

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

FALL 2024  
Mon/Wed/Fri 10:00-10:50 AM  
FAB 105

Office hours Tues/Thurs 10:30 am – 12:00 pm  
All other times by appointment  
Office: FAB 203B

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### **Course Description**

Welcome to Intro to Theatre!

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.

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.

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### **Required Texts**

N/A

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### **Materials Required:**

- 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.

**Student 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.
- 11) The student will develop the ability to express themselves creatively through appropriate theatrical performance and/or design.
- 12) The student will develop the ability to employ analytical and critical thinking skills through directing, playwriting, theatre history and script analysis, to work creatively and collaboratively with actors and technicians in mounting laboratory theatrical productions.
- 13) The student will develop the ability to demonstrate and apply standard industry requirements to all aspects of technical production.

**Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)**

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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.

## Marketable Skills Dissemination Strategy:

Through a combination of coursework and laboratory work, i.e., theatrical productions, our students will gain the opportunity to explore and develop all three program marketable skills. Specifically, students will learn how to analyze scripts, and communicate their findings via written assignments. They will also be encouraged to support their analysis orally through classroom discussion and their Comprehensive Oral Exam at the end of the senior year. Theatrical productions will provide the opportunity for actors and technicians to problem solve and work collaboratively developing strong teamwork skills.

## **Core Assessments**

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**Teamwork** - Students will develop teamwork skills to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

## **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:** Readings will be provided by the instructor. It is your responsibility to keep track of these readings and bring them to class. You will also view several productions (recordings of live plays) and short videos on theatre topics we'll be discussing throughout the term. You will need to access Digital Theatre+ which is part of the SRSU Library Database. Do your best to keep up with these readings and viewings. All readings and viewings will be available on Blackboard.

**Final Project:** For the final in this course, you will be partnered or grouped with classmates to present a scene provided by the instructor. Scenes must be rehearsed and blocked. You must be "off-book" for the final, which means your lines must be memorized. You will have supplemental written work due the day of final, which is a

character analysis. Format and instructions on the written portion will be provided by the instructor.

**NOTE: Several of the required readings and viewings in this course contain profanity, violence, and mature themes.**

## **Grading**

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Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Playwriting Assignment	20%
2) <i>Antigone</i> response paper	10%
3) <i>Art</i> response paper	10%
4) <i>All My Sons</i> response paper	10%
5) Other Written Assignments	10%
6) Participation	20%
7) Final Scene	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.

### **ADA Statement**

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the 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. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartz Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu) or [ronnie.harris@sulross.edu](mailto:ronnie.harris@sulross.edu). RGC students can also contact Alejandra Valdez, at 830-758-5006 or email [alejandra.valdez@sulross.edu](mailto:alejandra.valdez@sulross.edu). Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

**24-Hour National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 988**

If you are a student, faculty, or staff of SRSU and you are in crisis (mental health), you should contact one of the following numbers: local emergency at 9-1-1, the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-8255, SRSU police department (432-837-8101), or the local community mental health agency (PermiaCare, if in or around Alpine, at 432-837-3373).

### **Library**

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer 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 LoboID 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 by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting [library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/](http://library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/) or ask a librarian by emailing [srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu).

Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

### **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. Students should also avoid using open AI sources unless permission is expressly given for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

### **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.

**Supportive Statement**

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may 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 a supportive 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 1</b>		
Mon 8/26	Review syllabus and course expectations.	1. Share your experiences with live theatre. 2. What is theatre? How do you define it? 3. Does live theatre serve a function in modern society? Why or why not? Explain.  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.
Wed 8/28	Begin discussing origins of theatre and theatre terminology.	
Fri 8/30	Continue discussing theatre history and how to read a play.	<b>Viewing due:</b> Spotlight On: The Playwright  <a href="https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-playwright">https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-playwright</a>  <b>Reading due:</b> Chapter 1 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> (Readings tab on Blackboard) Answer all three questions at the end of the chapter.
<b>WEEK 2</b>		

Mon 9/2	NO CLASS	
Wed 9/4	Begin reading <i>All My Sons</i> by Arthur Miller	<b>Viewing due:</b> <a href="#">Spotlight On: The Director   Digital Theatre+ (digitaltheatreplus.com)</a>
Fri 9/6	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	<b>Viewing due:</b> <a href="#">Spotlight On: The Actor   Digital Theatre+ (digitaltheatreplus.com)</a>
<b>WEEK 3</b>		
Mon 9/9	Continue reading <i>All My Sons</i>	<b>Viewing due:</b> <a href="#">Spotlight On: The Lighting Designer   Digital Theatre+ (digitaltheatreplus.com)</a>  <a href="#">Spotlight On: The Set Designer   Digital Theatre+ (digitaltheatreplus.com)</a>
Wed 9/11	Finish reading <i>All My Sons</i>	<b>Viewing due:</b> <a href="#">Spotlight On: The Costume Designer   Digital Theatre+ (digitaltheatreplus.com)</a>  Last day to drop class!
Fri 9/13	Teamwork Project	Assignment due at the end of class
<b>WEEK 4</b>		
Mon 9/16	View <i>All My Sons</i>	<b>Viewing due:</b> <a href="#">Spotlight On: The Stage Manager   Digital Theatre+ (digitaltheatreplus.com)</a>

Wed 9/18	Continue viewing <i>All My Sons</i> in class on Digital Theatre+	
Fri 9/20	Finish viewing <i>All My Sons</i>	
<b>WEEK 5</b>		
Mon 9/23	Discuss <i>Antigone</i> & View <i>Antigone</i> (Actors of Dionysus) in class.	<b>Viewing due:</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>
Wed 9/25	Continue watching <i>Antigone</i>	
Fri 9/27	Finish watching <i>Antigone</i> /discussion	<b>Written Response Due:</b> <i>All My Sons</i> by 10PM
<b>WEEK 6</b>		
Mon 9/30	Begin reading <i>Art</i> by Yasmina Reza	
Wed 10/2	Continue reading <i>Art</i>	
Fri 10/4	Continue reading <i>Art</i>	
<b>WEEK 7</b>		
Mon 10/7	Discuss design elements of theatre more in depth.	
Wed 10/9	Continue discussing design.	
Fri 10/11	Continue discussing design.	<b>Assignment due by 10:00 pm on Blackboard:</b>  Submit response to <b>BOTH</b> questions # 1 and #2 at the end of chapter 6 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i> .  Opening night of <i>Art</i> will be this Friday October 11th in the Studio Theatre of the FAB
<b>WEEK 8</b>		
Mon 10/14	Actor Q&A	Ask any questions to the actors featured in SRSU's production of <i>Art</i> .
Wed 10/16	Production Team Q&A	Ask any questions to a few of the production team members of <i>Art</i> .



Fri 10/18	TBA	<b>Written response due:</b> <i>Antigone</i> response paper due on Blackboard by 10:00 pm. Assignment details under Assignments tab.
<b>WEEK 9</b>		
Mon 10/21	Playwriting Exercises	
Wed 10/23	Playwriting Exercises	
Fri 10/25	Playwriting	
<b>WEEK 10</b>		
Mon 10/28	Playwriting	
Wed 10/30	Playwriting	
Fri 11/1	Playwriting	<b>Written response due:</b> <i>Art</i> response paper due on Blackboard by 10:00 pm. The questions in this assignment will largely focus on the production of <i>Art</i> at SRSU. You are required to attend at least one performance of this production.
<b>WEEK 11</b>		
Mon 11/4	Acting Exercises	
Wed 11/6	Acting Exercises	<b>Assignment given:</b> Final scenes and partners assigned in class and posted on Blackboard.
Fri 11/8	Acting Exercises	
<b>WEEK 12</b>		
Mon 11/11	Acting Exercises  November 12th: Deadline to apply for graduation for Fall 2024!	<b>Due in class:</b> First draft of short play.
Wed 11/13	Acting Scene Work	
Fri 11/15	Acting Scene Work	

<b>WEEK 13</b>		
Mon 11/18	Acting Scene Work	
Wed 11/20	Acting Scene Work	
Fri 11/ 22	Acting Scene Work	
<b>WEEK 14</b>		
Mon 11/25	Acting Scene Work	<b>Due in class:</b> Second draft of short play. (Possibly no class)
Wed 11/27	<b>NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING</b>	
Fri 11/29	<b>NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING</b>	
<b>WEEK 15</b>		
Mon 12/2	Reading plays in class	
Wed 12/4	Reading plays in class	
<b>WEEK 16</b>		
FINAL Dec 6th-11th	Final date TBA	Perform final scenes and submit paperwork