

Intro to Theatre

THEA 1310

Instructor: Stuart Standly

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Office Hours
MTWThF 9:30am-10:30am
By Appointment

Course Description

The readings and viewings for this course will introduce students to dramatic texts, knowledge of dramatic principles and theatrical styles, and address a range of contemporary social issues. This course also teaches students how to become educated audience members and to appreciate the significance that theatre holds in a given cultural context.

Students also get the opportunity to design and create a unique presentation, by using the basic theatrical elements learned in this class. This course is an introduction to theatre and does not require prior theatrical experience.

Materials Required:

- 1) A working e-mail account. **You are required to check your Sul Ross email account daily.**
- 2) A working Blackboard account. I may post some assignments and reminders to Blackboard.
- 3) Paper and a writing utensil for every class meeting.
- 4) The instructor will provide any required reading materials.

Course Objectives

Among other topics, students will:

- Articulate a working vocabulary of theatre terminology
- Evaluate a performance for its formal qualities
- Demonstrate beginner knowledge of the rehearsal and performance process
- Articulate basic theatrical design principles
- Demonstrate beginner knowledge of script analysis
- Articulate the jobs of different types of theatre professionals
- Analyze the role that theatre plays in contemporary culture, particularly the ways in which theatre addresses issues of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class.

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 a script.
- 4) The ability to work creatively with actors and technicians in mounting a laboratory theatrical production.
- 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 the theatrical design and rendering of the design.
- 7) The ability to address all technical aspects of a theatrical production.

Additionally, the student will be able to:

- 8) Describe the theater process and compose a functional definition of 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 theater.
- 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 theater spaces.
- 15) Know the names and works associated with key figures in the theatre.
- 16) Demonstrate an understanding of acting, directing, playwriting, or design in the areas of set, sound, or makeup.

Students with Disabilities

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 Schwartze in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: [432-837-8203](tel:432-837-8203)

Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance is expected and you should come to class prepared to offer thoughtful comments and questions about the material. Your attendance and participation grades together are worth 20% of your overall grade. Remember, if you are not present, you cannot participate but attendance does not equal participation. So, participate!

Review the Absence Policy, from the Sul Ross State University Course Catalogue

CELL PHONES, TEXTING, AND ENGAGING IN ACTIONS NOT RELATED TO CLASS ON YOUR COMPUTER ARE PROHIBITED. YOU MAY BE ASKED TO LEAVE CLASS FOR THE DAY IF YOU ENGAGE IN ANY OF THE ABOVE ACTIVITIES. REPEAT OFFENDERS MAY BE DROPPED FROM THE CLASS WITH A GRADE OF AN "F."

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

Performance Attendance & Analysis: You are required to attend one performance of each Sul Ross State University Theater department productions.

Nat Turner in Jerusalem, in the FAB Studio Theater

October 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, & 27

Wolves, in the MAB Marshall Auditorium

November 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, & 17

You must write a 3pg essay analyzing the performance by explaining how each theatrical element was presented. You must also submit a *signed* program from the performance, along with your analysis essay. Programs must be signed by either the director of the show or the House Manager, and stapled to your essay.

Performance Project: You will work in groups to create, design, and perform a scripted scene in front of the class. Each project will be a unique creation designed by each group; it must be memorized for the final performance and include all necessary theatrical designs. These designs must include sketches or a collage of images that illustrate your design concept for costumes, a detailed ground plan for the set, and basic sound and lighting design concepts describing its theatrical purpose. **These scenes and the accompanying designs will function as the final exam for this course.**

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT SOME OF THE REQUIRED READINGS AND PERFORMANCES CONTAIN MATURE CONTENT, EXPLICIT LANGUAGE, DIFFICULT THEMES, AND/OR NUDDITY. THEY MAY BE OFFENSIVE TO SOME PEOPLE.

Written Assignments

Required Essays: You are required to write a number of essays for this class. Each of the Theatrical Element essays are worth 50pts each. The play analysis essays are worth 100pts each. **Essay assignments must be turned in on the day they are due. Late work is not accepted!!**

Format: All written assignments must be typed, in 12-point type, Times New Roman font or similar, double-spaced, and free of errors. You will be graded on both the content of your ideas and the clarity and accuracy of your writing, so I strongly suggest that you visit the Writing Center located in the Library Learning Center, before turning in your assignments.

Academic Integrity: The University has a Code of Academic Integrity, which prohibits, among other things, cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers or portions of papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, forging signatures, and using unauthorized study aids (including old quizzes and exams). This class abides by that code.

Challenges: If you have a concern about a grade on an assignment you must present the graded assignment and one paragraph explaining your comments on the grade (including any supporting evidence) to the instructor no later than one week after the grade is posted. **After one week, questions about grades will not be considered. This policy applies to ALL grades.**

Grading

Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Class Attendance	100pts
2) Class Participation	100pts
3) Theatrical Element Essays	300pts (6 essays @ 50pts each)
4) My Favorite Essay	100pts
5) <i>Nat Turner in Jerusalem</i> Essay	100pts
6) <i>Wolves</i> Essay	100pts
7) Final Group Design & Presentation	200pts

900-1000 points	= A
800-899 points	= B
700-799 points	= C
600-699 points	= D
599 & below	= F

Class Dates: Assignments and Deadlines

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

MWF 11:00am

Monday	26-Aug	Syllabus
Wednesday	28-Aug	What is Theater
Friday	30-Aug	History of Theater Development
Monday	2-Sep	Holiday - Labor Day
Wednesday	4-Sep	Aspects of Design
Friday	6-Sep	Theater Jobs
Monday	9-Sep	Spectacle Essay Due
Wednesday	11-Sep	Characters
Friday	13-Sep	Characters
Monday	16-Sep	Characters
Wednesday	18-Sep	Character Essay Due
Friday	20-Sep	Themes
Monday	23-Sep	Themes
Wednesday	25-Sep	Themes
Friday	27-Sep	Theme Essay Due
Monday	30-Sep	Use of Language
Wednesday	2-Oct	Use of Language
Friday	4-Oct	Use of Language
Monday	7-Oct	Language Essay Due
Wednesday	9-Oct	Rhythm
Friday	11-Oct	Rhythm
Monday	14-Oct	Rhythm
Wednesday	16-Oct	Rhythm Essay Due
Friday	18-Oct	Plot
Monday	21-Oct	Plot
Wednesday	23-Oct	Plot
Friday	25-Oct	Plot Essay Due
Monday	28-Oct	Nat Turner in Jerusalem Essay Due
Wednesday	30-Oct	Favorites Discussion
Friday	1-Nov	Favorites Discussion

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Monday	4-Nov	Favorites Essay Due
Wednesday	6-Nov	Group Assignments
Friday	8-Nov	Group Work – Project Selection
Monday	11-Nov	Holiday - Veterans Day
Wednesday	13-Nov	Wolves Essay Due
Friday	15-Nov	Group Work – Project Selection Due
Monday	18-Nov	Group Work – Design
Wednesday	20-Nov	Group Work – Design
Friday	22-Nov	Group Work – Designs Due
Monday	25-Nov	Group Work – Rehearsal
Wednesday	27-Nov	Holiday - Thanksgiving
Friday	29-Nov	Holiday - Thanksgiving
Monday	2-Dec	Group Work – Rehearsal
Wednesday	4-Dec	Group Work – Rehearsal
Tuesday	10-Dec	Final - Group Presentations 10:15am - 12:15pm