



EAST TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

THE 546.01W – Survey of Musical Theatre

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: [Aaron Adair, Ph.D.](#)

Office Location: Online

Office Hours: by appointment

Mobile (Text/Voicemail): 972-379-9480

Office Fax: 903-468-3250

University Email Address: aaron.adair@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: email

Communication Response Time: < 24 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required:

Jones, John Bush. *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press (2003). ISBN: 978-0874519044

Stempel, Larry. *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. (2010). ISBN: 978-0393929065

Software Required: None

Optional Texts and/or Materials: None

Course Description

This course explores representative musical theatre from the 1800s to present day. Students will evaluate and compare a variety of musicals including Minstrel Shows, Vaudeville, Operetta, Musical Comedy, and Opera to present-day Broadway Musicals. Students will examine composers, lyricists, producers, directors, choreographers, and performing artists who have contributed to the development of musical theater.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Critically analyze the evolution of musical theatre from the 1800s to the present, situating key works within their historical, social, and cultural contexts.
- Differentiate and compare major genres and forms, including Minstrel Shows, Vaudeville, Operetta, Musical Comedy, Opera, and contemporary Broadway musicals, articulating their unique characteristics and historical significance.
- Evaluate the contributions of composers, lyricists, producers, directors, choreographers, and performing artists to the development of musical theatre, using appropriate critical frameworks.
- Appraise the impact of individual and collaborative artistic practices on the evolution of musical theatre as an art form.
- Synthesize research from primary and secondary sources to construct well-supported arguments about the development and transformation of musical theatre genres and practices.
- Compare and contrast representative musicals across different periods, identifying continuities and innovations in style, theme, and production.
- Design and execute advanced research projects that interrogate significant questions in musical theatre history, employing appropriate methodologies and theoretical approaches.
- Communicate findings effectively in both written and oral forms, demonstrating scholarly rigor and the ability to engage with diverse academic and professional audiences.
- Integrate historical and analytical insights to inform contemporary perspectives on musical theatre production, performance, and scholarship.
- Formulate original interpretations or creative responses that demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the field's traditions and ongoing developments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

- Reliable internet access
- Access to Brightspace/D2L LMS

Instructional Methods

- Readings
- Discussion Board Posts
- Video Journal Posts and Replies
- Projects

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

- Remain engaged throughout the course
- Communicate with professor

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

- Note all due dates
- Submit assignments on time

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%
 B = 80%-89%
 C = 70%-79%
 D = 60%-69%
 F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 900 – 1000 Points
 B = 800 – 899 Points
 C = 700 – 799 Points
 D = 600 – 699 Points
 F = 0 – 599 Points

Assessments

Discussion Board Posts	30%
Video Journal Posts and Replies	20%
Midterm Video Project	25%
Final Video Project	25%
TOTAL	100%

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, an ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Professor in Brightspace/D2L or by email.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Students should expect a timely response to email questions and prompt grading and posting of assignments and exams. You should receive a response to your email within 24 hours. If you haven't received a response within 24 hours, please email again just in case I overlooked it. You should do your best to email from your official ETAMU student email account. **Be sure to include your name in the body of every email you send as well as the assignment number you are referencing.**

Students should expect prompt grading and posting of assignments and exams. Instructor feedback will be provided to students before the next assignment is due (within 7 days).

The professor reserves the right to make adjustments to the syllabus and/or grading policy as needed in order to meet the instructional needs and goals of the class. Students will be notified of any adjustments to the course schedule.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

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 in your Student Guide Handbook).

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- 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

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Student Grievance Procedure

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 \("Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation"\)](#).

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

In order to measure the level of compliance with the accreditation, throughout the semester I may collect some of the ungraded texts you produce solely for an assessment of program effectiveness that in no way affects students' course grades or GPAs.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

WEEK 1 syllabus / read and take notes for Chapter 1: *Transition Stages in Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for *Origin of Species: Conflicting Views of American Musical Theater History* (Borroff)
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 1 Video Journal Post and Replies)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

WEEK 2 read and take notes for Chapter 2: *Variety Stages* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for *Black Musicals in the Golden Age of American Theatre* (Schultz)

(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 2 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 3 read and take notes for Chapter 3: *A Transatlantic Muse* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for *Whither American Music Theater?* (Salzman)

(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 3 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 4 read and take notes for Chapter 4: *The Native Wit* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 1: *Patriotism, Xenophobia, and World War I* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*

(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 4 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 5 read and take notes for Chapter 5: *The Cult of Romance* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for *Early 20th-Century Operetta from the German Stage: A Cosmopolitan Genre* (Scott)

(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 5 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 6 read and take notes for Chapter 6: *A Shadow of Vulgarly* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 2: *The Musicals of the Roaring Twenties* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*

(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 6 Video Journal Post and Replies, **Progress Summary for Midterm Video Project**)

WEEK 7 read and take notes for Chapter 7: *Broadway Songbook* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 3: *Coping with Depression* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*

(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 7 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 8 read and take notes for Chapter 8: *The Script Angle* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 4: *World War II and the Rodgers and Hammerstein Years* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*

(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 8 Video Journal Post and Replies, **Midterm Video Project**)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

WEEK 9 read and take notes for Chapter 9: *Musical Theater: The New Art* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 5: *From Isolationism to Idealism in the Cold War Years* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 9 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 10 read and take notes for Chapter 10: *Opera, In Our Own Way* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for *Cinderella Meets Cendrillon: Music Theater and Opera Living Under the Same Roof* (McQuade)
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 10 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 11 read and take notes for Chapter 11: *The Great American Showshop* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 6: *Black and Jewish Musicals Since the 1960s* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 11 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 12 read and take notes for Chapter 12: *Away from Broadway* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 7: *Issue-Driven Musicals of the Turbulent Years* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 12 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 13 read and take notes for Chapter 13: *The Metaphor Angle* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 8: *Fragmented Society, Fragmented Musicals* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 13 Video Journal Post and Replies)

WEEK 14 read and take notes for Chapter 14: *Dancing Place* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for *Dance in Musical Theatre* (Das)
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 14 Video Journal Post and Replies, **Progress Summary for Final Video Project**)

WEEK 15 read and take notes for Chapter 15: *Distancing Effects* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 9: *"A Recycled Culture," Nostalgia, and Spectacle* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 15 Video Journal Post and Replies)

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

WEEK 16 read and take notes for Chapters 16: *Another Broadway...Another Show...* in *Showtime: A History of the Broadway Musical Theater* / read and take notes for Chapter 10: *New Voices, New Perspectives* in *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical*
(DUE: Assigned Readings Discussion Board Posts and Week 16 Video Journal Post and Replies, **Final Video Project**)