



**THE 1310: Intro to Theatre
 COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2015
 MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m.
 PERFORMING ARTS #100 (Main Theatre)**

Instructor: Casey Watkins, MFA, Assistant Professor of Theatre
Office Location: Performing Arts Center #104
Office Hours: M/W 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., T/R 10 a.m. – 12pm. or by appointment
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COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook:

Experiencing Theatre, Anne Fletcher and Scott R. Ireland

Putnam County Spelling Bee (PDF)*

Calling All, Melanie Marnich (PDF)

The Bear, Anton Chekov (PDF)

***All PDF texts will be provided for you by your instructor**

Required Viewing:

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Directed by Kelsey Cooper

Produced in the Main Stage Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce

October 20-24 at 8 p.m. and October 25 at 3 p.m.

Calling All

Directed by Lauren Simpson

Produced in the Studio Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce

November 17-21 at 8 p.m. and November 22 at 3 p.m.

Tickets are available for a nominal fee from the University Playhouse Box Office (PAC 101) from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 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.edu.

Course Description:

The purpose of Introduction to Theatre is to familiarize students with the basic elements of plays and productions and to help students develop the analytical skills to think, speak and write critically about the theater.

Course Ethics and Attendance: *Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* Promptness, attendance, and “attentiveness” are valued in this class. Please behave accordingly and do not disrupt the class with excessive talk or the use of cell phones or other devices. **A willingness to “give theatre and its many forms a chance” is most appreciated.** It is assumed that students will work cooperatively with one another and all work that is not “original” will be properly credited. See the TAMUC *Student’s Guide Handbook* for more information on plagiarism. This is a serious offense that can result in separation from the university. **EVEN if not specifically noted on instructions or prompts for each assignment, plagiarism policies will be strictly enforced.**

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

- 1) Become a more informed, critical audience member
- 2) Gain a basic understanding of the elements of dramatic structure and of theatrical production
- 3) Learn to evaluate the artistic quality of a script and a performance
- 4) Gain appreciation of how plays reflect the people and cultures that produce them.
- 5) Gain understanding of the relationship of theater to the other arts and humanities.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

In-Class Exercises (30 @ 5 points each = 150 pts. total): As stated above, attendance does not constitute participation. We will conduct in-class exercises almost every day. These exercises are used to focus your attention on the material offered in the course and are hands-on, interactive methods to explore the material. You **MUST** be present and you **MUST** participate to receive credit.

Response essays (2 @ 100 pts. = 200 pts. total): Students are required to attend performances of both Playhouse productions (clear your schedules NOW!). Students will submit papers that apply concepts explored in class to contemporary productions. Papers should be approx. 2 pages, typed, 12 pt. Arial font, well-organized (complete sentences, full paragraphs). I *will* consider spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure in the grading. (See prompt and rubric when handed out.)

Grading System and Scale

Attendance	360 points total (40 @ 9 points/day)
In-Class Exercises	150 points total (30 @ 5 points each)
Quizzes	100 points total (5 @ 20 points each)
Performance Response Essay 1	100 points
Performance Response Essay 2	100 points
Group Project	40 points
Unit One Exam	50 points
Final Exam (Practical)	100 points
TOTAL POINTS	1000 points

A grade of "A" will not be assigned to any individual who has not completed ALL outside of class assignments. Attendance at Departmental Productions regardless of average.

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. There WILL be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is often the speediest and easiest way of doing so. Additionally, I will provide electronic copies of the plays and any supplemental reading through eCollege and/or email.

WRITTEN WORK: Unfortunately, papers/projects do occasionally get lost. Please, for your sanity, save your work on a 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 assignments until you receive your final grade for the semester.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Contacting Me:

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. Don't be a stranger! If something is occurring that is presenting you with difficulties in this class, let me know. I cannot help you if I don't know what is going on. The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is **via email**. I check it almost constantly. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office.

Student Resources:

Department of 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>

TAMUC Counseling Center

Student Services Building Room 204
Phone: 903-886-5145

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Attendance Policy:

You may accumulate three (3) absences before any penalty occurs. **There are no additional absences allowed without penalty. Plan accordingly. There is no such thing as an “excused” absence.** Of course, if you have a prolonged illness or injury, or if a family emergency arises, speak with your instructor ASAP.

Grades will be dropped in ½ letter grade increments for every two class absences beyond three. (Example: Someone with an “A” average who misses class five times will be in the “A-” range; a seventh absence moves that student down into the “B+” range and so on...)

Late Arrivals:

To further foster a high level of commitment—and because the work we will be doing this semester will involve intensive focus—the class will adopt the following late entry policy. Students must be on time for every class. Entering a class late or leaving early is disruptive to the flow of the class and indicative of a less than disciplined/committed student. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. If you arrive within the ten minute grace period, please do so discretely in order to avoid disrupting the class activities/discussions. *It is your responsibility to make sure that you find me after class and document your late attendance for the day—otherwise, your initial marked absence documented during roll will remain.* Also, you are expected to stay until you are dismissed from class. **Two late arrivals (within the ten-minute grace period) or early departures (or any combination of the two) may be counted as one absence in the class.**

Cell Phones and Laptops:

Please turn off all cell phones upon entering the classroom. Please do not check messages or engage in text messaging during class. This is disruptive to the flow of the course. Further, you are welcome to take class notes on a laptop or other electronic device. However, these devices should only be used for taking notes over the current discussions/activities – and you must type very quietly and turn off all sound so as not to disturb other class members. If I suspect that laptops are being used for other purposes, I will ban them from the classroom.

Late Work:

I do not accept late work.

Extra Credit:

The instructor reserves the right to offer extra-credit to all students, and to gauge its application appropriately and uniformly for all.

Incompletes:

Under normal circumstances, an Incomplete (I or X) will NOT be given for a final grade in this course. Per University policy, students who **because of circumstances beyond their control** are unable to attend classes will, upon approval of their instructor, receive a mark of X (incomplete) in all courses in which they were **maintaining passing grades at the time of the request** for an incomplete.

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 a Disability:

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
Gee Library 132**

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

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 / CALENDAR

Readings and assignments are due on the days on which they are listed below. There are no “make-ups” for IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES.

M Aug 31 Intro to Class and Syllabus

HOMEWORK: Obtain text; Complete class contract, answer questions and hand in at next class meeting. This is a requirement for this class.

UNIT ONE

W Sept 2 What is Theatre?; What is a Play?

Thursday, Sept. 3rd- Last day to ADD a class without instructor permission

F Sept. 4 DUE: Class contract with answers

Ritual and performance

M Sept. 7 **LABOR DAY – NO CLASSES**

Monday, September 7- LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 80% REFUND

W Sept. 9 Aristotle’s elements

ICE #1: Imagining a Production

F Sept. 11 Reading a play and play structure
 ICE # 2: Types of plot
 Quiz # 1- Aristotle and Play structure

M Sept. 14 Character & Idea, theme and concept
 ICE # 3: Character and Theme

Monday, September 14- LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 70% REFUND

W Sept. 16 Realism and Non-Realism
 ICE # 4

**Wednesday, September 16- CENSUS DAY
 LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH REFUND**

F Sept 18 Presentational and Representational
 ICE # 5

UNIT TWO

M Sept. 21 Playwriting
 ICE # 6: Playwriting

W. Sept. 23 Genre and playwriting
 ICE # 7: Playwriting and monologue

Monday, September 21- LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 50% REFUND

F. Sept. 25 Devised Theatre
 ICE # 8: Devised theatre freeze tag

M. Sept. 28 Devised theatre and social issues
 ICE # 9
 Quiz # 2- Playwriting

UNIT THREE

W. Sept. 30 Design and Sceneography
 ICE # 10: Visual metaphor and inspirational images

Monday, September 28- LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 25% REFUND

F Oct 2 Theatre spaces

M Oct 5 Scenic Design
 ICE # 11: Scenic design

W Oct 7 Scenic Design
 ICE # 12

F Oct 9 Costume design
 ICE # 13: Costume design and texture

M Oct 12 Costume Design
 ICE # 14

UNIT FIVE

W Oct 14 Audience Etiquette
 ICE # 15: Bad audience

F Oct 16 Aesthetic value and performance criticism
 ICE # 16: Performance review

UNIT THREE Continued

M Oct 19 Lighting Design
 ICE # 17: Lighting design gel

W Oct 21 Lighting design
 ICE # 18

DoT Production ...Spelling Bee October 20-25

F Oct 23 Sound Design
 ICE #19: Sound design and mood

M Oct 26 Sound Design
 ICE # 20

W Oct 28	Collaboration ICE # 21: Design collaboration
F Oct 30	Collaboration continued Quiz # 3 Scenography
M Nov 2	Midterm review
W Nov 4	MIDTERM
	Thursday, Nov. 5 - LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH Q GRADE

UNIT FOUR

F Nov 6	The actor ICE # 22: In the moment
M Nov 9	Improv and acting ICE # 23: Prop improve
W Nov 11	...Spelling Bee Papers DUE Gesture, Stanislavsky and Viewpoints ICE # 24: Modeling
F Nov 13	Cold scenes and auditioning ICE # 25: Cold reading
M Nov 16	The director and vision and concept DoT Production <i>Calling All</i> November 17-22
W Nov 18	Stage pictures and blocking ICE # 26 Quiz # 4 Acting and directing

F Nov 20 Dramaturgy
ICE # 27

UNIT SIX

M Nov 23 Outreach/public relations
ICE # 28: Event outreach

W & F Nov 25 & 27 NO CLASS HAPPY THANKSGIVING

M Nov 30 Marketing
ICE # 29: Press release and logo
Calling All Response papers due

W Dec 2 Publicity
ICE # 30: Posters
Quiz # 5 Dramaturgy and Publicity

F Dec. 4 Roles in theatre group project

M Dec. 7 Roles in theatre group project

W Dec. 9 Presentations

F Dec. 11 Presentations and review

The Final Exam Period for this class is scheduled for Wednesday, December 16th from 10:30 am to 12:30pm

Student Contract for THE 1310, Fall 2015

I have read the Course Syllabus for THE 1310 and understand its content including the attendance policy, productions required, academic honesty section, and classroom behavior requirements (including use of cell phones).

NAME (Signature)

Date