

THEA 1310:001 INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATRE COURSE SYLLABUS

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

Fall, 2018

Class Meets MWF 9:00-9:50 in FAB 105

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Required Texts: *Zoot Suit + other plays* by Luis Valdez; *Man of La Mancha* by Dale Wasserman. Must bring to class for assigned readings.

Course Description: An introduction to dramatic texts and dramatic principles, script analysis, and theatrical styles. This course will also prepare students to become knowledgeable audience members with an appreciation for the significance that theatre productions can provide in a given cultural context.

This course offers students an opportunity to collaborate with their peers as actors, directors, and designers. Students will work together to rehearse, design and perform scenes from culturally significant plays. This course is intended to be an introduction to theatre. No prior theatre experience is required.

Other requirements:

1. A working SRSU e-mail account. Check daily especially before class.
2. Paper and pencil/pen for every class meeting.
3. A notebook binder with pockets to keep all handouts/scripts and notebook paper to take notes at every class.
4. Other supplies as needed for final exam project – TBA; outside research.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The graduating student will be able to/ demonstrate:

- 1) Knowledge of eras and contributions made throughout Theatre History and Musical Theatre History.
- 2) Describe the theatre process and compose a functional definition of the theatre event.
- 3) Describe the close link between theatre and religion.
- 4) Name the basic responsibilities and roles of the playwright, director, actor, and designer in the theatre production.
- 5) Have a basic understanding of the difference between tragedy, comedy, melodrama, farce, epic, and absurdist theatre.
- 6) Identify a variety of theatre spaces.
- 7) Know the names and works associated with key figures in the theatre.
- 8) An understanding of acting, directing, playwriting, or design in the areas of set, sound, or makeup.

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

- 9) The ability to express themselves creatively through appropriate theatrical performance.
- 10) The ability to analyze a script.
- 11) The ability to work creatively with actors and technicians in mounting a laboratory theatrical production.
- 12) The ability to apply standard requirements to all aspects of technical production.

Additionally, the graduating student with a concentration in technical/design will demonstrate:

- 13) The ability to apply all approaches to the theatrical design and rendering of the design.
- 14) The ability to address all technical aspects of a theatrical production.

Course Objectives:

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

- ® Critically understand the origins, progression, genres, and the development of theatre;
- ® Discern the basic responsibilities and roles of theatre professionals;
- ® Effectively analyze the basic elements of theatrical design;
- ® Communicate successfully written critical assessments of theatrical performances and printed works;
- ® Use your creative skills to work on design projects;
- ® Analyze the role that theatre plays in contemporary culture, particularly the ways in which theatre addresses issues of gender, religion, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT MANY OF THE REQUIRED READINGS, VIDEOS, AND PLAYS MAY CONTAIN MATURE CONTENT, EXPLICIT LANGUAGE, DIFFICULT THEMES, AND/OR NUDDITY.

Format of written assignments: All assignments must be typewritten in 12-point type. Times New Roman or Arial font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, and free of errors. You will be graded on both the content of your ideas and the clarity and accuracy of your writing. If needed, I suggest you visit the Writing Center in MAB 102 before turning in your papers.

Late Assignments: **All assignments** must be submitted as soon as class begins on the due date. **I will not accept late work.**

GRADING: Assignments are valued as follows:

Saturday Build Days (4 hours)	15%
Assignments/Quizzes	20%
Sul Ross Theatre Performance paper	20%
Class Participation/Attendance	15%
FINAL EXAM/class project	30%

Grading Criteria:

A= 100%-90%

B=89%-80%

C=79%-70%

D=69%-60%

F=below 60%

Students with disabilities needing academic assistance or other accommodations should contact Counseling and Prevention Services, Ferguson Hall 112, 432-837-8203.

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

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance is expected and you should come to class prepared to contribute to class discussion and ask questions of the material. Your participation grade is 15% of your overall grade so keep this in mind and speak up during class.

Two (2) unexcused absences will lower overall grade 9 points. Each subsequent absence will lower grade an additional 5 points. If you miss more than eight (8) classes, you must withdraw from the

course or I will drop you with the grade of "F." (Please refer to the absence policy from the Sul Ross State University course catalogue for further details).

Excused Absences: Excused absences from class include: religious holidays, an illness (a doctor's note must be submitted to the instructor), a death in the family (an obituary or funeral program must be submitted to the instructor), or court dates (an official notice from the court must be submitted to the instructor). If you miss an assignment or project deadline due to illness you must provide written documentation from the Health Center or other health care provider, verifying dates of treatment and the time period during which you were unable to meet academic responsibilities. ALL OTHER ABSENCES will be marked as unexcused.

Cell phones, texting, and engaging in activities unrelated to this class are all strictly prohibited during class time. If I see you using your cell phone during class, I reserve the right to ask you to leave and you will be marked absent. Repeat offenders may be asked to drop the class.

Build Hours: You are required to sign up for **four hours** of building/painting time on one of our Saturday build days from 9:30am to 1:30pm. I will pass around a sign-up sheet and you must choose one time slot, fill in your name and show up at the theatre or scene shop at your allotted time.

Sul Ross Theatre Performance Attendance & Analysis: You are required to attend 2 SRSU plays: *Macbeth* and *Tuna Christmas* this Fall semester. **You are required to write a 2-3 page critical analysis of these 2 productions. I will not accept late papers.** You must also staple your signed program to your paper. Programs must be signed by the Director or by the House Manager.

Group Project: You will work in groups of 4 or 5 for your final project. Each group must select a scene from one of the plays we read or view this semester. Scenes must be 5-7 minutes in length and presented to the class on the day of the final. Each group will have two actors, a director, and a designer. The director of each group must meet with his/her actors to rehearse the scene before the final performance. I recommend each group rehearse as many times as possible but you must rehearse a minimum of 6 times before the final performance on _____. **All directors must provide the instructor with a detailed rehearsal schedule signed by the actors by _____.** Actors must be off book (lines memorized) and work collaboratively with the director to develop the scene as fully as possible. The designer's job is to gather research, discuss images, language, ideas of the play with the director, create sketches or collages of the costumes for each character, and design a set for the scene. Use your creativity and found objects, etc. **Designers are strongly encouraged to attend at least one rehearsal, but enough to be comfortable with your job.** All members of the group are required to read the full play from which their scene is selected. **THIS PROJECT WILL SERVE AS THE FINAL EXAM FOR THIS COURSE.**

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

Note: Dates/details are subject to change at instructor's discretion

Week 1 Review syllabus

Aug 27-31 Theatre and its Audience: Cultural Collaboration: Theatre and Society

Week 2 Experiencing Theatre: Collaboration of Actor, Audience, and Space

Sept 3-7

Week 3 Analyzing Theatre: Thinking and Writing about Live Performances

Sept 10-14 Discuss SRSU Theatre Performance paper of *Macbeth* and *Tuna Christmas*; how to write a critique paper...handout

Week 4 Understanding the Play: A Theatrical Blueprint

Sept 17-21 **REPORT TO THE LIBRARY CLASSROOM Room 201 at the SRSU Library during class time** – Intro to Luis Valdez and *Zoot Suit*

Week 5 Interpreting the Play: Understanding Genre, Reading, and Writing

Sept 24-28 **REPORT TO THE LIBRARY CLASSROOM Room 201 at the SRSU Library during class time** - *El Teatro Campesino* by Luis Valdez and *Zoot Suit* Research

Week 6 Discuss *Zoot Suit*

Oct 1-5 **Prepare for QUIZ #1**; Begin reading *Man of La Mancha*

SATURDAY BUILD DAY – DATES TO BE DETERMINED

Week 7 Class work

Oct 8-12 Continue reading in class: *Man of La Mancha*

Week 8 Assign Critique paper for *Macbeth*

Oct 15-19 How to write a critique paper for live theatrical performance

SATURDAY BUILD DAY – DATES TO BE DETERMINED

Week 9 Film on Demand regarding *Man of La Mancha*; Research

Oct 22-26 **REPORT TO THE LIBRARY CLASSROOM Room 201 at the SRSU
Library during class time**

MACBETH OPENING NIGHT FRIDAY OCTOBER 26 – COME SEE SHOW 1ST TIME!

Week 10 Discuss *Man of La Mancha*

Oct 29-Nov 2 **Prepare for Quiz #2**

Week 11 **CRITIQUE PAPER #1 IS DUE BEFORE CLASS BEGINS ON MONDAY
NOV 5**; Watch film: *The Dresser*

Nov 5-9 **REPORT TO THE LIBRARY CLASSROOM Room 201 at the SRSU
Library during class time; MONDAY, NOV 5 --CRITIQUE PAPER DUE-
NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED!**

Week 12 Review particulars of film: *The Dresser*; research

Nov 12-16 **Prepare for Quiz #3**

TUNA CHRISTMAS OPENING NIGHT FRIDAY NOVEMBER 16th; COME SEE SHOW!

Week 13 Discuss Group Project and Collaboration between Director, Actors, and Designer

Nov 19 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS – NO CLASSES ON NOV 21-23, SRSU CLOSED**

Week 14 Assign paper #2 critical analysis of *Tuna Christmas*
Begin Collaborations of Final Group project in class

Nov 26-30

Week 15 **CRITIQUE PAPER #2 IS DUE BEFORE CLASS BEGINS ON MONDAY DECEMBER 3;** Continue work on final group collaborations

Dec 3-7 **CRITIQUE PAPER #2 DUE MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, BEGINNING OF CLASS – NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED.**

Last day of class before finals is Wednesday Dec 5

Week 16

December 11 FINAL EXAM PRESENTATIONS ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH AT 8am-10am. ALL STUDENTS MUST BE ON TIME AND ALL GROUPS MUST BE READY TO PRESENT THEIR FINAL PROJECT.
