

**Sul Ross State University**  
**THEA 1310-003 Introduction to the Theatre**

FALL 2022 MWF from 9:00 – 9:50 am  Office hours Monday/Tuesday/Thursday from 3:00 – 4:00 pm.  All other times by appointment.	Marjorie Scott, MFA Associate Prof. of Comm. and Theatre Chair, Dept. of Visual and Performing Arts  Office: FAB 106 p. 432-837-8039 m. 432-294-1191 <a href="mailto:mscott3@sulross.edu">mscott3@sulross.edu</a>
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### **Course Description**

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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 and does not require prior theatrical experience.

### **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 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.

### **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**

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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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**Participation:** Participation means pay attention, come to class prepared (do the reading!), engage in the classroom discussion, and ask questions. Do your best to prepare for class, show up, and engage.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory, as is punctuality. Please be on time and do your best to attend every class meeting. Illnesses and emergencies happen, and it is your responsibility to inform the instructor if you are unable to attend class. I do not accept secondhand information from classmates regarding your whereabouts. Email me before class at [mscott3@sulross.edu](mailto:mscott3@sulross.edu) if you anticipate being absent that day. If you inform me after your absence, the absence will be counted as unexcused. Per university policy, students with nine (9) unexcused absences will be dropped from the course with an “F.”

**Readings and Viewings:** You will read and view several plays throughout the term. You will also view short videos about theatre and read excerpts containing analysis of the plays you read and view.

**Response Papers:** Throughout the term, you will write critical analysis papers in response to the readings and 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?

**Final Project:** For your final, you will write a short play (about 10 minutes) or perform in a short scene from a play selected by the instructor. This means you have a choice. Do you want to act or write? If you choose to write a short play for the final, then start thinking about topics that interest you. What do you care about? What issues in the world need solving? What cultures need more or better representation on stage? What do you love? Hate? Fear? Believe? Value? What do you connect with?

## Grading

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Assignments are valued as follows:

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|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1) Attendance and participation      | 15% |
| 2) <i>Antigone</i> response paper    | 10% |
| 3) Playwriting Assignment            | 15% |
| 4) <i>All My Sons</i> response paper | 15% |

5) <i>Pipeline</i> response paper	10%
6) <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i> response	15%
7) Final Project (scene or short play)	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.

**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 you need accommodation, 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 Schwartze 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)

Week One	Classroom Activity	Reading/Assignment DUE
Mon 8/22	Review syllabus and course expectations.  Introduce yourself and share your experiences with live theatre.	
Wed 8/24	1) What is theatre? How do we define it? 2) Does live theatre serve a function in modern society? Why or why not? Explain.  Start reading <i>Pipeline</i> by Dominique Morisseau in class.	
Fri 8/26	Continue reading <i>Pipeline</i> in class.	Bring <i>Pipeline</i> script to class with you.
Week Two		
Mon 8/29	Continue reading <i>Pipeline</i> in class.	<b>No assignment due</b>
Wed 8/31	Continue reading <i>Pipeline</i> in class.	<b>No Assignment due</b>
Fri 9/2	Finish reading <i>Pipeline</i> in class	<b>No assignment due</b>
Week Three		
Mon 9/5	<b>LABOR DAY -- NO CLASS MEETING</b>	<b>No assignment due. Enjoy a day off!</b>

Wed, 9/7	<p><b>View:</b> <i>Pipeline</i> (2019, Lincoln Center’s Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre, Directed by Habib Azar, Lileana Blain-Cruz</p>	<p><b>Written assignment due on 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) What is the antagonist, or opposing force, in the play? Explain.</li> <li>3) Who is the protagonist of the play? How does he/she change? Explain.</li> <li>4) Is <i>Pipeline</i> relevant today in 2022? Why or why not? Explain.</li> </ol> <p><b>Viewing due:</b> Spotlight On: The Actor <b>and</b> Spotlight On: The Director (on Blackboard under “Viewings tab)</p> <p><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></p> <p><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></p>
Fri 9/9	Continue viewing <i>Pipeline</i> in class	
<b>Week Four</b>		
Mon 9/12	Finish viewing <i>Pipeline</i> (if necessary) Set up <i>Antigone</i>	<p><b>Reading due:</b> Excerpts about <i>Antigone</i>.</p> <p><b>Viewing due:</b> Unlocking Greek Theatre <b>and</b> Spotlight On: The Playwright</p>

	<p>Start viewing <i>Antigone</i> (Actors of Dionysus)</p> <p>Discuss Chapter 1 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i>.</p> <p>Be prepared to discuss the questions at the end of the chapter and the viewings on Greek Theatre and the playwright in class.</p> <p>Continue viewing <i>Antigone</i> (Actors of Dionysus)</p>	<p><a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/works-hops/unlocking-greek-theatre">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/works-hops/unlocking-greek-theatre</a></p> <p><a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/works-hops/spotlight-on-the-playwright">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/works-hops/spotlight-on-the-playwright</a></p>
Wed 9/14	Discuss <i>Antigone</i>	
Fri 9/16	Discuss <i>Antigone</i> – Review response paper assignment in class.	
<b>Week Five</b>		
Mon 9/19	Start reading <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i> by Sarah Ruhl	
Wed 9/21	Continue reading <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i>	
Fri 9/23	Continue reading <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i>	
<b>Week Six</b>		
Mon 9/26	Continue reading <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i>	<b>Assignment due:</b> <i>Antigone</i> response papers due on Blackboard by 10:00 pm
Wed 9/28	Finish reading <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i> - Review response paper assignment	



Fri 9/30	Discuss Design Elements (set, lighting, costume, sound, props).  <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>  <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>Reading due:</b> Chapter 6 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> : The Designers  <b>Written Assignment due:</b> Respond to <u>BOTH</u> questions # 1 <u>and</u> #2 at the end of chapter 6 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> . Bring <u>typed</u> responses to class.
<b>Week Seven</b>		
Mon 10/3	Continue discussing design elements	
Wed 10/5	Set up <i>All My Sons</i> and discuss post-WWII America.  Start reading <i>All My Sons</i> by Arthur Miller Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	<b>Reading due:</b> Chapter 7 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> : (Understanding Style: Realism)
Fri 10/7	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	
<b>Week Eight</b>		
Mon 10/10	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>  <b>Discussion:</b> Etiquette and expectations or theatre attendance.	
Wed 10/12	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	
Fri 10/14	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	<b>FYI:</b> Dead Man's Cell Phone opens at the Studio Theatre (7:30 pm F)
<b>Week Nine</b>		
Mon 10/17	View <i>All My Sons</i>	
Wed 10/19	View <i>All My Sons</i>	
Fri 10/21	View <i>All My Sons</i>	
<b>Week Ten</b>		
Mon 10/24	Playwriting Exercises in class	<b>Midterm assignment due:</b> <i>Dead Man's Cell Phone</i> analysis paper due in class. Must be typed.

Wed 10/26	Playwriting Exercises in class	<b>Reading due:</b> Handout on playwriting (on Blackboard)
Fri 10/28	Playwriting Exercises in class – Guest Instructor	
<b>Week Eleven</b>		
Mon 10/31	Acting Exercises – Guest Instructor	<b>Assignment due:</b> <i>All My Sons</i> response paper due on Blackboard by 10:00 pm
Wed 11/2	Acting Exercises – Guest Instructor	
Fri 11/4	Acting Exercises – Guest Instructor	Submit 1 <sup>st</sup> draft of play (6-10 pages). Upload to Blackboard.
<b>Week Twelve</b>		
Mon 11/7	Acting Exercises <b>Assign Final Projects</b> (acting or writing)	
Wed 11/9	Acting Exercises	
Fri 11/11	Read 2 <sup>nd</sup> drafts of plays aloud in class.	Submit 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft of play (6-10 pages). Upload to Blackboard. Bring copies to class!
<b>Week Thirteen</b>		
Mon 11/14	Read 2nd draft of plays	
Wed 11/16	Read 2nd draft of plays	
Fri 11/18	Read 2nd draft of plays	
<b>Week Fourteen</b>		
Mon 11/21	Rehearse final acting scenes	
Wed 11/23	NO CLASS	
Fri 11/25	NO CLASS	
<b>Week Fifteen</b>		
Mon 11/28	Rehearse final acting scenes	
Wed 11/30	Rehearse final acting scenes	
<b>Week Sixteen</b>		
Tues 12/6	<b>FINAL</b> <b>8:00 – 10:00 am</b>	<b>Read 4th draft of plays aloud and present rehearsed scenes (final project)</b>