

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
The City University of New York

Department of ENGLISH

Title of Course:	Course Number:	ENG 314
<b>ENGLISH 315: PLAYWRITING</b>	Class Hours per Week:	3
	Lab Hours:	0
	Credits:	3

A. Description

The objective of English 315: Playwriting is to sharpen students' creative writing skills and to teach them the elements of playwriting and character development. Through the reading of one-act plays and practice writing exercises each week, students will learn the craft of playwriting. They will write scenes and create their own one-act plays.

B. Prerequisites and/or Corequisites

English 201, or English 121

C. Student Outcomes

Students will

- Discuss course content in a range of critical contexts.
- Demonstrate knowledge of themes and genres of course texts (including making informed decisions in their own writing).
- Critique the complexities and differences among course texts (which may include student writing).

D. Required Texts and/or Supplementary Materials

*Art of the Playwright*, Packard (Thunder's Mouth Press)

*Elements of Playwriting*, Catron (Macmillan)

*Plays in One Act*, edited by Halpern (Ecco Press)

*Telling Tales: New One-Act Plays*, edited by Lane (Penguin)

*Contemporary Plays by Women of Color*, edited by Perkins & Uno (Routledge)

*Center Stage: An Anthology of 21 Contemporary Black American Plays*, edited by Ostrow (University of Illinois Press)

*Asian American Drama*, edited by Nelson (Applause)

*Plays By and About Women*, edited by Sullivan & Hutch (Vintage)

## E. Evaluation and Requirements of Students

Students are required to write at least six character sketches and scenes, which must be revised and edited for grading. They are expected to complete a draft and a revision of a one-act play by the end of the semester. They are required to attend one production of a play with their class at the Triplex or other theater, or students may attend a play on their own, and write a review. Grades will be based on the quality of students' written work, their class participation, and quizzes on plays assigned in texts.

### **College Attendance Policy**

At BMCC, the maximum number of absences is limited to one more hour than the number of hours a class meets in one week. For example, you may be enrolled in a three-hour class. In that class, you would be allowed 4 hours of absence (not 4 days). In the case of excessive absences, the instructor has the option to lower the grade or assign an F or WU grade.

### **Academic Adjustments for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments for this course must contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. BMCC is committed to providing equal access to all programs and curricula to all students.

### **BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.

Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC's web site, [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu). For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).

## F. Outline of Topics

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| Week 1: | Introduction: What is a play?<br>Aristotle's six dramatic unities: plot, character, thought, diction, song, and spectacle |
| Week 2: | Plot and Setting  |
| Week 3: | Characters  |
| Week 4: | Theme   |

Week 5:	Dialogue and Monologue
Weeks 6 and 7:	Building a Character: Developing characters through dialogue Developing characters through action
Weeks 8 to 10:	Building a Scene: Opening moments Conflicts Building suspense Climax Ending the scene
Week 11:	First Drafts of students' one-act plays discussed in groups
Week 12:	Rewriting and revising of one-act plays
Weeks 13 and 14:	Presentations of scenes from revised one-act plays