUV 108/2017.

REFERENCES



BASIC:

Aston, Elaine and Janelle Reinelt (eds). *The Cambridge Companion to Modern British Women Playwrights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Balme, Christopher. *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Studies*. Cambridge UP, 2008.

Cochrane, Claire. *Twentieth-Century British Theatre: Industry, Art and Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Fragkou, Marissia and Rebecca Benzie (eds.) *The Methuen Drama Handbook of Women in Contemporary British Theatre*. Methuen Drama, 2025.

Innes, Christopher. *Modern British Drama: The Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002.

Middeke, Martin; Peter Paul Schneirer and Aleks Sierz (eds). *The Methuen Guide to Contemporary British Playwrights*. London: Methuen Drama, 2011.

Murray, Christopher. *Twentieth-Century Irish Drama: Mirror Up to Nation*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000.

Pavis, Patrice. *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Pickering, Kenneth. *Key Concepts in Drama and Performance*. 2nd Edition. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Shepherd, Simon. *The Cambridge Introduction to Modern British Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Shepherd-Barr, Kirsten. *Modern Drama: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 2016.

Richards, Shaun (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Irish Drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

FURTHER READING:



Adishesiah, Siân and Louise LePage (eds.) *Twenty-First Century Drama: What Happens Now*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Angelaki, Vicky. *Social and Political Theatre in 21st-Century Britain*. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

Aragay, Mireia and Martin Middeke (eds.) *Of Precariousness: Vulnerabilities, Responsibilities, Communities in 21st-Century British Drama and Theatre*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017.

Aragay, Mireia, et al. (eds.), *British Theatre of the 1990s. Interviews with Directors, Playwrights, Critics and Academics*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Brown, Janet, *Feminist Drama: Definition and Critical Analysis*. Methuen, Scarecrow, 1979.

Brown, John Russell. *Modern British Dramatists: New Perspectives*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1984.

Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1962.

Fragkou, Marissia. *Ecologies of Precarity in Twenty-First Century Theatre: Politics, Affect, Responsibility*. London: Bloomsbury, 2019.

Goetsch, Paul (ed.). *English Dramatic Theories, 20th Century*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1972.

Hayman, Ronald. *British Theatre since 1955: A Reassessment*. Oxford UP, 1979.

Hildegard Klein Hagen, H. y Blanca López Román. *Teorías feministas y sus aplicaciones al teatro feminista británico contemporáneo*. Granada: Comares, 2001.

Kritzer, Amelia Howe. *Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain. New Writing: 1995-2005*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Morgan, Margery. *Drama: Plays, Theatre and Performance*. Harlow: Longman, 1987.

Prado Pérez, José Ramón. *Revisiones críticas del teatro británico: 1968-1990*. Castelló de la Plana: Publicaciones de la Universitat Jaume I, 2000.



Sierz, Aleks. *In-Yer-Face Theatre. British Drama Today*. London: Faber & Faber, 2001

Taylor, John Russell. *Anger and After: A guide to the New British Drama*: Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1963.

----. *The Second Wave: British Drama of the Sixties*. London, Eyre: Methuen, 1978.

Teruel Pozas, Miguel. *Tom Stoppard: la escritura como parodia*. Valencia: Universitat de València, 1994.