

Ambedkar University, Delhi  
 Proposal for Launch of a Course  
 (To be approved by the Academic Council)

School/Centre proposing the course	School of Undergraduate Studies
Programme(s)	BA (Honours)
Course title	<b>Modern World Drama</b>
Course code	SUS1EN272
Total Credits	4
Course type (core/compulsory/ elective/any other – please specify)	Elective
Level (Pre-doctoral/MA/PG Diploma /Certificate/UG)	UG
Proposed date of launch	Winter Semester 2016
Course coordinator and team	Vikram Singh Thakur

1. Does the course connect to, build on or overlap with any other courses offered in AUD?  
 If it links with any courses taught in the either SUS or builds up to courses taught at Masters

No.

2. Specific requirements on the part of students who can be admitted to this course:  
 (Pre-requisites; prior knowledge level; any others – please specify)

None.

3. No. of students to be admitted (with justification if lower than usual cohort size is proposed):

As per SUS norms

4. Course scheduling (semester; semester-long/half-semester course; workshop mode; seminar mode; any other – please specify):

Semester long

5. How does the course link with the vision of AUD?

The course has been designed keeping in mind AUD's vision of dismantling hierarchies in all forms. The choice of plays in different languages will expose students to a range of dramatic literary expressions. The course includes plays written by Indian, Scandinavian, Russian, West Indian, African and Irish playwrights. By engaging students with plays produced in both Europe and postcolonial societies the course tries to explore how some of the dramatic and theatrical traditions of the West were appropriated, subverted and refashioned in postcolonial societies.

6. How does the course link with the specific programme(s) where it is being offered?

The BA English Programme at AUD does not conform to existing Literary Studies programmes in many Indian universities. Unlike a chronological, period wise study of any one literature, the programme is structured around fields of study like genres, marginalized literatures, alternative forms of creative expressions like cinema, graphic arts, etc. A study of genres is an essential part of the program. The study of modern drama across languages and regions will expose students to a wide range of literary expressions. Both Western and indigenous traditions from the postcolonial world will be explored not just discretely but also through a comparative perspective. Western dramatic conventions and their negotiation within postcolonial drama will also be studied. The course will equip the student to look at the genre across the modern world within a comparative framework.

7. **Course Details: All headings to be filled**

- a. Summary: The course introduces students to modern drama written in various language traditions across the world through English translations. It will familiarize students with realism, naturalism, existentialism, social criticism and postcolonialism in drama. The course would benefit students by engaging them with a particular genre of literature in depth.
- b. Objectives: The course aims to introduce students of English literature specifically to the literary genre called drama written in various languages. By the end of the course the students should be able to analyse drama more critically and creatively. Also the choice of drama in different languages will expose students to different cultures.
- c. Expected learning outcomes: The outcomes will be as follows:
  - i. Develop critical thinking and writing skills
  - ii. Analysing primary texts
  - iii. Synthesising ideas discussed in class with their reading of texts
  - iv. Knowledge of literatures other than those written by postcolonial dramatists
- d. Overall structure (course organisation, rationale of organisation; outline of each module):

The course is divided into four modules. At least one text from each module will be taken up for detailed study in class. Other plays may be discussed during class presentations.

### **Module I| Naturalist and Realist European Drama**

Late nineteenth century Europe witnessed the emergence of a different kind of drama that was located within the realist movement that found its expression in varied creative expressions. Drama moved away from older conventions to representations and critiques of the modern society. This module will take up representative plays from the realist/ naturalist tradition that was a precursor to twentieth century modern European drama.

Ibsen, Henrik. "A Doll's House". *A Doll's House and Other Plays*. Trans. Peter Watts. Penguin Classics, (1879) 2003.

Strindberg, August. "Miss Julie". *Miss Julie and Other Plays*. Trans. Michael Robinson. Oxford and NY: OUP, (1998), 2008.

## **Module 2: Epic Theatre**

Brechtian Theatre and its innovative alienation technique that transformed the dramatic experience from a sensory to a reflective one wherein theatricality was emphasised to ensure a distancing from the action and an immersion into an intellectual engagement with the issues raised marked an extremely important phase in modern European drama. In this module students will study the theatrical innovations of Brecht which forced the audience to engage with the paradoxes and ironies of modern capitalist society at a cerebral level.

Brecht, Bertolt. *Mother Courage and Her Children*, 1939. Trans. Eric Bentley. NY: Grove Press, 1966.

## **Module 3: Modern European Drama (Existentialist and Absurd Drama)**

The years of the Second World War and the post-War period witnessed the emergence of drama that drew upon Existentialist philosophy and Camus's concept of the "Absurd". The complete breakdown of belief in social and political systems in the aftermath of the War, the fragmented, isolated and lonely existence and its consequent angst found its expression in a new and powerful anti-realist dramatic form named "Absurd Drama" by Martin Esslin. This module will take up any one representative play from this dramatic tradition.

Genet, Jean. *The Maids*. Trans. Bernard Frechtman. London: Faber & Faber, 1957.

Pinter, Harold. "The Birthday Party". *The Birthday Party, and the Room: Two Plays*. London: Grove Press, 1961.

Beckett, Samuel. "Waiting for Godot: A tragi-comedy in two acts". *The Complete Dramatic Works*. Faber & Faber, 2006.

## **Module 4: Postcolonial Drama**

This module introduces students to postcolonial drama. Issues like postcolonial subjectivity, decolonisation, use of indigenous myths, histories and cultures are some of these which this module will engage students with. At least one text will be taken up for detailed discussions in class.

Alekar, Satish. "The Dread Departed". *Collected Plays of Satish Alekar*. New Delhi: OUP, (1973) 2009.

Dattani, Mahesh. "Final Solutions". *Collected Plays*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2000.

Walcott, Derek. *Dream on Monkey Mountain, and Other Plays*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1972.

Thiong'o, Ngugi wa & Micere Githae Mugo. *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*. Waveland Press, 1976.

**Suggested Secondary Readings:**

Cohn, Ruby. "The World of Harold Pinter". *The Tulane Drama Review*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Mar.1962), 55-68.

Deshpande, G. P. "History, Politics and the Modern Playwright". *Theatre India* (May 1999).

Dharwadker, Aparna Bhargava. *Theatres of Independence: Drama, Theory, and Urban Performance in India since 1947*. New Delhi: OUP, 2006.

Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961.

---. *Samuel Beckett: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Vol. 51. Prentice Hall Direct, 1965.

Madsen, Børge Gedsø. "Strindberg As a Naturalistic Theorist: The Essay "Om Modern Drama Och Modern Teater"". *Scandinavian Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (MAY, 1958), 85-92.

Styan, J. L. *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice*. Cambridge University Press, 1983.

White, John J. *Bertolt Brecht's Dramatic Theory*. NY: Camden House, 2004.

**Assessment structure (modes and frequency of assessments):**

S. No.	Assessment	Period in which the assessment will take place	Weightage
1.	Class Participation	Throughout the semester	10%
2.	Mid-semester Exam	Mid-February	30%
3.	Home Assignment	Mid-March	10%
4.	End-semester Exam	As per AUD academic calendar	30%

- e. Instructional strategies: How it is taught?

Although lecture method will be used for teaching the course students would be expected to participate in class discussions which will be graded as 10% of their assessment.

- f. Special needs (facilities, requirements in terms of software, studio, lab, clinic, library, classroom/others instructional space; any other – please specify): A classroom with a good audio/video system required. Some of the plays will be screened during classroom discussion.
- g. Expertise in AUD faculty or outside:
- h. Linkages with external agencies (e.g., with field-based organizations, hospital; any others)

### **Signature of Course Coordinator(s)**

Note:

1. Modifications on the basis of deliberations in the Board of Studies (or Research Studies Committee in the case of research programmes) and the relevant Standing Committee (SCAP/SCPVCE/SCR) shall be incorporated and the revised proposal should be submitted to the Academic Council with due recommendations.
2. Core courses which are meant to be part of more than one programme, and are to be shared across Schools, may need to be taken through the Boards of Studies of the respective Schools. The electives shared between more than one programme should have been approved in the Board of Studies of and taken through the SCAP/SCPVCE/SCR of the primary School.
3. In certain special cases, where a course does not belong to any particular School, the proposal may be submitted through SCAP/SCPVCE/SCR to the Academic Council.

Recommendation of the School of Studies:

Suggestions:

**Signature of the Dean of the School**