

**Sul Ross State University**  
**THEA 1310-002 Introduction to the Theatre**

FALL 2022  
T/TH 12:30 – 1:45 pm  
FAB 105 (Studio Theatre)

Office hours Mon/Tues/Thurs 3:00 – 4:00 pm  
All other times by appointment  
Office: FAB 106

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### **Course Description**

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Welcome to THEA 1310: Introduction to the Theatre. I look forward to working with you this semester!

This course is designed to ignite your interest in theatre. You may be someone with a lot of experience with theatre, or you may be someone with no experience. My hope is that through the readings, viewings, discussions, and writing exercises in this course, you will develop an appreciation and understanding of theatre including its origins, formal elements, and the development of its genres throughout history. You'll also learn about the role of different theatre personnel and the processes they employ to create live theatre experiences.

The readings and viewings for this course will introduce you to dramatic texts, provide you with fundamental knowledge of dramatic principles and theatrical styles, and address a range of contemporary social issues.

This course satisfies the creative arts core requirement and is intended as an introduction to theatre. No prior theatre experience necessary.

### **Required Texts**

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The Creative Spirit: An Introduction to Theatre (6th edition), Arnold, Stephanie. McGraw Hill, 2014. ISBN-10: 0073514268 or ISBN-13: 978-0073514260

### **Materials Required:**

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- 1) A working Sul Ross e-mail account. You are required to check your Sul Ross email account daily.
- 2) A working Blackboard account.
- 3) Access to Digital Theatre + (use the SRSU Library Database)

- 4) A device used for viewing – preferably a computer or tablet. It's difficult to view recorded plays on a phone because the screen is so small. Do the best you can to access a computer or tablet.

**Program Learning Outcomes** *The graduating student will:*

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- 1) Demonstrate knowledge of the various theatrical genres, styles, and works made throughout theatre history;
- 2) demonstrate the ability to analyze scripts;
- 3) demonstrate the ability to analyze all technical aspects of a theatrical production;
- 4) describe the theatre process and compose a functional definition for the theatre event;
- 5) name the basic responsibilities and roles of the playwright, director, actor and designer in the theatre production;
- 6) have a basic understanding of the difference between tragedy, comedy, melodrama, farce, epic and absurdist theatre and be able to apply them to productions;
- 7) describe the uniqueness of the theatre art;
- 8) demonstrate an understanding of the elements necessary to bring about a unified production;
- 9) identify a variety of theatre spaces; and
- 10) list and describe of the names and works associated with key figures (playwrights, directors, designers, performers) in the theatre.

**Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)**

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Among other topics, students will:

- Articulate a working vocabulary of theatre terminology
- Evaluate a theatre performance for its formal qualities
- Demonstrate beginner knowledge of script analysis, including given circumstances, idea, character, plot, rhythm, language, and spectacle.
- 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.

**Marketable Skills (B.F.A. in Theatre)**

1. Students will acquire strong oral and written communication skills.
2. Students will acquire strong analytical skills.
3. Students will acquire strong teamwork and collaboration skills.

**Core Assessments**

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**Personal Responsibility** - Students will develop principles of personal responsibility for living in a diverse world; to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic

responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

**Social Responsibility** - Students will develop principles of social responsibility for living in a diverse world, to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

## **Course Requirements**

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**Written Responses:** Throughout the term, you will view videos of staged productions and write critical analysis papers in response to these viewings. Your responses will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- 1) Clarity of response. Are responses clear and well-organized?
- 2) Thoroughness of response. Does the response answer the question completely?
- 3) Effective use of language. Did you use correct grammar, syntax, punctuation, and vocabulary?
- 4) Quality and relevance of supporting materials (i.e., examples or citations, if appropriate). Are the examples cited relevant to the question? If used, are citations credible and relevant to the question?

**Readings and Viewings:** In addition to the required textbook, the instructor will provide selected readings on theatre history and play analysis, as well as pdfs of play scripts. You will also view several productions (recordings of live plays) and short videos on topics we'll be discussing throughout the term. Do your best to keep up with these readings and viewings. All readings and viewings will be available on Blackboard.

**Final Scene:** For the final in this course, you will partner with another classmate and present a rehearsed and blocked scene for the class. You must be off-book (memorized) and wear clothing that is a close approximation to your character's clothing (costume). Scenes will be provided by the instructor.

**NOTE: Several of the required readings and viewings in this course contain profanity, violence, nudity, and mature themes. There are some recordings that contain flashing lights. If this poses a risk to you, please contact the instructor; it will remain confidential.**

### **ADA Statement**

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It

is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu) Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, SUI Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

### **Library**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine. Offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LobolD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

### **Academic Integrity**

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

### **Classroom Climate of Respect**

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose, and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another based on race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

### **Diversity Statement**

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the crisis of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for

the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

### Course Calendar

(Please note: this calendar is subject to change at instructor's discretion)

Date	Classroom Activity	Reading/Assignment DUE
<b>WEEK ONE</b>		
Tues 8/23	Review syllabus and course expectations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share your experiences with live theatre.</li> <li>2. What is theatre? How do we define it?</li> <li>3. Does live theatre serve a function in modern society? Why or why not? Explain.</li> </ol> <p>This will be an in-class written assignment that we will discuss as a group. You will submit your written responses at the end of the class period.</p>
Thurs 8/25	Start reading <i>Pipeline</i> by Dominique Morisseau	<b>No Assignment due</b>
<b>WEEK TWO</b>		
Tues 8/30	Continue reading <i>Pipeline</i> by Dominique Morisseau	<p><b>Viewing due:</b> Spotlight On: The Playwright</p> <p><a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus.com.wmlsrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-playwright">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus.com.wmlsrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-playwright</a></p>
Thurs 9/1	<b>View:</b> <i>Pipeline</i> (2019, Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre, Directed by Habib Azar, Lileana Blain-Cruz)	<p><b>Reading due:</b> Finish <i>Pipeline</i> script</p> <p><b>Assignment due (Blackboard):</b> Respond to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What is the theme/idea of the play?</li> <li>2) Who is the protagonist of the play? Explain.</li> <li>3) Do you think <i>Pipeline</i> is relevant today in 2022? Why or why not? Explain in a paragraph or two.</li> </ol>
<b>WEEK THREE</b>		
Tues 9/6	Discuss Chapter 1 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> .	<b>Read:</b> Chapter 1 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> (Readings tab on Blackboard)

		<b>Assignment due (on Blackboard):</b> Respond to <u>all questions</u> at the end of chapter 1 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> . Upload to Blackboard (under Assignments tab)
Thurs 9/8	<b>View:</b> Essential Greeks on Digital Theatre +  Discuss <i>Antigone</i>	<b>Read:</b> Excerpts about <i>Antigone</i> . Be prepared to discuss <i>Antigone</i> in class.  <b>View:</b> Unlocking Greek Theatre  <a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/unlocking-greek-theatre">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/unlocking-greek-theatre</a>
<b>WEEK FOUR</b>		
Tues, 9/13	View <i>Antigone</i> (Actors of Dionysus) in class.	<b>Viewing due</b> Spotlight On: The Actor <b>and</b> Spotlight On: The Director  <a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-actor">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-actor</a>  <a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-director">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-director</a>
Thurs 9/15	Discuss <i>Antigone</i> in class.	<b>Reading due:</b> Chapter 6 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> : The Designers  <b>Viewing due</b> Spotlight On: The Costume Designer  <a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-costume-designer">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-costume-designer</a>  <b>Viewing due:</b> Spotlight On: The Set Designer  <a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-set-designer">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-set-designer</a>
<b>WEEK FIVE</b>		
Tues, 9/20	Discuss chapter 6 (design elements)	<b>Viewing due:</b> Spotlight On: The Lighting Designer (cont'd on next page)  <a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-lighting-designer">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-lighting-designer</a>

		<p><b>Viewing due:</b> Spotlight On: The Sound Designer</p> <p><a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-sound-designer">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-sound-designer</a></p> <p><b>Assignment due on Blackboard:</b></p> <p>Submit response to <b>BOTH</b> questions # 1 and #2 at the end of chapter 6 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i>.</p> <p><b>View:</b> <i>All My Sons</i> by Arthur Miller (Apollo Theatre, Directed by Howard Davies)</p> <p><a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/productions/all-my-sons-digital-theatre">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/productions/all-my-sons-digital-theatre</a></p>
Thurs, 9/22	Continue discussing chapter 6 (design elements).	<b>Assignment due on Blackboard:</b> <i>Antigone</i> response papers due on Blackboard by 10:00 pm. Assignment details under Assignments tab.
<b>WEEK SIX</b>		
Tues, 9/27	Start reading <i>All My Sons</i>	<b>Reading due:</b> Chapter 7 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> : (Understanding Style: Realism)
Thurs, 9/29	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	No assignment due
<b>WEEK SEVEN</b>		
Tues, 10/4	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	
Thurs, 10/6	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	
<b>WEEK EIGHT</b>		
Tues, 10/11	View <i>All My Sons</i> in class	
Thurs, 10/13	Continue viewing <i>All My Sons</i>	
<b>WEEK NINE</b>		

Tues, 10/ 18	Playwriting Exercises in class	
Thurs 10/20	Playwriting Exercises in class continued	
WEEK TEN		
Tues 10/25	Playwriting Exercises in class continued	<b>Assignment due:</b> <i>All My Sons</i> response paper due on Blackboard by 10:00 pm (under Assignments tab).
Thurs 10/27	Playwriting Exercises in class continued	
WEEK ELEVEN		
Tues 11/1	<b>TBD</b>	
Thurs, 11/3	<b>TBD</b>	<b>Assignment due:</b> <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i> response paper due on Blackboard by 10:00 pm. Assignment details under Assignments tab on Blackboard.
WEEK TWELVE		
Tues 11/8	Assign Final Projects (Playwriting or Scenes) Acting Exercises	<b>Assignment due:</b> Playwriting scenes due in class. Must be typed.
Thurs 11/10	Acting Exercises	
WEEK THIRTEEN		
Tues 11/15	Acting Exercises	
Thurs 11/17	Acting Exercises	
WEEK FOURTEEN		
Tues 11/22	TBD	
Thurs 11/24	<b>Thanksgiving holiday. No class meeting.</b>	N/A
WEEK FIFTEEN		

Tues 11/29	Final class meeting before finals	<b>Assignment due (for writers only):</b> Drafts of short plays due in class.  <b>Assignment due (for actors only):</b> Written character analysis. Must be typed.
Thurs 12/1	DEAD DAY	No class meeting
WEEK SIXTEEN		
12/7	10:15 am – 12:15 pm	<b>FINAL DUE.</b> Meet in Studio Theatre at 10:15 am to present final scenes and read short plays.

## Grading

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Assignments are valued as follows:

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| 1) Written Assignments                         | 15% |
| 2) <i>Antigone</i> response paper              | 10% |
| 3) <i>All My Sons</i> response paper (midterm) | 20% |
| 4) <i>Pipeline</i> responses                   | 10% |
| 5) <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i> response paper | 15% |
| 6) Participation                               | 10% |
| 7) Final Scene (acting or writing)             | 20% |

### Grading Criteria:

A = Exceptional. Demonstrates mastery of material beyond expectation. Professional quality of work. Highest level of scholarship.

B = Above average. Demonstrates mastery of material. Work is of better-than-expected quality, but not quite professional. High level of scholarship.

C = Average. Demonstrates proficiency with material. Work is of amateur quality. Ordinary level of scholarship.

D = Below Average. Less than proficient with material. Work shows errors, careless mistakes, or is just plain wrong. Poor scholarship

F – Failure. Material incomplete. Work grossly negligent or incomplete. No evidence of scholarship present.