

English 385.001: Courtroom/Drama: Law & Literature (Fall 2019)

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Larson (jlarson@email.unc.edu)

Office hours* (229 Greenlaw): MF 11:00am-12:30pm & by appointment

*see "conferences" section below for more info

In this **Course-based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE)** course, we will read landmark court decisions alongside plays that speak directly to those cases and/or were written in response to those cases. Each pairing's discussion will focus on the cultural, political, and historical contexts of both the case's hearing/decision and the play's creation/performance. We will also examine contextual primary materials—including letters, interviews, oral histories, and court transcripts—about the cases we read in the course (as well as related cases), with an eye toward understanding how the plays that correspond with these cases have shaped and have been shaped by the contexts these materials describe. Together, we will consider novel questions such as: How does reading/understanding the court's language influence our reading/understanding of the literature related to the court's ruling and vice-versa? How do the primary documents related to a case and a text influence our understanding of the cultural, artistic, and political influences that shaped the case and text? How are court opinions themselves a type of literature that is in conversation with other literary works? How and why does drama engage the court most directly?

You will be also be working with a Graduate Research Consultant, Caitlin Bell-Butterfield (mariefar@live.unc.edu), who will assist you in the research process. The GRC Program is sponsored by the Office for Undergraduate Research (<http://our.unc.edu>), and you may be able to use this research-exposure course to meet a requirement of the Carolina Research Scholars Program (<http://our.unc.edu/students/crsp>). I encourage you to visit the OUR website to learn about how you might engage in research, scholarship and creative performance while you are at Carolina.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- Identify and analyze the key literary and rhetorical elements of both dramatic and legal writing
- Locate primary and secondary documents to support your arguments
- Effectively discuss the relationships between American drama and law
- Present your research findings to a community of fellow researchers

Texts

US v. Shipp

Angelina Weld Grimke, *Rachel*

Scopes v. State of Tennessee

Jerome Lawrence and Robert Lee, *Inherit the Wind*

Watkins v. US

Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*
Hansberry v. Lee
Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*
Loving v. Virginia
Alice Childress, *The Wedding Band*
Hollingsworth v. Perry
Dustin Lance Black, *8*

Assignments

Discussion (50%)

Your discussion grade will be based on written responses to the plays and on formal case briefs for the cases we read for class. These responses and briefs will be posted on the Sakai Discussion Board *before class*. In addition, once during the term, you will also be asked to lead (with a partner/small group of other students) class discussion for play/case pairing. Expectations/criteria for both responses and discussion leadership are detailed in separate handouts.

Midterm Exam (15%)

The exam will be take-home and cover all the plays and cases discussed in the course to that point.

Final Project (25%)

The final project will be a multi-media montage or similar creation that explores these connections between/among the cases and the plays and explains how each informs our reading of the other. Project expectations/criteria are detailed in a separate handout.

Final Presentation (10%)

For the final exam, each case/play presentation group will present their montages, discuss their research findings, and offer their conclusions about possible answers to the course's research questions. Presentation expectations/criteria are detailed in a separate handout.

Course Policies

Attendance

Discussion and active learning are the heart of this course, and we have much to learn from each other; therefore, it is imperative the all students be in class, on time to contribute ideas and reflections. Each absence beyond three (3) may result in a reduction of your final grade by one-third letter grade (A becomes an A-). Absences may be excused only with timely, official documentation from the appropriate university office (i.e, the Dean of Students or Athletics, *not* student health).

Late Policy

All work must be submitted on time to the proper place on Sakai. Work not submitted at the specified time is considered late unless we made prior

arrangements or unless there is an extreme extenuating circumstance (such as severe illness/injury or a family emergency). Computer or printer failure is not an excuse. Work will be accepted up to 4 days late (yes, weekends and holidays count), with a 10% per day late penalty.

Conferences/E-mail

I am generally easiest to reach electronically. My e-mail address is listed on the first page of the syllabus and is also available through Sakai. **I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the school week (M-F). Please refrain from e-mailing questions about an assignment due in fewer than 24 hours. In all other cases, if you do not receive a response within 24 hours during the school week, please re-send the message.**

Also, please do not send me drafts, homework, or any other attachments over e-mail unless I have specifically requested that you do so. You may submit passages from essays/assignments to review or a full draft with specific questions/concerns to respond to as long as it is at least 3 business days before the assignment is due. Please see the [draft review policy and directions](#) (also posted on Sakai) for more details

If you would like more feedback, you should bring your draft to office hours. My office hours are listed on the first page of this syllabus. Please use the youcanbook.me sign-up (link on Sakai) to make an office hours appointment. If you cannot make any of the times offered, please email me for an appointment at an alternate time.

Laptops in class

You will be asked to bring your laptop to class often during the semester. On these days (or any other days you use your laptop/table for notes, etc.), if you are off-task (on e-mail, on facebook, etc.), you may be marked absent for the day.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of the Student Honor Code. You must document all sources of information that you incorporate into your work. A person commits plagiarism when he or she represents someone else's ideas as his or her own. We will discuss source documentation in detail during the semester, but you should familiarize yourself with the honor code before turning in any assignments. Any cases of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with UNC policies.

Classroom Environment

Creating a classroom environment that makes all students comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas is critical. To that end, each student is responsible for exercising tolerance and respect for a wide variety of ideas and healthy intellectual disagreement. Our University philosophy supports this position, which fosters intellectual growth.

Course Calendar

All reading, viewing, and responses should be completed *before class* unless otherwise noted. Please check Sakai announcements for calendar recaps and updates. ****This calendar is subject to change****

Introduction

W August 21

Welcome and Syllabus

F August 23

Background Activities

Sign up for Unit Leader roles

M August 26

Close reading activity

Unit 1: US v. Shipp/Rachel

W August 28

Read *Rachel, Act I*

F August 30

Read *Rachel, Acts II & III*

Rachel reading response

M September 2

No class, Labor Day

W September 4

Read *US v. Shipp*

F September 6

US v. Shipp case brief

M September 9

Primary documents presentation

Unit 2: The State of Tennessee vs. John Thomas Scopes/Inherit the Wind

W September 11

Read *Inherit the Wind*

F September 13

Inherit the Wind reading response

M September 16

Read and [Scopes v. State of Tennessee](#) & Scopes trial [transcript](#) (optional)

W September 18

Scopes v. State of Tennessee case brief

F September 20

Primary documents presentation

Unit 3: Watkins v. US/The Crucible

M September 23

Read *The Crucible*, Act I

W September 25

Finish *The Crucible*

The Crucible reading response

F September 27

Read *Watkins v. US*

M September 31

Watkins v. US case brief

W October 2

Primary documents presentation

F October 4

Midterm Exam

Unit 4: *Hansberry v. Lee/A Raisin in the Sun*

M October 7

Read *A Raisin in the Sun*, Act I

W October 9

Finish *A Raisin in the Sun*

A Raisin in the Sun reading response

F October 11

Read *Hansberry v. Lee*

M October 14

Hansberry v. Lee case brief

W October 16

Primary documents presentation

F October 18

No class: Fall break

M October 21

Project planning day

W October 23

Read *The Wedding Band*

Unit 5: *Loving v. Virginia/The Wedding Band*

F October 25

Finish *The Wedding Band*

The Wedding Band reading response

M October 28

Project planning day

W October 30

Read *Loving v. Virginia*

F November 1

Loving v. Virginia case brief

M November 4

Primary documents presentation

W November 6

Project planning day

Unit 6: Hollingsworth v. Perry/8

F November 8

View 8

8 viewing response

M November 11

Read *Hollingsworth v. Perry*

W November 13

Hollingsworth v. Perry case brief

F November 15

Primary documents presentation

M November 18-F November 22

Project planning days/Poster workshops

Wrap up

M November 25

Complete/submit CURE Summit poster

W November 27-F November 29

No class: Thanksgiving

M December 2

Presentation practice/video draft previews/paper draft workshop

T December 3

CURE Summit

W December 4 (LDOC)

Papers due

Presentation practice/video draft previews

F December 13 @ 8am

Final Exam session: media projects & presentations due