

**Institute of English Studies
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
University of the Punjab, Lahore.
Course Outline**



Programme	BS English Literature	Course Code	ELL-201	Credit Hours	3
Course Title	Classical and Renaissance Drama				
Course Introduction					
This course examines the origins and evolution of tragedy from Classical Greece to the English Renaissance. Students will study four major plays—Aeschylus’s <i>Prometheus Bound</i> , Sophocles’ <i>Oedipus the King</i> , Shakespeare’s <i>King Lear</i> , and Christopher Marlowe’s <i>The Jew of Malta</i> —alongside Aristotle’s <i>Poetics</i> to understand the conventions, structure, and philosophical dimensions of tragic drama. Emphasis is placed on thematic interpretation, performance context, and the development of tragic form across historical periods.					
Learning Outcomes					
On the completion of the course, the students will be able to: 1. Understand the historical development of drama from its origins to the Renaissance. 2. Apply Aristotle’s theories of tragedy to selected plays. 3. Analyze dramatic structure, character, and theme in Classical and Renaissance tragedy. 4. Compare the philosophical and moral dimensions of ancient and Renaissance tragedies. 5. Demonstrate interpretive and analytical skills through discussion, performance, and written assignments.					
Course Content				Assignments/Readings	
Week 1	Unit I: Foundations of Drama 1.1 Origins of Drama 1.1.1 Introduction to drama; ritual and festival origins of Greek theatre; early dramatic forms.			Write a response explaining: How ritual, festival, and communal performances gave rise to early Greek theatre	
Week 2	1.2 Aristotle’s <i>Poetics</i> 1.2.1 The tragic hero; hamartia, catharsis, and unity of action.			Prepare a short note addressing: Aristotle’s definition of tragedy.	
Week 3	Unit II: Greek Tragedy — Aeschylus 2.1 <i>Prometheus Bound</i> : Context 2.1.1 Historical and mythological background; Aeschylus’s contribution to Greek tragedy; themes of rebellion and divine authority.			Write a critical reflection on: Theme of rebellion vs. divine authority in <i>Prometheus Bound</i> .	
Week 4	2.2 <i>Prometheus Bound</i> : Reading and Analysis 2.2.1 Close reading of selected scenes; analysis of character, imagery, and dialogue.			Select one scene from <i>Prometheus Bound</i> and identify key imagery and metaphors	
Week 5	2.3 <i>Prometheus Bound</i> : Themes and Conclusion 2.3.1 Discussion of suffering, justice, and resistance; Aeschylus’s legacy and influence.			Write a comparative paragraph comparing Aeschylus’s treatment of justice with one modern literary or film text.	

Week 6	Unit III: Greek Tragedy — Sophocles 3.1 <i>Oedipus the King</i>: Context 3.1.1 The world of fifth-century Athens; Sophocles's dramatic technique and religious framework.	Write a contextual summary explaining: Cultural and political life of 5th-century BCE Athens.
Week 7	3.2 <i>Oedipus the King</i>: Reading 3.2.1 Exposition and rising action; Oedipus as ruler and seeker of truth; role of the Chorus. Conflict and discovery; investigation scenes and use of dramatic irony	Analyze: Exposition and rising action in the opening scenes of <i>Oedipus the King</i> .
Week 8	MID TERM EXAMINATION	
Week 9	3.3 <i>Oedipus the King</i>: Climax 3.3.1 Recognition (anagnorisis) and reversal (peripeteia); confrontation with fate.	Write an analytical response on: Anagnorisis (recognition) in the play.
Week 10	3.4 <i>Oedipus the King</i>: Falling Action 3.4.1 Consequences of self-knowledge; moral and philosophical implications.	Prepare a short reflection on: Consequences of self-knowledge.
Week 11	3.5 <i>Oedipus the King</i>: Themes 3.5.1 Fate, free will, blindness, and human limitation; the play as model of Aristotelian tragedy.	Write a comparison note outlining similarities and differences between <i>Prometheus Bound</i> and <i>Oedipus the King</i> regarding themes
Week 12	3.6 <i>Oedipus the King</i>: Review 3.6.1 Review and comparative discussion; connections with Aeschylus and later tragedies.	
Week 13	Unit IV: Shakespearean Tragedy 4.1 <i>King Lear</i>: Context 4.1.1 Renaissance theater and humanism; tragedy of power, family, and madness. Enactments.	Write a contextual essay on Renaissance humanism.
Week 14	4.2 <i>King Lear</i>: Reading and Analysis 4.2.1 Major scenes; character study of Lear, Cordelia, and Edmund; dramatic techniques. Enactments.	
Week 15	Unit V: Elizabethan Tragedy Beyond Shakespeare 5.1 Christopher Marlowe: <i>The Jew of Malta</i> 5.1.1 Themes of justice, nature, and redemption; <i>King Lear</i> as universal tragedy. Enactments. 5.1.2 Historical context of Elizabethan drama; religious and political satire; analysis of Barabas as tragic anti-hero.	
Week 16	END TERM EXAMINATION	

Textbooks and Reading Material			
1. Textbooks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aeschylus. (n.d.). <i>Prometheus bound</i> (Trans. H. W. Smyth). Harvard University Press / Loeb Classical Library. Marlowe, C. (1600). <i>The Jew of Malta</i>. In J. Bullen (Ed.), Christopher Marlowe: The complete plays. Oxford University Press. Shakespeare, W. (1608). <i>King Lear</i>. In B. A. Mowat & P. Werstine (Eds.), The tragedy of King Lear. Simon & Schuster. Sophocles. (2018). <i>Oedipus the King</i> (P. J. Finglass, Ed.). Cambridge University Press. 2. Suggested Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finglass, P. J. (Ed.). (2018). Sophocles: Oedipus the King (Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries, No. 57). Cambridge University Press. Ruffell, I. (2012). Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound (Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy). Bloomsbury Academic. (Series editor: Thomas Harrison) Ioppolo, G. (2003). William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Sourcebook. Routledge. Logan, R. A. (Ed.). (2013). The Jew of Malta: A Critical Reader. Bloomsbury Academic. 			
Teaching Learning Strategies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures, seminars, and tutorials. Close reading and textual analysis of plays. Class discussions and audio-visual presentations. Dramatic readings and performance-based learning. 			
Assignments: Types and Number with Calendar			
Two assignments, one before midterms and one after midterm, to be submitted.			
Assessment			
Sr. No.	Elements	Weightage	Details
1.	Midterm Assessment	25%	Written Assessment at the mid-point of the semester.
2.	Formative Assessment	15%	Continuous assessment includes: Classroom participation, assignments, presentations, viva voce, attitude and behavior, hands-on-activities, short tests, projects, practical, reflections, readings, quizzes etc.
3.	Final Assessment	60%	Written Examination at the end of the semester. It is mostly in the form of a test, but owing to the nature of the course the teacher may assess their students based on term paper, research proposal development, field work and report writing etc.