

# **THEA 1310:001 INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATRE**

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

### **SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Fall, 2019**

**Class Meets: Tuesday and Thursday 9:30-10:45 in BAB 304**

Carolyn Barrientes, MFA

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**Required Texts:** *Zoot Suit + other plays* by Luis Valdez; *Man of La Mancha* by Dale Wasserman; *Blood Wedding* by Hughes. Must bring to class for assigned readings. Ebooks are not allowed.

**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.

**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 NUDITY.

FORMAT OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments must be typewritten in 12-point type. Times New Roman or Ariel font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, and free of errors. PLEASE PROOF YOUR WORK. You will be graded on both the content and your ideas and the clarity and accuracy of your writing. If needed, I suggest you visit the Writing Center before turning in your papers.

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:

Quizzes or other assignments 25%

2 Sul Ross Theatre Performance papers 25%

Class participation/Class attendance 25%

FINAL EXAM CLASS PROJECT 25%

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 25% of your overall grade so keep this in mind and speak up during class and attend daily.

After two unexcused absences, your overall grade will be lowered by 9 points; each subsequent absence will lower grade an additional 5 points. If you miss more than 8 classes, you must withdraw from the course or I will drop you with the grade of "F."

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.

**Sul Ross Theatre Performance Attendance & Analysis:** You are required to attend two SRSU plays: *Nat Turner in Jerusalem* and *The Wolves*. You will be required to write a 2-3 page critical analysis of this production. I will not accept late papers. You must also staple your signed program to your paper with the Director's signature.

**Group project:** You will work in groups for your final project. Each group must select a scene from one of the plays we read this semester. Scenes must be 5-7 minutes in length and presented to the class on the day of the final exam. Each group will have two – three 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 a minimum of 6 times. All directors must provide the instructor with a detailed rehearsal schedule signed by the actors. 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 research, discuss images, language, ideas of the play with the director and actors, 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 2 rehearsals. All members of the group are required to read the full play from which their scene is selected. THIS GROUP PROJECT WILL SERVE AS THE FINAL EXAM FOR THIS COURSE. ALL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP MUST BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE.

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

(Dates/details are subject to change at instructor's discretion)

Aug 27 Review syllabus; ice breaker exercise

Aug 29 Theatre and its Audience: Cultural Collaboration: Theatre and Society

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Sept 3 Experiencing Theatre: Collaboration of Actor, Audience, and Space

Sept 5 Dramatic Structure: Aristotle's six elements

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Sept 10 Analyzing Theatre: Thinking and Writing about Live Performances

Sept 12 Discuss SRSU Theatre Performance papers; how to write a critique paper...handout

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Sept 17 Intro to Luis Valdez and *Zoot Suit*

Sept 19 Read *Zoot Suit* in class

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Sept 24 *Zoot Suit*, the video to watch

**Sept 26 No Class today** – I will be at TETA Conference; study *Zoot Suit* for quiz

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Oct 1 Discuss questions about *Zoot Suit*

Oct 3 **QUIZ #1 *Zoot Suit* Oct 3**

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Oct 8 Bring script to class: Begin reading *Man of La Mancha*

Oct 10 Continue reading in class: *Man of La Mancha*

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Oct 15 Assign Critique paper #1 for *Nat Turner in Jerusalem*; play opens Oct 18!

Oct 17 How to write a critique for live theatre performance

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Oct 22 Film on Demand regarding *Man of La Mancha*

**Oct 24 No class today**; CB at CASA Conference; Study for *Man of La Mancha* quiz

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Oct 29 Discuss questions for *Man of La Mancha*

**Oct 31 Quiz #2 *Man of La Mancha***

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Nov 5 **CRITIQUE PAPER #1 IS DUE BEFORE CLASS BEGINS**; Bring script to class; Begin reading *Blood Wedding* in class

Nov 7 Continue reading *Blood Wedding* in class; Assign paper #2 critical analysis of *The Wolves* – opens Nov 8!

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Nov 12 Discuss *Blood Wedding* and prepare for last quiz

Nov 14 Quiz on *Blood Wedding*

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Nov 19 Discuss Group Project and Collaboration between Director, Actors, and Designer

Nov 21 **CRITIQUE PAPER #2 IS DUE BEFORE CLASS BEGINS**; continue group work in class for final project

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Nov 26 Begin Collaborations of Final Group project in class; meeting individually with Actors; Directors and Designers

Nov 28      **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS – NO CLASSES ON NOV 27-29, SRSU CLOSED**

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Dec 3      Continue rehearsals on final group collaborations  
Last day of class before final exam...

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**DEC 9      FINAL EXAM PRESENTATIONS ON MONDAY, DEC 9 AT 8AM-10AM.**  
**ALL STUDENTS MUST BE ON TIME AND ALL GROUPS MUST BE**  
**READY TO PRESENT THEIR FINAL PROJECT.**

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