

THEA 1313 – Spring 2021

CRNs: 25440 & 27983

Instructor: Rafa Pérez, MFA

Contact: Blackboard Course Messages or

Teams Message M – F, 10AM – 5PM

Office hours on Microsoft Teams: M & W 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM or by appointment

## Course Description

The primary goal of Theatre 1313 is to develop students' understanding of theatre and its place in history and society as it represents the human experience. Theatre and the performing arts were once thought to fade away as modern forms of entertainment have become a way of life. Even now, theatre is shifting and evolving further as a result of COVID-19. And yet the performing arts continue to be a vital form of entertainment, expression and communication of the human condition.

The course will present a brief history of theatre and the beginnings of each of its elements as they have developed and continue to do so. By watching filmed, live theatre performances online, students will experience, virtually, much of what is discussed throughout the semester; students will have the opportunity to play critic and discuss their opinions of the productions. Throughout the course we will also discuss the elements of theatre, why they exist and how they are applied in order to convey meaning and tell a story.

## Student/Instructor Communication Plan

It is my preference that you speak with me “in person” on Teams during my posted office hours above. Send me a message on Teams (using my UTEP email: rperez10@utep.edu) during my office hours to let me know you'd like to meet. Consider this the virtual equivalence to “knocking on my door”. We can then jump into a virtual call to speak. You may also send me a message through Blackboard Ultra (do not email me outside of Blackboard) in case I can help that way, or we can schedule an appointment at a later time. Lastly, you may send me a Teams message if you have a quick question that I can respond to by text. I will only respond to Teams messages Monday thru Friday, between 9 AM and 5 PM (Mountain Time).

Make a habit of checking Announcements through Blackboard daily. This will be my primary form of communicating to everyone in the course. It is your responsibility to make sure you read my messages and let me know if something is unclear. These times are uncertain and the calendar may shift if necessary.

For all communication, please refer to me as Mr. Pérez (I am not yet a professor) and my pronouns are he/him. If you would like to share your pronouns and/or have another name you'd rather go by, please be sure to let me know when you send me a message.

## Blackboard Statement

Blackboard Ultra is the official LMS (Learning Management System) of UTEP. You are expected to utilize and be familiar with Blackboard Ultra. If there are any questions regarding the use of Blackboard Ultra, please speak with your peer leader or me during office hours. For assistance with logging in or any other technical issue, you can reach the [Help Desk here](#) or by calling 915-747-HELP (4357). Blackboard Ultra also has an app available where you can easily check the online syllabus, calendar, messages, due dates, assignments and discussions. It's a great tool to check in on things, but as with most things, the desktop web version is your best bet for compatibility, uploading and submitting assignments.

## Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of theatre and storytelling to society and the times;
- Engage in meaningful discussion about theatrical design elements and their relevance as they apply to theatre;
- Criticize performing arts and creative choices made for theatrical elements;
- Analyze theatre in the past, how it has evolved and what could happen post-COVID-19;
- Use knowledge gained in the course to create a sample design concept presentation

## Required Text/Materials

- Computer or technology with webcam, microphone and internet access
- *The Theatre Experience* by Edwin Wilson, 13<sup>th</sup> ed., ISBN: 978-0073514277 (10<sup>th</sup> edition or newer is acceptable; have the text in hand by the second week of school.)
- Active Blackboard Ultra
- Access to [Digital Theatre Plus](#) database through UTEP Library webpage
- Microsoft Word & Power Point– Can be obtained through the university [Help Desk Page](#)
- Microsoft Teams – Can be downloaded used with your UTEP email.

## Course Content

- A. Quizzes throughout the semester over subject matter in the text and discussion boards.
- B. Watch/read material presented in text and Blackboard Modules.
- C. Complete assignments and participate in discussion boards.
- D. Attend 2 UTEP Department of Theatre & Dance virtual events.
- E. Write 1 Critique of a UTEP Theatre & Dance virtual event.
- F. Comprehensive Final Exam at the end of the semester.
- G. Project assignments and Final Presentation.

Grade Distribution – Students can earn a total of 1000 points in the course.

- Quizzes – 100 points (5 quizzes each worth 20 pts)
- Participation – 75 points (Based on logging in to Blackboard each week)
- Attend 2 virtual shows – 50 points (Each show you attend is worth 25 points)
- Critique – 100 points
- Discussion Boards– 100 points
- Homework Assignments – 150 points
- Project Assignments – 200 points
- Final Project Presentation – 100 points
- Final Exam – 125 points

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

## Course Policies and Procedures

You are responsible for reading material listed in the “Readings” column and submitting all homework on time from the “Assignments” column of the calendar each week. The readings will prepare you to participate in discussions and complete assignments for the week. All dates are clearly specified on the course calendar. Should there be any issues with due dates, please contact me at least 24 hours in advance and we can discuss other arrangements as necessary.

Discussion Boards will supplement readings and articles found in weekly modules. For each Discussion Board, you will be responding to my prompts by writing at the collegiate level and your forum posts are to be at least 250 words in length. After you’ve made your initial post, you are also to respond to at least 3 of your peers’ posts. Late posts and responses will not be graded.

Quizzes will be made available on Fridays at 12:00 AM MST. You will have 24 hours (until 11:59 PM MST that night) to complete the quiz. Each quiz may only be taken once.

There will be a folder on Blackboard titled “Project Assignments” in which you will find any and all material regarding the project including all assignments as well as the grading rubrics for each. This semester you will be tasked with creating a design concept for a children’s play. There will be several assignments throughout the semester which will lead to the final presentation. I will elaborate on this in a class video as the time draws near. Please contact me if you have any questions or doubts about writing your review.

All assignment files should be titled, saved and submitted in the following format:  
“firstname\_lastname\_assignmentname.docx”

You will also be responsible for writing a critique on one of the virtual productions by the UTEP Department of Theatre & Dance. Readings from the text, discussions and assignments will help you with the development of your paper and to make an educated analysis of a play. This assignment is to be formatted in MLA style. A guide to formatting in MLA style is available in the Writing Assignments, Rubrics & Guides folder on our Blackboard Home Page.

The final exam will be a comprehensive test, meaning it will cover all content discussed throughout the semester. Here are some of the best practices to follow in order to prepare:

- Make notes! It can be easy to think “I’ll just print these notes from Blackboard” but I assure you that the information will be better processed in your mind if you write your own notes.
- Read all content in the modules.
- Participate in all discussions.
- Complete all assignments.
- Ask questions.

All materials – written, audio and visual – shared within this course remain within this course. You can share your own materials developed in this course on your personal social media if you are the sole owner of the content. If you want to share content that includes or is co-authored with other classmates, you need to write them AND the instructor to discuss the authorization.

## Late Work Policy

Late work is unacceptable. Nothing in my class can be “made-up”. If you are going to miss a quiz or anticipate something preventing you from turning work in on time, please notify me *in advance* and as soon as you are aware, so we can discuss. If you find yourself in an extreme circumstance, please communicate this with me as quickly as possible so that we can discuss alternative assignments or due dates.

## UTEP Policy Regarding Safety and COVID-19

UTEP has established policies to help protect the health of our community and make our campus safe. All instructors must know and understand these policies when preparing and offering courses. The [UTEP Temporary Health and Safety Policy](#) requires all faculty, staff, and students to follow these guidelines:

- Stay at home if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test.
- Report ([screening.utep.edu](https://screening.utep.edu)) if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who has received a positive coronavirus test.
- Complete screening questions ([screening.utep.edu](https://screening.utep.edu)) every day before coming to campus and follow instructions provided.
- While on campus:
  - wear face coverings when in common areas or when others are present;
  - maintain a minimum separation of six (6) feet between yourself and others when possible, and arrange spaces to make this possible in almost all circumstances;
  - adhere to room/space limitations on number of occupants; and
  - wash and/or sanitize hands frequently.

## Student Responsibilities When Going On Campus

- Complete self-screening ([screening.utep.edu](https://screening.utep.edu)) prior to every campus visit.
- Complete COVID-19 student training at [this site](#).
- Contact instructor if temporary accommodations due to COVID-19 are needed (i.e., due to positive COVID-19 test, symptoms, or exposure).
- If unable to wear a face covering (e.g., medical reasons), the best course of action is to enroll in courses that are entirely online or to work with academic advisors, if necessary, to identify alternative courses. If this is not possible, request an accommodation from [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#) (CASS) prior to coming to campus for in-person activities. Students who receive an accommodation to not wear a face covering must share this with the professor and work to minimize contact with others in the class.

## 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 contact me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. As I will respect your individual's 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.

## UTEP Edge Statement

The UTEP Edge is our philosophy that acknowledges the many assets our students bring to the University. We provide a variety of high-impact experiences both in and out of the classroom through work of our faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners that build on these assets and talents. Many of the assignments and discussions in this class will further develop the talents you bring to this class such as developing your communication skills, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem solving. Participating in experiences such as research, civic engagement, student employment, and study abroad contribute to increasing your confidence,

enhancing your personal and professional skills, and equip you with a competitive advantage for when you graduate and enter the workforce or pursue a graduate degree. It is this competitive edge that will prepare you for leadership and lifelong success.

## **Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities Policy**

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University.

Learn more by calling by visiting [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services \(CASS\)](#) or by calling 915-747-5148.

Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk may contact the CASS office to discuss temporary accommodations for on-campus courses and activities.

## **Scholastic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Learn more here: [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#)

## **Netiquette**

The internet allows for easy discourse among people, but many forget the golden rule when it comes to online etiquette. Please be respectful of one another. Before making any post, please take a moment to ask yourself: "Is this in response to the assignment?" "Is this constructive or conducive to educational discussion?" "Is this kind?" If the answer to any of these questions is, "No," then you probably shouldn't post it.

Most discussions for this course will be based on thoughts and opinions on readings, the theatre, how theatre works and the subject matter of theatre. I remind you that theatre is an art that focuses primarily on humans and the human condition. We all have many experiences and backgrounds, and in the theatre, everyone and everything has a place. Differences of opinion are always welcome and many times the intent of theatre is to educate and generate discourse in order to shed light on a matter that might be otherwise neglected. I ask you all to have an open mind and entertain the idea that someone else might know something that you do not.

Be sure to read through the [10 Rules of Netiquette for Students](#) if you have any doubts about whether your post is Netiquette compliant. Remember the Golden Rule.

## Student Resources

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Familiarize yourself with the bookmarks on the right-hand side of the Blackboard student portal (visible before entering into a course) as well as the resources below.

- [UTEP Tech Support Helpdesk](#): Can assist with any technological issues, downloading of applications and making sure your technology is working as it should.
- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [Math Tutoring Center \(MaRCS\)](#): Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- [History Tutoring Center \(HTC\)](#): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.

## Plagiarism and the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

According to the University of Texas at El Paso's Handbook of Operating Procedures (1.2.2.1), Scholastic Dishonesty is defined as:

"Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution \(OSCCR\)](#). Please note that the student should be permitted to complete all assignments, sit for tests, and attend classes until the matter has been fully resolved. If the matter is unresolved when final course grades are due, you should record an "Incomplete" for the accused student's grade.