



**THE 1310 002: INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE 20767  
COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2014**

**Location: PAC 100**

**Time: MWF 10 am – 10:50 am**

**Instructor:** Joe Reynolds, MFA

**Office Location:** PAC 134

**Office Hours:** MWF 3 PM – 4:30 PM and by appointment

**Office Phone:** 903-886-5336

**University Email Address:** Joe.Reynolds@tamuc.edu

<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
---------------------------

**Textbook(s) required:** *THE THEATRE EXPERIENCE, EDWIN WILSON, and 11th edition.*  
Plays can be found online through TAMUC library.

**Course Description:**

The course is a survey of the fields of theatre activity designed to provide introductory knowledge of all phases of drama, literature, performance, theatre facilities, equipment and production procedures.

**Objective:** The objective of this course is to provide the student with an overview of the fundamentals of theatre through practical experience in the various crafts of theatre.

**Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, the student will be able to:**

1. Identify a basic understanding of theatrical performance as a synthesis of many arts- playwriting, acting, directing, design, music, dance and management.
2. Apply this knowledge to engage in critical and useful participation in theatre as either a thinking member of the audience or as a participant in the art itself.
3. Recognize the benefits to the quality of life by the continued exposure to theatrical arts.

**Attendance:** *Attendance and promptness are a requirement for all theatre classes.* The collaborative nature of theatre requires commitment of all individuals to the group. Punctuality is also key to the health of your career in the professional theatre. Attendance is taken for every class. You are allowed three absences without penalty. (Two tardies are equivalent to one absence). Every absence after the third will result in an automatic reduction of one letter grade for the class. Six total absences will result with you being asked to drop the course. The quizzes and exams must be taken on the date listed in the syllabus to get full credit.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

ASSIGNMENTS: see syllabus for specific directions.

QUIZZES. Short quizzes covering the reading material and lectures.

MID-TERM EXAM AND

GROUP PROJECT

FINAL EXAM

## **Grading**

Assignments 25%  
Quizzes 20%  
Mid-Term Exam 20%  
Group Project 15%  
Final Exam 20%  
Total: 100%

*All papers must be typed, formatted according to MLA research paper guidelines.*

**GRADING SCALE:** The following grading scale will be used to determine all individual grades as well as the student's overall grade in the course:

A 90%-100% (Exceptional Quality Work)  
B 80%-89% (Above Average Quality Work)  
C 70%-79% (Average Quality Work)  
D 60%-69% (Below Average Quality Work)  
F 0%-59% (Fails to Meet Acceptable Expectations in Quality of Work)

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

**WORKING EMAIL REQUIREMENT:** It is a course expectation that you have a working email address that you check daily. If you have not already acquired an email address through the University or otherwise, please make arrangements to do so before the next class meeting.

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

**eCOLLEGE:** You are required to have working access to the course eCollege site, as provided by the University. The syllabus and some materials may be distributed through eCollege. I use the grade book in eCollege, where I will post grades for individual assignments. The grade book conveniently provides your current percentage in the class, although be aware that it may not necessarily include an attendance deduction, which might be deducted from your point total.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

### **Contacting the instructor:**

Please feel free to visit me during my office hours at any time during the semester. I am here to help! If you can't make my office hours due to a scheduling conflict, please set up an appointment with me. It is not an imposition. If something is occurring that is presenting you with difficulties with this class, let me know. Don't be intimidated. Talk to me! The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is via email. I check it fairly frequently. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures:**

### **University Specific Procedures:** *ADA Statement*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**

**Ge e Library 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)

## Student Disability Resources & Services

### *Student Conduct*

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

## Course Outline and Calendar

### **Week 1:**

January 13 - 17: Introduction to the Class--read through course syllabus and discuss general expectations. Discussion: Experiencing Today's Global, Diverse Theatre.

The Audience: Its Role and Imagination

Read Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

**Assignment #1:** Find a play, dance, or live concert being performed now or in the very near future that you can go see. Check out these theatres in Dallas: Dallas Theatre Center. Dallas Summer Musicals at Fair Park. Bishop Arts Theatre Center. Contemporary Theatre of Dallas. The Ochre House. Turn in a typed information sheet with your name, the title of the show, author, the place of the venue, date, time, and cost of a ticket, at the top of the page. Then write a short description of what it's about based on the advertising and any knowledge you can find out about the production, (word of mouth, internet search for reviews, marketing and publicity.) Also, write a few sentences about why you are interested in going to see it. Turn in by **January 24<sup>th</sup>** at the latest to receive credit. **No late assignments accepted.**

### **Week 2:**

January 20 – No class

January 22 – 24: Discussion: Background and Expectations of the Audience. The Critic.

Read Chapter 3

**Turn in Assignment #1 by Friday.**

**Assignment #2:** Choose a 1-2 monologue from one of these plays to be performed in front of the class on February 7<sup>th</sup>. *Death of a Salesman*. *A Raisin in the Sun*. *The Glass Menagerie*. *The Crucible*. You must read the entire play!

### **Week 3:**

January 27 – 31: The Audience Views the Stage. Theatre Spaces.

Read Chapter 4

**Quiz #1 on Wednesday covering Chapter 1 – 4.**

**Homework:** Read the play that your monologue is from and choose a speech to perform in front of the class for next week. Begin your speech with "Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (your name) and this is from *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry."

You don't need any props or costume. Put the focus of the imaginary person you are talking to out in front so the audience can see your eyes. Take your time. Speak slowly and clearly and with enough volume so that we can all understand you.

**NO CLASS ON FRIDAY, January 30<sup>TH</sup>. (TETA CONFERENCE) Memorize your speech.**

### **Week 4:**

February 3 – 7: The Performers and The Director. Stage Acting Today. **Perform speeches on Friday.** No late monologues accepted. Please be prepared to receive full credit.

Read Chapter 5 and Handouts

**Assignment #2 Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup>**, perform a memorized monologue about 1 to 2 minutes long from one of these plays: Death of a Salesman. A Raisin in the Sun. The Glass Menagerie. The Crucible. Hamlet. You must be present and perform your monologue today to get credit. No late speeches accepted.

### **Week 5**

February 10 - 14: The Director and the Producer

Read Chapter 6

Study for Quiz on Friday.

**Quiz #2 on Friday covering Chapter 5 – 6 and Handouts**

### **Week 6**

February 17 - 21: Creating the play. The Playwright. Dramatic Forms. Dramatic Characters.

Read Chapter 7 and 8

**Assignment #3** Write a one to two page treatment, that is, a synopsis, of an original idea you have that would make a good play. Be sure to describe the plot, theme, characters, style of dialogue, the setting and time period. **Due no later than February 28<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Week 7**

February 24 - 28: Tragedy, Comedy, Tragicomedy and other Serious Drama

Read Chapter 9 and handouts

**Assignment #3 Due by February 28<sup>th</sup>.**

**Quiz #3 on Friday covering Chapter 7 – 9 and handouts**

### **Week 8**

March 3 Review for Mid Term

March 5 **Mid Term Exam covering Chapter 1 – 9 and handouts.**

March 7 No class (choose a play to read from the list for your designer concept presentation.)  
(Death of a Salesman, The Glass Menagerie, The Crucible, A Raisin in the Sun or Hamlet.)

### **Week 9**

March 10 - 14: No class. Read your play again!

### **Week 10**

March 17 - 21: The Designers

Read Chapters 10 and 11

**Assignment #4 Present a designer concept** for a play (Death of a Salesman, The Glass Menagerie, The Crucible, A Raisin in the Sun or Hamlet.) Your presentation is a collage of images that help you tell the story and display your vision for the production. Find images that are emotionally impactful and that show color, texture and a cohesive style. Print or cut them from magazines and glue them on a concept board, (large poster board, or cardboard box). Type a one page statement to turn in with your concept board that basically is your presentation speech. Present the collage to the class on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **Week 11**

March 24 – The Designers

Read Chapter 12

March 26 – **Assignment #4 - Present your designer concept** collage boards in class. You must present today to receive credit. No late presentations!

Find a duet acting partner in class today and discuss possible scene choices.

Sign up for duet acting scene presentation.

March 28 – Musical Theatre

Read Chapter 13

Read Handout

**Assignment #5 – Duet Acting Scene** (choose a 4 to 6 minute scene from one of the plays discussed in class. Memorize and rehearse the scene in class.)

### **Week 12**

March 31 - April 4: Musical Theatre, Broadway and Nonprofit Professional Theatre

**Assignment #5 – Wednesday and Friday, April 4 Perform Duet Acting Scenes**

### **Week 13**

April 7 - 11: World Theatre and Contemporary American Theatre History

Read Chapter 14 and 15

**Quiz #4 on Friday covering Chapters 10 - 15 and handouts.**

**Discuss Group Project – A movement play with music (no lyrics). Groups consist of actors, director, technical staff and designers.**

### **Week 14**

April 14 - 18: Theatre Management

Read Handout

Rehearse Group Project: Finalize all positions.

### **Week 15**

April 21 - 25: Theatre as a collaborative art

Read Handout

Rehearse Group Project

### **Week 16**

April 28 – **Final Project due: Perform group projects**

April 30 – Review for final exam.

May 2 - **Final Exam on last day of class.**

### **Week 17**

No class.