Fordham University London Centre

COURSE: Text & Context (British Writers)  (Prof. Gearing)

ABOUT THE PROFESSOR:

Nigel Gearing has some thirty years’ experience as a teacher of English & American Literature and Theatre & Film Studies at college and university level.

BA Honours in English (Cantab.)

MA in English & American Studies (University of Michigan, USA)

MA (Cantab.)

He has taught at King’s College (University of London), Royal Holloway College, University of Birmingham, Kingston University, Drama Centre, British American Drama Academy, London Drama Academy, Foundation For International Exchange, Morley College.

His work as a playwright, translator and screenwriter has been performed in the UK, the USA, and Europe and is available in Oberon Books and Methuen.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

British Writers is a course which studies three important British texts from the last four hundred years. These are:

- MACBETH by William Shakespeare
- GREAT EXPECTATIONS by Charles Dickens
- PYGMALION by George Bernard Shaw

The primary study of these texts will be supplemented by watching (and discussing) extracts from film or TV adaptations and – if possible – by either a related walk round relevant parts of London or a group visit to the theatre.

Students will be required

- To read the above texts (Students will be expected to arrive for the first class having already read ‘Macbeth’.)
- To participate fully in all class discussions
- To give at least one presentation each (presentation titles to be specified by the tutor)
- To write a short essay at the end of study of each of the above texts and a longer essay at the end of the course as a whole (essay titles to be specified by the tutor)
LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To impart to the students an in-depth knowledge of the three core texts and a critical framework within which to discuss them
- To impart to the students a general knowledge of the historical, cultural and social context from which these texts emerged

TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

Each class will see a combination of lecture (by the tutor), seminar-style discussion and individual student presentations.

BREAKDOWN OF GRADE:

Short essay 1 & 2: 20% each

Short essay 3 & General essay (to be done at same time under exam conditions): 35%

Presentation(s): 15%

Class participation: 10%

COURSE TEXTS:

- MACBETH by William Shakespeare
- GREAT EXPECTATIONS by Charles Dickens
- PYGMALION by George Bernard Shaw

(These may be read in any available PRINTED edition; this course operates a Closed Laptop policy. Any secondary sources will be specified by the tutor at the time of study.)

COURSE CALENDAR Spring 2016

Week of Jan 11 Introduction to Course; introduction to Shakespeare
Week of Jan 18 Macbeth
Week of Jan 25 Macbeth
Week of Feb 1 Macbeth
Week of Feb 8 Macbeth; introduction to Dickens
Week of Feb 15 Great Expectations
Week of Feb 22 Great Expectations
(Midterm break)

Week of March 7  Great Expectations
Week of March 14 Great Expectations; introduction to Bernard Shaw
Week of March 21 Pygmalion
Week of March 28 Pygmalion
Week of April 4  Pygmalion
Week of April 11  Text & Context: a Japanese Macbeth, an American
Great Expectations, a musical Pygmalion. Discussion.
Week of April 18  Exam
Week of April 25  Dickens House Visit (TBC)

NIGEL GEARING