

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

COURSE OUTLINE

1. **COURSE TITLE**

Tragedy: Idea and History

2. **COURSE CODE**

HUMN 3086

3. **No. OF UNITS**

3 Units

4. **OFFERING DEPARTMENT**

Department Humanities and Creative Writing

5. **PREREQUISITES**

NIL

6. **MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION**

English/Chinese

7. **AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

This course aims to discuss tragedy in its dramatic forms, its original idea and development in modern times. The course materials introduce the history and key concepts related to the dramatic tragedy, and refer to selected examples of important texts of the tragic in dramatic art as main content of discussion. The idea of tragedy, and what it means in various cultural and social contexts, will be examined in a range of dramatic texts. Through a critical analysis of these dramatic examples of different forms, students can appreciate the effects of stage art and different approaches in acting on the creation of meaning in the texts, as well as their relation with their own time and culture.

8. **COURSE CONTENT**

I. Introduction to the Course: Tragedy, the Tragic Hero, and the tragic

- a) Psychology of tragedy: Aristotle's pity, fear and catharsis
- b) Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*
- c) Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's theories of tragedy
- d) Is there a Chinese tragedy?

II. Greek tragedy

- a) Aeschylus' *The Oresteian Trilogy*
- b) Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* and *Antigone*
- c) Euripides' *Medea*

- d) Roman and Senecan tragedy
- e) Tragedy and Stoicism

III. Shakespearian tragedy

- a) Tragedy of character
- b) *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*

III. Modern Tragedy

- a) Calderon's *Life is a Dream*
- b) French Classicism: *Racine's Phèdre* and *Corneille's Cinna*
- c) Schiller's *The Robbers*

IV. Conclusion: Tragedy and the Tragic in Today's World

*The different versions of selected plays/texts are only proposed examples for discussion in the course. Depending on the instructor, versions other than those stated here may be chosen.

9. **COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (CILOs)**

| CILO | By the end of the course, students should be able to |
|-------------|--|
| CILO 1 | Narrate the different forms of tragedy and their aesthetic characteristics |
| CILO 2 | Analyze selected works of tragedy in their different formats of presentation. |
| CILO 3 | Critically discuss how the dramatic tragedy of different times and cultures reflect issues and concerns relevant to their times. |

10. **TEACHING & LEARNING ACTIVITIES (TLAs)**

| CILO alignment | Type of TLA |
|-----------------------|--|
| CILO 1 | Students will be given an introduction to the history, development, and major concepts related to the tragedy in dramatic form, with reference to selected examples from key texts. |
| CILO 2 | Students will be guided in close reading and discussion of selected original texts of drama, and recorded productions of relevant texts. Discussion will focus on the themes, variations in performances, and the effects of different presentation methods. In-class sessions of role-play and script-reading will also take place. |
| CILO 3 | Critical articles discussing the texts and their different productions, especially on how these productions engage the audience in critical discussions of contemporary culture, social and political issues will be used. |

11. **ASSESSMENT METHODS (AMS)**

| Type of Assessment Methods | Weighting | CILOs to be addressed | Description of Assessment Tasks |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Presentation | 30% | CILO 1+2 | The participation portion of the grade determines whether the student has been attentive to lecture material from the instructor, has participated in discussions of course content, and, if the instructor so determines, has completed any presentations or other activities to be determined by the instructor. |
| Term Paper | 30% | CILO 2+3 | The research paper tests the student's ability to present and critically evaluate a chosen genre of comedy |
| Final exam | 40% | CILO 2+3 | The exam will test the student's recognition and comprehension of terms and concepts from course lectures and readings as well as the student's ability to explain, synthesize, and critique course content in a written essay. |

END