

**Course # 130**  
**Course Title: Playwriting**  
**Section # 8176**  
**Transferability: UC:CSU**  
**3 units**  
**Instructor: Martin Zurla**

**Office Hours:**

**Via Telephone:** By Appointment via email ([foremost@pacbell.net](mailto:foremost@pacbell.net)). I require at least a three day notice for a Telephone meeting.

**Contact Information:**

Email: [foremost@pacbell.net](mailto:foremost@pacbell.net)

**You might want to take a few moments and review the following short video explaining how to use the ETUDES-NG software:**

**Go to:**

<http://usdegreeonline.wlac.edu/pages/129.asp>

**PLEASE NOTE: This Syllabus is subject to change.**

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**I suggest that you do NOT use any hand-held device such as an iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, etc., to take this course. This is especially true when submitting assignments.**

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<p><b>IMPORTANT:</b> Course starts <b>September 2, 2014</b>. You must access the course no later than <b>September 8, 2014</b>. Failure to access the course <b>on or before September 8, 2014</b> could result in being dropped from this course. First week attendance is determined by by completing the Welcome Message Assignment which is due <b>September 8, 2014</b></p>
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Please be sure to login to the ETUDES course site on the first day of class. It's important to have at least an hour or two available for checking in on the first day so you can look around and get a sense of the workload. Familiarize yourself with the course requirements and due dates so you will be able to plan your time well for the next sixteen weeks. Since this is an intense course, everyone needs to hit the ground running. Plan on logging in at least twice a week.

Remember, late submission cannot be accepted and that there is no make-up work or extra credit offered in this course.

Remember, no late assignments can be accepted. It is the student's responsibility to make sure they have a working computer and internet connection. No technical problems can be accepted as a reason for not completing ALL assignments and exams.

Please note that students are responsible for learning the ETUDES-NG software and for using a working computer. Late submissions will not be accepted. Technical software or computer problems cannot be accepted as reason for not turning in an assignment on time. Make-up work is NOT offered in this course.

I strongly urge you to login early in the week and to login at least twice a week. Make sure you check the Announcement section and the Discussion and Private Message Area (Forums) each time you login. Please review all of each week's modules.

Make sure when you submit to the Forums (Discussion and Private Message Area) you submit to the correct Forum. Make sure you REPLY to my post. It makes reviewing all the posts much easier for both the class and for me. Thanks.

The main reason that I will sometimes ask you to submit one assignment to both areas (Discussion and Private Messages Area AND Assignments, Tests and Surveys Area) is because your submission in the Forums area is part of your class participation and it also gives the entire class the opportunity to share each other's thoughts and comments to the assignment.

The reason you submit to the Assignments, Tests and Surveys Area is so that if I choose to, I can make personal one-on-one comments concerning your work (for your eyes ONLY). I do not share these comments.

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**NOTE: I do not live in California. There is a 3 hour time difference between where I live and California.**

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## **HELP and SUPPORT**

Check out:

Student Success Video at

- <http://www.wlac.edu/online/index.asp>
- <http://www.wlac.edu/online/login.asp>
- <http://www.wlac.edu/online/students.asp>

You might want to take a few moments and review the following short video explaining how to use the ETUDES-NG software:

Go to: <http://usdegreeonline.wlac.edu/pages/129.asp>

Please review the information on West Los Angeles College's (WLAC) Online Classes website at <http://www.wlac.edu/online>. Click on the Student Services link to access our online Bookstore to order required materials. Click on the Course Login link for login instructions, Technical Requirements and videos on How to Login, Navigate within Etudes, Read & Post in the Discussion area.

**BEFORE** you begin this course, review the following in your Modules Area (left side of your screen):

**Start Here! (Review ALL sections listed under this module)**

**Student User Guide**

**Taking Tests - Student Side**

Click on the Technical Requirements link at <http://www.wlac.edu/online> to access the Student Help Desk forum where your issue is likely addressed in the Frequently Asked Questions section. If not, scroll down to the WEST ~ WLAC section and post a message explaining the problem or contact the WLAC Distance Learning Program Office at (310) 287-4305 or via email: [ichone@wlac.edu](mailto:ichone@wlac.edu). Also, please check out the following ETUDES-NG Information at: [http://www.wlac.edu/online/ETUDES\\_NG.htm](http://www.wlac.edu/online/ETUDES_NG.htm)

If you are experiencing technical problems you should review the Technical Requirements and Helpful Hints links at <http://www.wlac.edu/online>. If you still have problems please contact the Distance Learning Program office at (310) 287-4305 or via email at [ichone@wlac.edu](mailto:ichone@wlac.edu).

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## **STUDENT SERVICES**

[Online Student Helpdesk](#)

[ETUDES Login Information](#)

[ETUDES FAQ \(Frequently Asked Questions\)](#)

[Online Student Users Guide \(.PDF file\)](#)

[Logging in to ETUDES" Demo for Students](#)

[Reading Modules and Participating in Discussions \(Flash Movie\)](#)

[Posting to Discussions in ETUDES" Demo for Students](#)

[Online Technical Requirements](#) (when you get to the Gateway page look at the menu to the left)

[Online Academic Counseling](#)

[Online Subject Tutoring](#)

[WLAC's Bookstore](#)

[Library: Heldman Learning Resource Center \(HLRC\)](#)

[New Student Information](#)

[Graduation & Transfer](#)

[WLAC's Online Instructors](#)

[Netiquette\\*\\*](#)

[Strategies for Online Learners](#)

[Be a Successful Online Student](#)

[Tips for Online Success](#)

[How to Plan a Homework Schedule](#)

[How to Find Motivation to do Homework](#)

[How to Get Straight A's](#)

\* (from WLAC's Website: "Many thanks to Sarah Phinney of Porterville College for sharing these helpful resources.")

\*\* Netiquette (a compound formed from "net etiquette") is a set of social conventions that facilitate interaction over networks, ranging from [Usenet](#) and [mailing lists](#) to [blogs](#) and [forums](#). From: "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netiquette>"

**... and if you still have questions, you can always  
email me at [foremost@pacbell.net](mailto:foremost@pacbell.net).**

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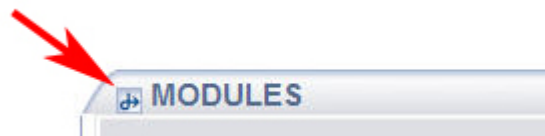
**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

**NEVER, and I do mean NEVER use your browser's "Back" button or key while logged into ETUDES, especially when taking an exam or test. If you do, you will lose all your work and, in an exam, you will be booted out of the exam.**

**In ETUDES-NG, you will see this little icon (looks like the Jiffy Lube logo)**



Like this



**You should click on the icon and it will bring you back to the main area. You will find them everywhere EXCEPT in the Discussion and Private Messages area.**



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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce you to the basic principles and techniques of playwriting. This is a hands-on practical introduction to playwriting.

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## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

Gain a critical perspective of the art and craft of playwriting from an historical overview.

Have a strong foundation in understanding and identifying the different writing genres, i.e. drama, comedy, and tragedy by focusing on analyzing structure and character and plot development.

Developing and incorporating the playwright's tools to create and develop dramatic characters in dramatic situations.

Develop a broad understanding of theatrical writing techniques and the proper structure of stage terminologies.

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## SLOs FOR THE COURSE

**Discover the links in the arts between the past and present and what they reveal about human life through the written stage play.**

This course will introduce you to the theatre and related industries. You will learn to become more aware of the components constituting an artistic entity and to intelligently and objectively evaluate a professional and non-professional performance for the stage. We will study the historical developments in Western dramatic literature and theatrical productions from the Greeks through today. We will also touch on the historical relationship and contemporary impact theatre has had on the film and television industries. We will also gain a deeper understanding of the playwright's task and how each student can and will develop their own creative stage play.

**Read effectively for gathering information, for meaning, cultural understanding and enjoyment. (D. Language and Rationality↔English)**

From reading the required stage plays and evaluating each from both an historical and a personal perspective, gain a working theoretical and practical understanding of how a stage production is put together from the written stage play to casting, to directing, to designing, to producing and eventually to the staging a full live theater production.

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## COURSE REQUIRED READING

**TEXT BOOK** - Available at the WLAC Bookstore (310) 287-4560 and at Amazon.com

- **Playwriting: The Structure of Action, Revised and Expanded Edition**, by Sam Smiley (Author), Norman Bert (Contributor); Yale University Press; Rev Exp edition (October 24, 2005); # ISBN-10: 0300107242; # ISBN-13: 978-0300107241

Before downloading the following files, make sure you have [Acrobat Reader](#) installed. For a free copy of this small program, [click here](#).

- **STAGE PLAYS** ([click on the link to download file](#))
    - [Romeo and Juliet](#) by William Shakespeare (website)
    - [A Doll's House](#) by Henrik Ibsen - PDF file
    - [Nothing for Nothing](#) by Martin Zurla - PDF file
  - **THEORY:**
    - [The Poetics](#), Aristotle - PDF file
  - **ALL CLASS DOWNLOADS/HANDOUTS**
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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Reading Assignments: All reading must be done prior to the class for which it is assigned.
- Submitting and Completing all Assignments and Discussion topics. Discussion topic DUE DATES are usually due by Sunday, 11:30pm of the announced assignment. No Late submissions can be accepted. (see due dates below for details)
- Write a one-act stage play.
- **THEATRICAL PRESENTATION:** Attend a live performance (NO MUSICALS or ONE-PERSON SHOWS WILL BE ACCEPTED) of a stage play of your choice during the term from among 200+ theatres in the Los Angeles area. Listings for productions in the L.A. area can be found in the L.A. Weekly and the LA Times Sunday Calendar section.
  - **I can read the following files: MS Word document DOC, .DOCX, .PDF, TXT or .RTF files. I cannot read Mac files.**

**This paper must include the following:**

- The name and address of the theater.
- The date you attended the production.
- The name of the playwright.
- The name of the play.
- The name of the director.
- The name of the actors.

**This paper must discuss the following points:**

- What is the story?
- What is the plot?
- What is the major theme of the play?
- What is the major conflict of the play?

- Describe and define the Protagonist and the Antagonist.
- How important were the production elements: Sets, lighting, costumes and sound?
- Why did you like OR dislike the overall production of the play.

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**GRADING** (See the **Start Here!** Module, especially the "Course Grading Policy")

**A Word On Grading**

**CHECK THE "ANNOUNCEMENTS" AREA EACH TIME YOU LOGON TO CLASS.**  
**If you miss an announcement, you may miss important information that just might effect your final grade point average.**

**It is your responsibility to check the announcement area at the beginning of each week.**

You'll notice that some of your assignments have to be submitted to **BOTH** the Assignment area and the Discussion area.

PLEASE BE AWARE that the assignments posted in the Discussion area are gradable.

BE ADVISED: When submitting your assignment to the Discussion area make sure you submit your work to the CORRECT Forum in the Discussion area. The forum area will be stated in the week's lecture notes (units). It is very difficult to keep track of your submissions if they are submitted to a different forum. **If you submit to the wrong Forum, you will not get credit for the submission.**

REMEMBER - ALL assignments have a due date. Once the due date passes, the assignment/test/forums topic will close and you will no longer be able to submit to that particular assignment. I hope the above helps. If you have questions or concerns about the class, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Please remember that your final grade will be based on a total - accumulation - of points, therefore one point can make the difference between an A or B, B or a C, etc. These assignments are not difficult. Check your syllabus for final grade point breakdown.

This is just a reminder to make sure you read all the assignments listed in the weekly lecture notes and in the Assignment and Discussion areas (Forums). If you have any questions or concerns about the class, do not hesitate in contacting me. Please remember that I am here to help.

**You will be required to complete the following:**

**All Course Assignments.** Points determined by specific assignment. SEE BELOW.

**Participation in the [Discussion and Private Messages area](#)** (points determined by specific assignment)

**REMEMBER: ALL assignments have a due date. Once the due date passes, the assignment and forum topic will close and you will no longer be able to submit that particular assignment.**

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Please Note That These Schedules Are Subject To Change**

<b>MODULE</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>
1	1-Sep	Introduction
2	8-Sep	What To Write About
3	15-Sep	Where Your Characters Live
4	22-Sep	Imagining Characters
5	29-Sep	Review & Catch Up
6	6-Oct	Creating Characters
7	13-Oct	Making Connections
8	20-Oct	The Writing Begins: A Short Scene
9	27-Oct	Starting The One-Act, Perspectives
10	3-Nov	Conflict On A Personal Level
11	10-Nov	Alternatives
12	17-Nov	Plays Are Entertainment
13	24-Nov	A Lonely Occupation
14	1-Dec	Understanding Conflict
15	8-Dec	Putting The Pieces Together
16	15-Dec	The Beginning Can Be the Toughest End

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### TEXT BOOK READING SCHEDULE

<b>Module</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	Preface	ix	Preface
2	1	3	Vision
3	2	20	Finding and Developing Ideas
4	3	41	Drafting and Revisions
5	4	73	Plot



6	5	101	Story
7	6	123	Character
8	7	151	Thought
9	8	183	Diction
10	9	226	Melody
11	10	252	Spectacle
12	11	285	A Way of Life
13	Appendix 1	295	Manuscript Format
14	Appendix 2	308	Copyright Protection
15	Bibliography	311	Bibliography
16			

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### ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

WEEK	MODULE	OPEN	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS AREA	DUE	POINTS	DISCUSSIONS AREA	DUE	POINTS
	1	1-Sep	Introduction	Theatrical Presentation	21-Dec	100	Welcome Message	7-Sep	5
	2	8-Sep	What To Write About	Answering Machine	14-Sep	10	Answering Machine	14-Sep	5
	3	15-Sep	Where Your Characters Live	Summer	21-Sep	10	Summer	21-Sep	5
	4	22-Sep	Imagining Characters						
	5	29-Sep	Review & Catch Up	Ideas	5-Oct	10			
	6	6-Oct	Creating Characters						
	7	13-Oct	Making Connections	Course Comments	19-Oct	10	Course Comments	19-Oct	5
	8	20-Oct	The Writing Begins: A Short Scene	Scene #1	26-Oct	10	Scene #1	26-Oct	5
	9	27-Oct	Starting The One-Act, Perspectives						
	10	3-Nov	Conflict On A Personal Level						

1	11	10-Nov	Alternatives	First Draft	23-Nov	50	First Draft	23-Nov	10
2	12	17-Nov	Plays Are Entertainment						
3	13	24-Nov	A Lonely Occupation						
4	14	1-Dec	Understanding Conflict	Final Draft	21-Dec	100	Frustrations	7-Dec	5
5	15	8-Dec	Putting The Pieces Together						
6	16	15-Dec	The Beginning Can Be the Toughest End	Theatrical Presentation	21-Dec		Final Comments	21-Dec	5
			POSSIBLE POINTS:			300			45
			TOTAL:						345

FINAL			
A	345	-	325
B	324	-	304
C	303	-	283
D	282	-	262
F	261	-	0

**Notes** (these tests and required assignments are subject to change):

**Please be aware that one point can be very, VERY important; it can mean the difference between an A or a B, a B or a C, etc. for your final grade. Your grade is based on cumulative points, so be very aware of each assignment and make sure you submit them on time.**

**Your Exams and Quiz are located in the Tasks, Test and Survey Area  
Your Unit requirements are located in either the:**

**Assignments Area and/or the Discussion and Private Messages Area.**

### CAREFULLY READ THE FOLLOWING

The topics we are undertaking in our Theatre course this semester have controversy as their theoretical foundation. By definition, since the days of Protagoras, the ancient Greek "Father of Debate" who first taught that all issues have least two sides in order to have debate, One must have controversy. If we all agree then there is no debate for there is nothing to debate. This means that in class during presentations you may be exposed to new, different, and controversial ideas, language and issues with which you may fundamentally disagree, which may offend you in some manner. However, the recognition that controversy is at the heart of debate does not encourage or condone gender, sexist, racist, ethnic, or religious slurs, or any form of slander or hate speech. As always in our class, these forms of speech will not be permitted. However, if you are offended in any way by ideas and/or language that are different than your own, you are free to leave the class. You are not a captive in this class. If you elect to leave, you will incur no loss of credit or points in grading in this class. If you have any questions, please contact

me. Some of the language, stage plays, course material and video presentations may be deemed offensive by some people. Please let me know before continuing with this class if think you may have a problem with this type of material.

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### DROP POLICY

If you choose to drop the course, it is **your responsibility** to do so before the official drop date listed at <http://www.wlac.edu/scheduleofclass/schedulecalendar.html> (or see below) You will not be automatically excluded for lack of participation. Please note that the student is responsible for dropping a course at the appropriate time and in the correct manner. See the college calendar for dates. If you have any questions concerning a course drop, please contact WLAC's Admissions Office.

No Excuses can be accepted for missing assignments or test and exam submissions. If you feel you cannot meet this course's requirements, I suggest you drop the course as soon as possible.

If you choose to drop the course, it is your responsibility to do so before the official drop date. Please note that the student is responsible for dropping a course at the appropriate time and in the correct manner.

However, if during the course, a student's total grade point (to date) indicates a failing grade point average, that student can be dropped on or before WLAC's scheduled "Last Day To Drop" date. See dates listed in the course syllabus.

If you have any questions concerning a course drop, please contact WLAC's Admissions Office.

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### INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE POLICY

If you have a question for me, please post it to the "Questions" discussion area. If your question is of a personal nature (which you do not want your fellow students to see), send me a "Private Message," or email me directly. I will respond to you within at least 48 hours and often much sooner.

**Email me at [foremost@pacbell.net](mailto:foremost@pacbell.net).**

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<p><b>IMPORTANT:</b> <u>Plagiarism</u> will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is a piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work and it is the act of plagiarizing; taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own.</p>
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### IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION

**NO EXTRA CREDIT WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THIS COURSE.** You will be required to fulfill all course requirements on or before the due dates. No exceptions. If you think there may be a technical problem, it behooves you to resolve that problem. This course WILL NOT accept technical problems as reason why one could not fulfill the course requirements.

**NO MAKEUP WORK WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THIS COURSE** will be accepted without a written and signed letter sent as a hard copy to me and your college counselor. This letter must detail the reason you did not complete the course requirements. If necessary, you must also attach any support material.

Fall Semester 2014: Traditional Semester	
SESSION PERIOD	Classes start Sept 2 Sept 1 - Dec 21
APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED BEGINNING	Tues, Apr 2
<b>REGISTRATION BEGINS</b>	
-Priority (EOPS, DSPS, Veterans, Foster Care Youth & CalWORKs)	Begins May 7
-Continuing Students	Begins May 12
-New & Returning Students	Begins May 19
Special Registration Hours Aug 25 - Sept 12	Mon - Thur: 8:30a - 7:00p Fri 8:30a - 2:00p closed Sat/Sun
M-F CLASSES Begin	TUES, SEPT 2
Sat CLASSES Begin	SAT, SEPT 6
FINALS ( <a href="#">pdf schedule</a> - scroll to pg 2)	Dec 15 - 21
<b>LAST DAY TO</b>	
Apply In-Person	All Year
Determine Residency	Aug 15
File Pre-requisite / Challenge Petition	Aug 15
Add Traditional Classes	Aug 31 online Sept 12 in-person
Drop a Class w/o a Fee	Sept 12
Drop a Class w/o a W	Sept 12
Drop w/ a W	Nov 21
File Pass/No Pass	Sept 12
<b>GRADUATION PETITION ACCEPTED</b>	Apr 28 - Nov 14
<b>CAMPUS CLOSED</b>	Labor Day, Sept 1 Veteran's Day, Nov 11 Thanksgiving Nov 27 - 30
<i>NOTE: Short-term courses and other accelerated program classes have different deadlines. Please check with your instructor.</i>	

Calendar Subject to change  
CONTACT THE OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS AND RECORDS FOR CLASSES WITH OTHER START OR  
END DATES.

STUDENTS MUST USE THE S.T.E.P. OR INTERNET TO DROP CLASSES DURING NON- BUSINESS HOURS.

WWW.WLAC.EDU

ADMISSIONS AND RECORDS OFFICE HOURS	TELEPHONE REGISTRATION NUMBERS
9:00 AM - 7:00 PM Mon - Thursday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Friday	(310) 605-0505 OR (213) 689-8888 (323) 226-1999 OR (818) 988-2222

IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO OBSERVE DEADLINE DATES.  
FAILURE TO DROP CLASSES MAY RESULT IN A, W, OR F ON YOUR ACADEMIC RECORDS.

SOME DROP DEADLINE DATES OCCUR DURING NON-OPERATING HOURS.  
USE THE TELEPHONE REGISTRATION SYSTEM OR THE INTERNET TO DROP CLASSES.

ADMISSIONS AND RECORDS OFFICE HOURS and REGISTRATION NUMBERS

9:00 AM - 7:00PM MONDAY - THURSDAY  
9:00AM - 2:00PM FRIDAY

(310) 605-0505  
(323) 226-1999  
(818) 988-2222  
(213) 689-8888

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