
Intro to Theatre Syllabus

Instructor: Roderic “Greg” Thompson
Email: RGThompson2@UTEP.edu

Office Hours: By Appointment Only
Class Meets: Tue/Thu 9:00am-10:20am

Required Text/Materials:

- Unit Guides **U1**, **U2** and **U3**; selected readings - all provided for you on Blackboard
- Active Blackboard
- Adobe Reader – <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- Microsoft Word – Can be obtained for free from the university.

“I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.” - Oscar Wilde

Course Objectives: This course will detail the many aspects of theatre, how it began, why it exists and its function in society. You will learn about how a production comes together, the relationship of the performers with the audience and the importance of theatre in society. By the end of the course, you will be able to give educated responses on design elements of theatre, the subject matter of a play and its relevance to the times.

This course will be online with three synchronous “face-to-face” Zoom sessions - one for each unit. The course is broken into three units: **Unit1** - *From the Beginning*; **Unit2** - *Making Theatre: How Do They Do That*; **Unit3** - *Theatre Now: Why Theatre Matters*.

We will look at the origins of theatre, theatre production and theatre performance. Through selected readings, video content and group discussions, we will explore our own thoughts about theatre; the audience’s part in the play and why theatre matters to all of us.

Attendance: Your education is the foundation of YOUR career - it will only show up for you, if you show up for it! While attendance will not be recorded and graded during for this class, consider that your “virtual attendance” will be evident in your work. What you learn and how you process and express that learning will “show up” for you - do your best as I will be a great audience and can’t wait to see where the material in the class takes you.

The Discussion Board: The Discussion Board will pop up on Blackboard, mid-way through each unit. Why mid-way? I want you to have a couple weeks with the Unit material so you can fully engage in the conversation, making use of what you are learning.

To complete each Discussion Board assignment, you must add 4 individual entries, whether you start a new thread, add a comment to one of your existing threads or comment in someone else’s thread in any combination, that are substantial and pertinent to the topic. Each entry counts 25 pts. for a total of 100. Every entry you make on the board counts - Blackboard tracks all of them.

If that is still confusing, you have to have four separate, or individual entries, whether you start a new thread, add to one of your existing threads or add to someone else’s thread – each of those count as one entry.

Technology in Zoom: Personal cell phone use is prohibited during online class time. If you are expecting an important phone call or message, please let me know prior to the start of class. You may use your tablet or computer for taking notes. Your camera **MUST BE ON** and you must be visible during online class time.

Late Work: Nothing in my class can be “made-up”. If you are going to miss a quiz/test day or anticipate something preventing you from turning work in on time, please speak with me in advance and we can discuss your options.

*The Calendar is subject to change at my discretion in order to facilitate assignments and understanding. I will notify you with ample time of any changes or shifts to the syllabus in class and via Black Board.

Attendance/Participation & Extra Credit: UTEP Department of Theatre & Dance Required Attendance/Participation - You must “attend/listen to” or participate in two UTEP virtual or live productions. Following your attendance or participation, write and submit a written response to the production, highlighting the experience; what you saw, how the production affected you and any insights into the production and its place in society. It must follow the format for written work and be not less than 450 words - unless otherwise noted.

Department Events: <https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/theatre-dance/events/>

Viewing/Reviewing For Extra Credit: You may choose to watch additional UTEP productions, other theatre productions live or broadcast (with the exception of high school productions), or any of the productions on **DigitalTheatre+** through the UTEP Library and write a one-page response to the production(s), highlighting what you saw, how the production affected you and any insights into the production and its place in society, you may have.

DigitalTheatre+: <https://0-www-digitaltheatreplus-com.lib.utep.edu/education/>

Required Format for Written Work: Written assignments are required, as assigned. Each assignment must be a minimum of not less than 450 words - unless otherwise noted. It must be single spaced, font size 11pt, typed and submitted in Word.doc or PDF format - *no other format will be accepted.*

In the top right corner of your paper →

Topic of Assignment or Title of Production

Your Name

Due Date

Course Name - M/W or T/R

Greg Thompson

Naming Your File: You must label and save the file using the following format: First Initial/Last Name.Title.doc or .pdf (Word will add the .doc, Acrobat will add .pdf for you). So, *for example*, my file for this assignment will look like this, once I save it: GThompson.Title.doc or GThompson.Title.pdf

Submitting Your Work: All assignments must be submitted to me through email - you must use your UTEP email address to ensure your email will not get kicked back.

Email your work to me at: RGThompson2@utep.edu

In the email subject line: you **MUST** type only the name of the assignment and attach the **Word.doc** or **PDF** to the email. Do **NOT** copy it into the body of the email. Do **NOT** submit it through Blackboard.

Extra Credit: Your first Extra Credit submission will eliminate your lowest grade, completely. Your second will add 3 points to final grade.

Deadline for Extra Credit and Required Viewing/Participation is May 6th, 5:00pm. May 7th is Dead Day, so there are no exceptions to this deadline.

Final Project: Your Final Project will be a comprehensive review of the play, *The Container*, which you will find Digital Theatre + in the UTEP Library’s collections through Blackboard - instructions for accessing the Digital Theatre + Collection will follow, shortly.

Completing Your Finals: You will find more detailed information in your Course Guide. Your final requires you to write a full, professional-quality review. The review must be a minimum of 1,000 words; single-spaced; 1” margins; font size 11pt; typed and submitted in Word.doc or .PDF format. Details can be found in your Unit III Course Guide which will open on Blackboard February 19

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Grading: A = 100 – 90% B = 89 – 80% C = 79 – 70% D = 60%<
Quizzes – 30% • Attend/Respond – 10% • Written Work – 30% • Final Project – 30%

A note on subject matter: The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable seeing on stage. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. As I will respect your individual rights to choose what shows you want to see, I expect all discussions—including any that may occur outside of class—to be conducted in a respectful and professional matter.

Statement on Disability: *The Center for Students with Disabilities at UTEP provides students with disabilities accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. If you are dealing with a mental, physical, emotional, or sensory disability - whether permanent or temporary - contact them for a confidential consultation. For more information, visit <http://www.UTEP.edu/CSD/Pages/default.aspx> or see pages 5-12 of the Student Handbook. You may also contact The Cass office at (915) 747-5148 for help and accommodations.*

Statement on Academic Dishonesty: It is the official policy of the university that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation and appropriate disposition. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion and the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or attempt to commit such acts.

Technical Support: Need help with Blackboard? Go to Tech Support Room 300 in the Library, immediately. If you do not understand, do not wait until you are having problems. Contact: Help Desk email, helpdesk@utep.edu, by phone 747-5257. Hours are M-F 7a-8p, Sat 9a-10p and Sun 12-4p.

Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

Syllabus Calendar and Course Map: Below you will find the course laid out, week by week. You will also find a Course Map on Blackboard. The map is break out of assignments and dates, to help get and stay organized.

Zoom Key: You will use this key for all Zoom meetings, “Kickoffs and scheduled Office Hours.

Meeting ID: 880 5406 1457

Passcode: 565654

Intro to Theatre Course Calendar Spring 2021

THEA 1313-002/CRN: 21580 • Office Hours: By Appointment

Instructor: Greg Thompson • Email: rgthompson2@UTEP.edu**Weeks 1 - 5 / UNIT 1 - *From the Beginning* (January 19th - February 18th)**

Let's get started! - I cannot encourage you enough to be pro-active; Do Not Fall Behind - we have so much great stuff to learn together, and you will get from this course what you put into it. Get busy, get organized and stay focused.

You will find everything you need in your **Unit1** folder on Blackboard. Start at the beginning of the Guide and work your way through to the end. If you have any questions please reach out to me at rgthompson2@utep.edu.

January 19th - Please get familiar with the content for this course on Blackboard.

January 19th - **"What is Theatre?"** (Written Assignment 1) **Due: January 26th**
Share your POV regarding acting, to your understanding of the craft. Avoid critiquing the craft or practitioners of the craft. See above for format for writing/submitting written work.

January 19th - 22nd - Late Registration (Fees are incurred)

January 21st - I will host a Zoom welcome for you all on Thursday, January 21st, 9:00am - 10:20am, and I strongly recommend you join me. I will take a few minutes to and I strongly recommend you join me. I will take a I will take a few minutes to share my screen and walk you through the Unit 1 Guide and answer any of your questions. The "key" to get you into the meeting is in the syllabus, above.

I will also host a Zoom meeting to "Kick-off" each unit. Please plan to attend, if you can.

January 25th - Discussion Board 1 opens on Blackboard. Complete by February 8

January 28th - **"All The World's A Stage"** (Written Assignment 2) **Due: Feb. 10th**
Share your POV regarding acting, to your understanding of the craft. Avoid critiquing the craft or practitioners of the craft. See above for format for writing/submitting written work.

February 3 – Spring Census Day Note: This is the last day to register for classes. Payments are due by 5:00 pm.

Your End of Unit 1 Quiz will appear on Blackboard on Thursday, February 18th

• **All Unit End Quizzes go live at 9am and close at midnight on the assigned date.**

February 19 – Graduation application deadline for degree conferral

Weeks 6 - 10 / UNIT 2 - *Making Theatre: How Do They Do That* (Feb 23rd - March 25th)

HERE WE GO AGAIN! - By now you should be very familiar with the format and structure of the course - stay at it, stay organized and do good work. Always let me know if you need anything! Kick-off, February 23rd from 9:00am - 10:20am.

For this unit you will find everything you need in your **Unit2** folder on Blackboard.

February 15 – 20th **Class Day** Note: Students who were given a payment deadline extension will be dropped at 5:00 pm if payment arrangements have not been made.

February 23rd - **“What is Theatre?”** (Written Assignment 2) **Due: March 2nd**
In ONE SENTENCE, share your POV regarding acting, to your understanding of the craft. Note: You do not need to write 450 - 600 words. Boil your ideas down to one sentence. See above for format for writing/submitting written work.

March 9th - Discussion Board 2 opens on Blackboard. Complete by March 23rd

SPRING BREAK – March 15th – 19th - Study Hard!

April 1 – **Spring Drop/Withdrawal Deadline**

Note: Student-initiated drops are permitted after this date, but the student is not guaranteed a grade of W. The faculty member of record will issue a grade of either W or F.

Your End of Unit 2 Quiz will appear on Blackboard on Thursday, March 25th

- **All Unit End Quizzes go live at 9am and close at midnight on the assigned date.**

“In Your Own Words” is due on Tuesday, March 25th, no later than 5:00pm.

***See details in your U2 Guide**

Weeks 11 - 15 / UNIT 3 - *Theatre Now: Why Theatre Matters* (March 30th - May 6th)

The home stretch! For this unit you will find everything you need in your Unit III folder. Be sure you stay on top of your final project work. Reach out if you need me! Kickoff, March 30th from 9:00am - 10:20am

April 5 - **“What is Theatre?”** (Written Assignment 3) **Due: April 19th**
In ONE WORD, share your POV regarding acting, to your understanding of the craft. Avoid critiquing the craft or practitioners of the craft. Note: You do not need to write 450 - 600. Boil your ideas down to one word.

April 15th - Discussion Board 3 opens on Blackboard. Complete by April 29th

April 16 – **Deadline** to submit candidates' names for commencement program

Week 16 – Study and Complete Last Assignment

May 6 – **Last Day of Classes**

Extra Credit and Required Viewing Deadline: 5:00pm

Your End of Unit 3 Quiz will appear on Blackboard on Thursday, May 6th

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- **All Unit End Quizzes go live at 9am and close at midnight on the assigned date.**

May 7 – Dead Day

Week 17 – FINALS - SPECIFIC DATE/TIME TBA

May 10-14 – Finals - For this class: Tuesday, May 11th 10:00 am – 12:45 pm

“To See A World...” is due on Tuesday, May 11th, no later than 12:45pm.

***See details in your U3 Guide**

May 15-16 – Spring Commencement

May 20 – Grades posted - students notified of grades/academic standing

TO COMPLETE YOUR FINAL, FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS IN YOUR UNIT3 COURSE GUIDE, THEN EMAIL ME YOUR COMPLETED, COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW BY THE END OF THE DESIGNATED EXAM PERIOD - DATE/TIME TBD.

Written Work	Discussion Boards	Quizzes
What is Theatre 1 Due: January 26 th	Discussion Board 1 January 25 th - February 8 th	Unit 1 February 18 th
All The World's A Stage Due: February 10 th		
What is Theatre 2: One Sentence Due: March 2 nd	Discussion Board 2 March 9 th - March 23 rd	Unit 2 March 25 th
U2: “In Your Own Words” Due: March 25		
What is Theatre 3 Due: April 15 th	Discussion Board 3 April 5 th - April 19 th	Unit 3 May 6 th
U3: “To See A World...” Due: May 6 th		
Extra Credit/Required Viewing May 6 th 5:00pm		

• A Note About Discussions

All discussions online, verbal and written, will follow the Socratic Method. This helps us organize our thoughts and communicate more clearly. It will also help us to ensure equity and respect within our discourse, help create a level of trust and inspire enthusiastic participation by all.

What is the Socratic Method?

The Socratic method (also known as method of Elenchus, elenctic method, or Socratic debate), is a form of cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals, based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presuppositions. It is named after the Classical Greek philosopher Socrates and is introduced by him in Plato's, *Theaetetus*, as midwifery (maieutics) because it is employed to bring out definitions implicit in the interlocutors' beliefs, or to help them further their understanding.

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The Socratic method is a method of hypothesis elimination, in that better hypotheses are found by steadily identifying and eliminating those that lead to contradictions.

The Socratic method searches for general, commonly held truths that shape beliefs and scrutinizes them to determine their consistency with other beliefs. The basic form is a series of questions formulated as tests of logic and fact intended to help a person or group discover their beliefs about some topic; exploring definitions and seeking to characterize general characteristics shared by various particular instances.