

**THE 1310.003 US - INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE
COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2014
T/R 9:30 p.m. – 10:45 p.m. Performing Arts Center # 130**

**Instructor: Kelsey Cooper, Adjunct Professor of Theatre
Office Hours: T/R 10:45-12:30 (and by appointment)**

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook:

Wilson, Edwin. *The Theater Experience*. 12th Edition.

Online retailers list new and used copies of this paperback text from \$85 – \$27 (plus shipping). Earlier editions of this text do not contain significant changes in material. If you purchase an earlier edition of the text at a cheaper cost, it is your responsibility to remain proactive in determining changes in chapter breakdowns, supplemental material needed, etc. There will a copy of this text placed on “in-house,” two-hour reserve in the library for your use as well.

Required Supplemental Readings will be posted on eCollege throughout the semester.

Required Viewing:

Fall 2014 MainStage Shows-TBD

Tickets are available for a nominal fee from the University Playhouse Box Office (PAC 101) from 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. on weekdays. Or, you may make advance reservations by phone at any time by calling 903-886-5900 or by email at playhouseboxoffice@tamuc-commerce.edu.

**Note: Please understand that viewing a performance of both of the shows listed above is an absolute requirement of the course and integral for the successful completion of assignments. Clear your schedule now! If you cannot attend these performances, for whatever reason, drop this class and re-enroll during a semester when your schedule will permit you to fully meet the course requirements.*

Course Description:

This course surveys varying aspects of theatre, including but not limited to: literature, production, and the crafts of the actor. This is a University Studies course that involves critical thinking, writing, and intercultural comparisons. This course draws upon several interdisciplinary concerns in discussing the collaborative nature of the art of theatre.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this semester, the student will make progress on gaining factual knowledge (terminologies, classifications, methods, and trends).

developing skills in expressing oneself orally or in writing.

developing creative capacities.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

QUIZZES (25%): There will be quiz following each assigned reading over the course of the semester. My best suggestion is to keep up with your reading, attend class, and take good notes. Make-up quizzes are not normally given and will only be approved in extraordinary situations. In cases of *extreme* emergency (such as hospitalization or a death in the family), you are required to contact me *before* the class you must miss in order to negotiate any arrangements, etc. (I highly suggest utilizing both email and phone for this task). In such a case, you will be expected to provide official documentation for your absence. Please note that contacting me does not necessarily mean that you will be able to make alternate quiz arrangements. It has to be a “legit” emergency like the instances mentioned above. Quizzes will consist of approximately 10-20 multiple choice, matching, true or false, and/or short answer questions. *Note: Late arrivals beware... after the first quiz is handed in, no other quizzes will be distributed in class. In other words, if you are late on a quiz day – you may acquire a zero on your quiz!*

PERFORMANCE REVIEW ESSAY (10%): Each person will be required to write a scholarly Performance Review Essay focusing on the specifics of the University Playhouse’s production. (Please remember that even though you are only required to write about one of these productions, you will be required to view both productions for the course. *Exams and/or quizzes may also contain questions regarding these productions.*) The Performance Review Essays should be approximately 3-5 pages in length (double spaced). Additional description and specific requirements for this assignment will be given at a later date.

PROJECTS (25%): You will be assigned at least two individual and one group project. Merely writing, developing and doing performances, turning in completed elements of the project on time, having your lines perfectly memorized, and being brave enough to stand up in front of everyone gives you a minimum grade of 80% (although a poor evaluation from your fellow group members or failure to turn in assignments will lower this threshold). Additional descriptions, requirements, and due dates for these assignments will be given at a later time. ***Your final group presentation will count as your final exam grade.***

EXAM #1 (15%) & EXAM #2 (15%): The exams in this course will be based on materials covered in lectures, readings from the texts, class activities, prior quizzes, and plays we read and see. These will utilize an objective (multiple choice, matching, true/false) and/or short answer/essay question format. Make-up exams are not normally given and will only be approved in extraordinary situations. In cases of *extreme* emergency (such as hospitalization or a death in the family), you are required to contact me *before* the class you must miss in order to negotiate any arrangements, etc.

(I highly suggest utilizing both email and phone for this task). In such a case, you will be expected to provide official documentation for your absence. Please note that contacting me does not necessarily mean that you will be able to make alternate testing arrangements. It has to be a “legit” emergency like the instances mentioned above.

Note: Late arrivals beware... after the first exam is handed in, no other exams will be distributed in class. In other words, if you are late on an exam day – you may acquire a zero on your exam!

PARTICIPATION (10%): *Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* Participation is vital in this class! This is an interactive environment and students must not only attend, but must also actively contribute to each class. Furthermore, the completion of any miscellaneous homework assignments will also be considered part of your participation grade. There may be quite a few of these short assignments (including evidence of play attendance); they are all important to your success in this course. So please make sure you understand what is expected of you.

Positive, respectful and helpful attitudes are mandatory. *I would like to make this very clear: I will make every effort to treat you with the respect that I believe you deserve. You are also expected to treat your peers and myself with that same respectful attitude.* If I believe that a student is disrespectful, I will ask that person to leave the classroom. In this event, the student will receive a zero for any activities conducted that day in class and receive a zero for his/her participation grade for the day (no matter how long you have been in class). Disrespect, rudeness, or negative attitudes will *substantially* lower the student’s participation grade. The following are other reasons you would be asked to leave the class and receive a zero for the day’s activities: sleeping in class, reading the newspaper, working on other assignments, coming to class under the influence of... anything, or otherwise causing disruption or distraction during class (this includes cell phones going off in class – turn them off when you come into the classroom and don’t turn them on again until you leave). Finally, it should go without saying that refusal to participate in any activity or part of an activity during class (including evidence of reading through active discussion) will result in a substantial and appropriate loss of participation points for the student. Each class meeting will be worth approximately 3.5% of your overall Participation grade.

Grading:

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)

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

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. I am here to assist you in success and will do my best to help you achieve it. 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.

Student Resources:

Department of Mass Media, Communication and Theatre

Performing Arts Center (PAC) 101

Phone: 903-886-5346 (Main Office)

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/mmct/default.asp>

Communication Skills Center

Hall of Languages 103

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/litlang/CSC/index.htm>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Policies and Procedures:

CLOTHING: Dress for maximum freedom and movement. Although there is a significant lecture/discussion component to this course, you will also be engaging in numerous classroom exercises that will require movement and physical activity. Wear comfortable shoes that you can move around in or bring other shoes. Heels, boots, short skirts, tight jeans, and low-cut shirts will all restrict breath, vocal work, and movement (and consequently restrict your ability to participate in class). *No one will be excused from a class activity because of clothing concerns. You are required to wear clothing that will not inhibit participation in class activities.* Do not wear jewelry that will affect your freedom of movement or speech. *I will try to give you advance notice of a day's exercises that will be exceptionally active.

ATTENDANCE: You should realize the vital importance of daily student attendance for developing new skills and understanding new material. The classes will involve lectures, discussions, large and small group daily activities, written assignments, quizzes, etc. *Missed classes cannot be tolerated.* In other words, attend, participate, and learn! *You are expected to attend every class meeting.* I am very strict about this. Your participation will be calculated each day. If you are absent, your participation grade will be lowered accordingly. In other words, if you do not attend, you cannot participate. There will be a sign-in sheet available each day in order to aid me in calculating your participation grade and tracking your attendance. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the sign-in sheet – otherwise, you will be marked absent. You must come to class prepared to participate! I expect you to be familiar with assigned readings (as well as any handouts you may receive) and to actively engage in classroom discussions and activities. *If you are absent, you are making that choice, and I expect you to accept the consequences graciously and in a mature manner.* It is your responsibility to remain informed of class activities if you are absent for any reason.

Under normal circumstances, the formal attendance policy for the class is as follows: You are allowed two *emergency* absences during this semester without overall grading penalty – please use them wisely (and please remember that *any* absences – including these two emergency absences – will affect your participation grade). Upon the third absence, 3.5 points will be deducted from the student's final grade in the course; upon each additional absence the student's final grade will be deducted 3.5 more points.

Due to the daily interactive nature of the course, upon the sixth absence (no matter the circumstances) the student will automatically be: 1) dropped from the course or 2) fail the course (depending on the point in the semester). Please keep up with your absences in this course – this is your responsibility. Do not ask me how many absences you have during the semester; I may not have that information readily available when you need it.

For more information on the university attendance policy please go to the following link: <http://www7.tamu-commerce.edu/registrar/attendance.asp>

LATE ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES: Students must be on time for every class. Entering a class late or leaving early is disruptive to the flow of the class. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. If you are late for class, your participation grade will reflect this. The class will begin promptly at 9:30 a.m.! If you arrive after 9:40 a.m., please do not enter the classroom (you will be marked absent regardless). If you arrive within the ten-minute grace period, you will be marked tardy. Late arrivals: you are expected to enter the classroom discretely in order to avoid disrupting the class activities/discussions. It is your responsibility to make sure that you find me after class and sign-in for the day. Also, you are expected to stay until you are dismissed from class. Both late arrivals and early departures will significantly reduce your participation grade. *Two documented "tardies" or early departures may be counted as one absence in the class.*

WRITTEN WORK: Unfortunately, papers do occasionally get lost. Please, for your sanity, save your work on a disc or thumb drive, etc. Do not depend on your paper staying on the hard drive of any University computer, as it will be deleted, altered, or worse – turned in by someone else as their work! *Be aware that it is a course expectation that you keep copies of your original drafts and graded assignments until you receive your final grade for the semester.*

LATE WORK: *Late written work/projects will be deducted a full letter grade each weekday after the assigned due date.* This means that if you have to be absent for some reason on the day a written assignment is due, you must give your assignment to one of your classmates to hand in for you, or you will receive grading deductions. All assignments are due within the first ten minutes of the class period unless I specify otherwise. At 9:40 a.m. on the day that the assignment is due, your assignment will receive one letter grade reduction in credit; at 9:30 a.m. the following day another letter grade will be reduced, and so on. *No late assignments will be accepted after one week past the original due date.*

EXTRA CREDIT: As a general rule, there is no extra credit offered in this class – please, do not even ask. In the rare circumstance that an opportunity for extra credit arises, this will be announced to the entire class.

ADAPTATION OF ASSIGNMENTS: Due to the fluid nature of this class, some assignments/scheduling may need to be adapted. All changes will be announced prior to implementation.

FOOD, DRINK, AND GUM: Please do not bring food or drinks into the classroom at any time (exception: you may bring bottled water with you to class). Gum may not be chewed when participating in warm-ups/performance activities.

INCOMPLETES: Under normal circumstances, an Incomplete (I or X) will not be given as a final grade in this course.

University Specific Policies and Procedures:

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: This course adheres strictly to the college's guidelines for Academic Dishonesty printed in the *Student's Guide Handbook*. Plagiarism, cheating, or otherwise representing another's work or ideas as your own without proper attribution will not be tolerated. All work must be new and created for this class during this semester by you. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the definition of Academic Dishonesty at Texas A&M-Commerce. If such an instance occurs, the student will receive an automatic zero for the work in question, and I will immediately report the incident to the Head of the Department. (*You should be aware that this could result in dismissal from school without credit for the semester.*)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: 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
James G. Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
HYPERLINK "<mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu>"
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

**Note: Please be aware that under no circumstances can I implement any disability accommodations without official documentation from the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services at Texas A&M University - Commerce.*

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 *Student's Guide Handbook*, Policies and Procedures, Conduct.)

A COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR will be given on the first day of class.