

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

THEA 1310 – Introduction to Theatre

THEA 1310-001
MWF 10:00-10:50
BAB 304

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Office Hours:
11:00-12:00 MWF
10:00-12:00 TR
Or by appointment
FAB 203B

Course Description

Theatre is a unique art form, and in this class we will be exploring all of the different forms that go into creating each performance. We will act, we will design and we will write. I do not expect you to be fantastic actors, designers or playwrights; all that I expect is that you will put something of yourself into your work. Theatre requires involvement, both in the work being done and with your fellow theatre practitioners. If you can do that, we can play together. In this class you will have the opportunity to write a scene, design scenery, and perform a short scene with your classmates.

Course Requirements

Textbook: Readings will be posted on Blackboard, or handed out in class. There is no required textbook for this class.

Project Materials: Any project materials required for the design project are to be provided by the student. I will take into account difficulties, but I expect you to work things out yourselves

Shop Hours: As part of your grade, you are required to work a total of 15 hours in the scene shop. The earlier you get this done, the more likely you are to work on something fun and interesting.

Materials:

- 1) A working e-mail account;

- 2) A working blackboard account;
- 3) A folder or binder for scripts, handouts, assignments, and notes. Please use this folder/binder for this class only.
- 4) Please bring a pen or pencil to every class.

Primary Learning Objectives: The student will be able to

- Demonstrate knowledge of general theatre history. The origins and evolution of theatre as an art form
- Describe the theater process and compose a functional definition of the theatre event.
- Describe the close link between theatre and religion.
- Name the basic responsibilities and roles of the playwright, director, actor, and designer in the theatre production
- Have a basic understanding of the difference between tragedy, comedy, melodrama, farce, epic, and absurdist theater.
- Describe the uniqueness of the theatre art.
- Understand and describe the elements necessary to bring about a unified production.
- Identify a variety of theater spaces.
- Know the names and works associated with key figures in the theatre.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze a play for the basic structure.
- Demonstrate their understanding of acting, directing, playwriting, or design in the areas of set, lighting, sound, or costume/makeup.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this class, students will:

- Articulate a working vocabulary of theater terminology
- Demonstrate beginner knowledge of basic stagecraft
- Evaluate a theatrical performance for its formal qualities
- Demonstrate beginner knowledge of playwriting
- Perform a rudimentary stage scene

CLASS MEETINGS:

Attendance is required. Theatre is a deeply collaborative art form and if you are not here, you cannot participate. Much of what we are going to do will require input from

the whole class. 3 Absences will result in the loss of points, more than 9 and you will be dropped from the class.

Assignments not completed or turned in on time, will receive one half credit of grade up to two (2) days after the due date. Papers and assignments will not be accepted after two days. All written assignments must be typed. **Students are responsible for unattended classes.**

UNIVERSITY RULES/REGULATIONS:

Rules and regulations regarding plagiarism, dishonesty, and other issues concerning classroom participation can be found in the University Rules and Regulations and Student Handbook.

Grading Breakdown:

Attendance/participation:	5%
Quizzes:	5%
Production review:	5%
Scene Shop hours:	10%
Design Project:	25%
Written Scene:	25%
Final performance:	25%
Total:	100%

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University Alpine, TX 79832 (432-837-8203) Email: mschwartz@sulross.edu

CLASS DATES: Assignments and Deadlines

Note that these dates and the details of each class are subject to change at the instructor's discretion

Class Date Topics and Assignments

- 1 Jan 21 Review Syllabus, assignments, and deadlines. Expected outcomes. **Read Cohen Chap 1**
- 2 Jan 23 Why Theatre?
- 3 Jan 26 A brief exploration of theatre history, The Greeks to the Elizabethan
- 4 Jan 28 A further brief exploration of theatre history, Elizabethan to modern
- 5 Jan 30 An introduction to play structure and analysis **READ Excerpt from *The Poetics*.**
- 6 Feb 2 Aristotle: How to build an effective scene
- 7 Feb 4 Play structure: The Plot
- 8 Feb 6 Play structure: Building tension and effective conflict
- 9 Feb 9 Play structure: Creating believable characters
- 10 Feb 11 Play structure: Dialogue
- 11 Feb 13 Playwriting and the Playwright **Read Cohen chap 4**
- 12 Feb 16 Work Day: be prepared to workshop your scene in class
- 13 Feb 18 Work Day: be prepared to workshop your scene in class
- 14 Feb 20 **Scenes due, end of class** Playwriting: revision and performance
- 15 Feb 23 Introduction to theatre design and technology **Read Cohen chap 5**
- 16 Feb 25 Design Basics
- 17 Feb 27 Reading and analyzing the script **Read *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf***
- 18 Mar 2 Scenic design
- 19 Mar 4 Sound and Light design
- 20 Mar 6 Costume and Makeup design
- 21 Mar 9 Theatre Technology: Technical Direction and stage management
- 22 Mar 11 Movie Day: Watch *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* Act 1
- 23 Mar 13 Movie Day: Watch *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* Act 2
- 24 Mar 16-20 **SPRING BREAK** (Work on your projects)
- 25 Mar 23 The Technical Director
- 26 Mar 25 Stage Management and Stage hands
- 27 Mar 27 The scene shop and costume shop
- 27 Mar 30 Work Day: Come to class ready to work on your project

29 Apr 1 Work Day: Come to class ready to work on your project
30 Apr 3 **GOOD FRIDAY NO CLASS**
31 Apr 6 **Design Projects due, Beginning of class:** Design project presentations
32 Apr 8 The Actor and Director (Assign scene partners) **Read Cohen Chap 3 and 6**
33 Apr 10 Staging
34 Apr 13 Movement and positioning
35 Apr 15 Building the character
36 Apr 17 Using your voice properly
37 Apr 20 The rehearsal process
38 Apr 22 In class rehearsal
39 Apr 24 In class rehearsal
40 Apr 27 In class rehearsal
41 Apr 29 In class rehearsal
43 May 1 In class rehearsal (off book)
44 May 4 In class rehearsal (off book)
45 May 6 In class rehearsal (off book)
FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 11th 10:15 AM Location TBA