

Sul Ross State University
THEA 1310-2W1 Introduction to the Theater

Summer II 2025
Web-delivered course
Office hours by appointment only
This course satisfies the creative arts core requirement.

Marjorie Scott, M.F.A.
Associate Prof. of Communication and Theater
Chair, Dept. of Visual and Performing Arts
Office: FAB 106
office. 432-837-8039
mscott3@sulross.edu

Course Description

Through the readings, viewings, discussions, and writing assignments in this course, students 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 students to dramatic texts, provide them with fundamental knowledge of dramatic principles and theatrical styles, and address a range of contemporary social issues.

This course is intended as an introduction to theatre and does not require prior theatrical experience.

Required Texts

No textbook is required for this class. All readings will be provided and posted to Blackboard by the instructor.

Materials Required:

- 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)

Students will:

SLO 1: The student will develop the ability to express himself/herself creatively through appropriate theatrical performance and/or design.

SLO 2: 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.

SLO 3: The student will develop the ability to demonstrate and apply standard industry requirements to all aspects of technical production.

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.

Course Requirements

Discussion Board Topics and Written Assignments: Throughout the term, you will view videos of staged productions and to write short critical analyses in response to these viewings. Your responses will be evaluated on the following four 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: I'll provide selected readings on theatre history and play analysis, as well as pdfs of some 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.

***Cinderella* Analysis Paper:** You will write a 2-page critical analysis paper on a musical production of Theatre of the Big Bend's current production of Rodgers + Hammerstein's *Cinderella*, directed by Bret Scott with music direction by Dr. Andrew Alegría.

Final Paper: Due Tuesday, August 12 by 12:00 pm (noon). For your final, you will write a 2-3-page typed, double-spaced paper responding to the following questions:

- 1) Is theatre for entertainment only? Or does it serve another purpose in modern society? Explain, providing examples from the plays you watched in this class to support your argument.
- 2) What was your favorite production you viewed this term? Why? Explain and reference **at least two examples** from the production in your response.

- 3) What purpose do the design elements (costume, lights, sound, scenic, props) serve in a live production? Explain using **at least two examples** from productions you viewed this term.
- 4) Each of the plays you viewed this term expressed a theme or idea about the current state of the world or humanity. What issues (political or social) do you think need to be addressed on the stage in 2025? Choose at least one issue (think theme or idea) and explain why you think it would make an important subject for a play.

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.

Grading

Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Discussion Board Topics (6)	30%
2) Written Assignments (4)	20%
3) <i>Cinderella</i> paper	25%
4) Final Paper	25%

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 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 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.

Libraries

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. 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), or phone (432-837-8123).

The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass. Offer additional access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through SWTJC website, library.swtjc.edu. The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and Document Delivery from the Alpine campus.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is open to help YOU with your writing assignments and can be found on Blackboard. If you are logged into Blackboard, all you have to do is [click here](#)! The Center can assist you with prewriting, big picture revisions, and help with presentations that include writing. They offer appointments for papers, and if you have a quick question, you can drop in and get an answer.

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.

(See the following page for the course calendar.)

Course Calendar

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

Date	Assignment Due	Reading/Viewing Due
Mon, July 7		Read the course syllabus carefully. Contact instructor with any questions.
Tues, July 8	Discussion Board #1: Share your experiences with live theatre. Have you ever seen a play? Have you ever been in a play? Explain in a few sentences. And then read what your classmates wrote! Due by 11:59 pm CDT	
Wed, July 9		Reading #1: Chapter 1 of <u>The Creative Spirit</u> (on Blackboard) View: Unlocking Greek Theatre https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/unlocking-greek-theatre View: Spotlight On: The Playwright https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-playwright
Thurs, July 10	Written Assignment #1: Respond to all three questions about chapter one of <u>The Creative Spirit</u> (Reading #1). Due by 11:59 pm CDT	
Fri, July 11		View: <i>Antigone</i> (2017, Sandpit Theatre, St Albans. Actors of Dionysus) https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/productions/antigone

		<p>View: Spotlight On: The Actor <u>and</u> Spotlight On: The Director</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-actor</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-director</p>
Mon, July 14	<p>Discussion Board #2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Did Antigone do the right thing? If so, why? If not, why not? 2) What do you think the moral of <i>Antigone</i> is? What “lesson” could be learned by an audience member watching the show? Explain in a paragraph. <p>Due by 11:59 pm CDT</p>	
Tues, July 15		<p>Read: Chapter 7 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i>: (Understanding Style: Realism)</p> <p>View: <i>Long Day’s Journey Into Night</i> by Eugene O’Neill.</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/productions/long-days-journey-into-night-digital-theatre?start=62&end=1857</p>
Wed, July 16		
Thurs, July 17	<p>Written Assignment #2:</p> <p>Respond to all questions about the production of <i>Long Day’s Journey Into Night</i>.</p> <p>Due by 11:59 pm CDT</p>	
Fri, July 18		<p>Read: Chapter 6 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i>: The Designers (pdf on Blackboard)</p>

		<p>View: Spotlight On: The Costume Designer</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-costume-designer</p> <p>View: Spotlight On: The Set Designer</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-set-designer</p> <p>View: Spotlight On: The Lighting Designer</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-lighting-designer</p> <p>View: Spotlight On: The Sound Designer</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/spotlight-on-the-sound-designer</p>
Mon, July 21	<p>Written Assignment #3: Submit responses to <u>all three questions</u> the end of chapter 6 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i>. Due by 11:59 pm CDT</p>	
Tues, July 22		<p>View: Rodgers + Hammerstein's <i>Cinderella</i> at the Kokernot Outdoor Theatre in Alpine.</p> <p>Visit www.theatrebigbend.org for performance dates). Free admission with valid ID. Performance dates: July 10, 11, 12, 13 and July 17, 18, 19, 20.</p> <p>All performances begin at 8:00 pm at the Kokernot Outdoor Theatre in Alpine, Texas. The run-time of the show is 2 hours and 30 minutes which includes a 10-minute intermission (this is a break between act one and act two).</p> <p>Read: Chapter 11 of <i>The Creative Spirit</i></p>

		<p>View: Unlocking Musical Theatre (this will help you understand musical theatre a bit more)</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/workshops/unlocking-musical-theatre</p>
Wed, July 23	Critical analysis paper (2-3 pages) on <i>Cinderella</i> performance due by 11:59 pm CDT.	
Thurs, July 24		<p>View: <i>All My Sons</i> by Arthur Miller (2012, directed by Howard Davies)</p> <p>https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/productions/all-my-sons-digital-theatre#about</p>
Fri, July 25		
Mon, July 28	<p>Discussion Board #3: Respond to both questions about the production of <i>All My Sons</i> by Arthur Miller:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Do you think Joe is a hero or villain? Why? Explain in a paragraph. 2) What personal responsibility does each one of us in society have in keeping others safe from harm? Explain in a paragraph or two. <p>Describe the use of sound in the play? Was it effective in telling the story of what was happening to the characters? Why, or why not? Explain using at least two examples from the production.</p>	
Tues, July 29		

Wed, July 30	Discussion Board #4 (follow up): Reply to <u>at least two</u> classmates' responses to the questions about <i>All My Sons</i> . Due by 11:59 pm CDT	
Thurs, July 31		View: <i>Pipeline</i> (2019, Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre, Directed by Habib Azar, Lileana Blain-Cruz) https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.wmlrsu.idm.oclc.org/content/productions/pipeline
Fri, August 1		
Mon, August 4	Discussion Board #5: 1) Was Nya (the mom in <i>Pipeline</i>) helping or hurting her son Omari? Explain using specific examples from the production. 2) Why do you think Omari was so angry with his father? Explain. 3) Was the acting believable in the production? Why or why not? Explain. Due by 11:59 pm CDT	
Tues, August 5		Read your classmates' Discussion Board #5 responses to <i>Pipeline</i> .
Wed, August 6	Discussion Board #6 (follow up): Write <u>at least two</u> detailed responses to fellow classmates' response to the <i>Pipeline</i> discussion.	

	Due by 11:59 pm CDT	
Thurs, August 7		Read about what's playing on Broadway (NYC theatre district) and off-Broadway (near the Broadway theatre) at New York Theatre Guide https://www.newyorktheatreguide.com and Broadway.com https://www.broadway.com
Fri, August 8	<p>Written Assignment #4:</p> <p>Imagine you're going on a trip to New York City to see some live theatre and you have the budget to choose <u>three</u> shows.</p> <p>After reading about your show options on New York Theatre Guide and Broadway.com, <u>choose three productions</u> you would like to see the most. For each show, briefly explain the reasons you chose it.</p> <p>Due by 11:59 pm CDT.</p>	
Mon, August 11		
Tues, August 12	FINAL – Submit a 2-3-page typed, double-spaced paper reflecting on what you've learned about theater this semester. Assignment details on Blackboard.	
Wed, August 13	Final class day. Course grades submitted by noon.	