

**THEA 5303: The History of the Theatre: Greek Theatre Through Renaissance Theatre Syllabus (2014)**  
(TR 11-12:15 p.m.; BAB 304)

**Mr. Gregory M. Schwab, Professor of Theatre/Chair of Fine Arts and Communication**  
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Office Hours T & R 8:30-9 a.m. & 3:30-4:30 p.m.; W 10 a.m.-noon or by arrangement

**I. Instructional Materials:**

- A) Required Textbook: *Living Theatre: A History* by Edwin Wilson and Alvin Goldfarb, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2012. (Will be used for Theatre History II as well)
- B) Class Lectures/Demonstrations/Presentations
- C) Supplemental Reading Materials
- D) Outside Research
- E) SRSU Theatre Program productions

**II. Course Overview:**

This course is designed to aid the student in the understanding of the beginnings of theatre history through the European Renaissance.

The student will investigate the including historical periods, playwrights, plays, social and political conditions and acting styles of each period of theatrical history.

The student will have the opportunity to critically analyze the impact of social, economic, and political influences on theatre during the various periods of theatre history from the beginnings of theatre through Renaissance theatre.

Also the student will be able to discern the important theatre genres/styles, works, and artists during the first two millennia of theatre.

Utilizing assigned research and analytical rubrics, graduate students will lead the undergraduates in small groups to develop class projects and presentations.

The graduate student will research and present a 30 minute discussion/lecture on a selected theatrical topic.

Additionally, the student will utilize acquired knowledge to analyze and critically assess two Sul Ross theatrical productions.

The course assignments, discussions, and other instructional materials/modules will be supplemented through materials in Blackboard.

**III. Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course the student should be able to

- Critically understand the origins, progression, and the development of theatre;
- Assess the significance of the works within their time period, the oeuvre of the playwright, and the innovations, if any, of the play to world of dramatic literature;
- Creatively present a multimedia/dimensional analysis of an assigned research project;
- Research and present salient information on a theatrical topic in an organized and effective manner; and
- Communicate successfully written critical assessments of theatrical performances and printed works.

**IV. Program Learning Outcomes:**

The graduating student will demonstrate:

1. knowledge of eras and contributions made throughout Theatre History and Musical Theatre History.

Additionally the graduating student with a concentration in Acting/Directing will demonstrate:

2. the ability to express themselves creatively through appropriate theatrical performance;
  3. the ability to analyze scripts;
  4. the ability work creatively with actors and technicians in mounting a laboratory theatrical production; and
  5. the ability to apply standard requirements to all aspects of technical production.
- Additionally the graduating student with a concentration in technical/design will demonstrate:
6. the ability to apply all approaches to theatrical design and rendering of the design; and
  7. the ability to address all technical aspects of a theatrical production
- Additionally the student will be able to:
8. describe the theatre process and compose a functional definition for the theatre event;
  9. describe the close link between theatre and religion;
  10. name the basic responsibilities and roles of the playwright, director, actor and designer in the theatre production;
  11. have a basic understanding of the difference between tragedy, comedy, melodrama, farce, epic and absurdist theatre;
  12. describe the uniqueness of the theatre art;
  13. understand and describe the elements necessary to bring about a unified production;
  14. identify a variety of theatre spaces;
  15. know the names and works associated with key figures in the theatre; and
  16. demonstrate their understanding of acting, directing, playwriting or design in the areas of set, sound, or make-up.

#### V. Course Requirements:

- A. Three examinations, including the final exam, will be given. The tests will cover material from the text, lectures, demonstrations, reading and viewing materials, guest lectures, and SRSU theatrical productions. All exams will be given in Blackboard 9.
- B. Announced and unannounced quizzes will be given during the semester. All quizzes will be given in Blackboard 9.
- C. The graduate student will be required to present/participate in two class projects i.e.: a recreation of the City Dionysia theatre festival and a Renaissance fair). The graduate student will lead a small group of students in of an “active” projects, which may include cutting(s) from plays, a demonstration of heatrical styles of the period, reenactments of period playwrights or religious/ political/social figures, or samples of non-theatrical forms of entertainment.
- D. The graduate student will research a selected theatrical topic and present a 30-minute discussion/lecture to the entire class.
- D. The graduate student will present 4 short oral/written reports over an assigned research topic.
- E. Two short, written discussion papers on the SRSU theatrical productions will be required. The graduate student will be required to critique two of the SRSU fall theatrical productions and to submit a two page, typewritten critical assessment of the play, including discussion of genre, the MDQ, the protagonist, the antagonist, and use of Aristotlean elements. **All critiques are due the first class period after the close of each play.**
- F. The student will be required to create an digital theatrical history time-line to include all of the major plays, playwrights, theatrical events and discoveries/inventions, plus the major social, political and religious events, and major discoveries and inventions, which helped define the theatre of the period. The timeline will begin with the earliest forms of theatre and continue through the Renaissance. The project will be due by **4 pm, Wednesday, December 3.**
- G. Participation in all class activities, discussions, demonstrations, etc. is required.

#### VI. Criteria For Grade Evaluation:

- A. Each student will be graded upon the basis of the assignment’s guidelines and the completeness and effectiveness of the presentation/assignment.
- B. Breakdown of grading percentages is as follows:
 

1. Small Group Presentations (2 at 5%)	10%
2. Timeline of Theatre History	8%
3. Examinations (3 @ 11%)	33%
4. Quizzes (Lowest grade dropped)	21%

- 5. Research Presentations (4 @ 2%) 8%
  - 6. Play critiques (2 @ 4%) 8%
  - 7. Graduate Research Presentation 10%
  - 8. Participation & Attendance 2%
- C. Grading will be on a 100 points system as follows:  
 93-100+ = A    84-92 = B    75-83= C    66-74 = D    Below 66 = F
- D **Assignments must be completed by the due date/time** or prior to the scheduled date if the student is absent for a legitimate SRSU activity, or the first class day that the student is back from a doctor verified illness (doctor's note must be submitted).
- E. Assignments that are late will be **penalized 25 points** per class period.
- F. Since the final grade is dependent upon the total number of accumulated points, it is important that all work be completed and turned in.
- G. Extra credit: (0-100 points) Extra credit may be given for participation/involvement in any of this semester's SRSU theatrical productions. Points will be awarded on the basis of the quality and the level of participation. Extra credit will not be given if the student is enrolled in Theatre Practicum or any theatre course unless the requirements for that class have already been fulfilled.

**VII. Special Needs:**

It is Sul Ross State University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodation because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact the ADA Coordinator for Program Accessibility, who is located in FH 112 or call 432-837-8203. All requests for special accommodations must be related in writing to the professor prior to the third class day.

**VIII. Final Examination Schedule:** Final exam must be completed by **Tuesday, December 9, 10:15 a.m.**

**IX. Class Courtesy:** For the courtesy of all students, **all cell phones and pagers must be turned off** prior to the beginning of the class. Emergency personnel may seek a special dispensation from the professor.

**X. Syllabus:** A copy of this syllabus will appear on the Department of Fine Arts and Communication's web page.

**XI. Tentative Semester Class Schedule:**

- Week of August 25** Course overview; syllabus;
- Week of September 1** Origins of Theatre; Greek Theatre; quiz;
- Week of September 8** Greek Theatre; Roman Theatre; quiz;
- Week of September 15** Roman Theatre; City Dionysia Festival prep;
- Week of September 22** Early Asian Theatre; quiz;
- Week of September 29** Early Asian Theatre; City Dionysia Festival;
- Week of October 6** **Test #1;** Test Recap; Medieval Theatre; quiz;
- Week of October 13** Medieval Theatre; Italian Renaissance Theatre; quiz;
- Week of October 20** Renaissance Fair Prep;
- Week of October 27** Italian Renaissance Theatre; quiz;
- Week of November 3** **Test #2;** Test Recap; English Renaissance Theatre;
- Week of November 10** English Renaissance Theatre; quiz;
- Week of November 17** Renaissance Fair; Spanish Golden Age Theatre; quiz;
- Tuesday, November 25** French Neoclassical Theatre; quiz;
- Tuesday, December 2** French Neoclassical Theatre; quiz; prep for final
- Wednesday, December 3 4 p.m.** Timeline Due in FAB 106
- Tuesday, December 9 10:15 a.m.** **Final Examination deadline**

**SRSU Theatrical Production & Special Events Schedule:**

- Oct. 10-11, 17-18** 8:15 pm Studio Theatre Performances of *Moises: A Modern-Day Tragedy*
- Oct. 12 & 19** 2 pm Studio Theatre Matinees of *Moises: A Modern-Day Tragedy*
- Nov. 20-22** 8:15 p.m. Studio Theatre Performances of *East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street*