

# **Introduction to Theatre – THEA 1313- CRN23440**

Syllabus- Spring 2023

Instructor: Samantha Michelle Nava, MFA

Office Location: D273 Fox Fine Arts

Class Time: Wednesday 9:00 – 10:20am

Class Location: Fox Fine Arts D180

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 10:30-11:30am

Email: smnava5@utep.edu

Wednesday 11-12pm

Phone: 915-747-6213

## **Course Description**

This course will be an exploration into theater arts from its origins to the present and the way it depicts the human experience and how it relates to the written word. The social and cultural influences it derives from will serve as tools to understanding the different techniques and technical aspects that collaborate to create a production. The course is designed to serve not only as an introduction to drama for departmental majors, but as a general survey for non-majors.

## **Course Objective**

At the end of this course, students will:

- Understand the basic knowledge of theatre
- Develop the understanding of the aesthetic of the performing arts and theatre as an art form and its role in society.
- Students will be able to evaluate and present a critical view of social and cultural influences of live and online productions.

## **Required Text:**

Introduction to Theatre

By Carolyn Cubit-Tsutsui

- Available at General Collection Reserves at the UTEP Library
- Available for Electronic Reading at no cost on the Course Reserves (see Blackboard PowerPoint for directions on accessing).

## **Teaching Philosophy**

My teaching philosophy is to allow students to experience personal responsibility in a university setting. It will be the student's responsibility to actively participate in their job as a college student by actively participating in the class over the course of the semester, checking blackboard daily, being prepared for class and completing all assignments. My job is to provide a positive environment through lecture, class discussions and activities that encourages the desire to learn, guide the students through the course and make sure that the students feel comfortable coming to me to ask any questions or to talk about the class.

## **Technology Requirements:**

- Access to UTEP Library Database from home
- Word/Google Docs will be needed for the class. If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal link below:  
[https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/SOFTWARE\\_PAGES/soft\\_microsoftoffice365.html](https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/SOFTWARE_PAGES/soft_microsoftoffice365.html)
- Adobe Reader – <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

### **Course Policies:**

- It is the responsibility of the student to fulfill all the course requirements to the best of their abilities. If a student is unclear about anything on the syllabus, they should seek clarification from the instructor.
- If you do not feel well, are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or test positive for COVID-19, PLEASE STAY HOME. For positive COVID-19 tests, please send me an email with a positive COVID-19 test result or a doctor's note and I will make accommodations if possible.
- Students are expected to maintain a positive classroom environment, which is conducive to learning. To assure all students have an opportunity to benefit from time spent in class, students are prohibited from using cell phones in class unless otherwise approved by the instructor.
- No earphones, ear buds/air pods are allowed on while in the classroom.
- Late work will not be accepted, no exceptions. If a deadline is missed, the student will receive a zero as a grade for that project or assignment.
- Food and/or Drink snacks are permitted; please eat and drink quietly, avoid noisy food or packaging and YOU MUST clean up after yourself before leaving.
- Cell Phones are prohibited from being used while in class unless otherwise spoken to the professor.
- Students must behave in accordance with all rules put forth by the Handbook of Operating Procedures of the University of Texas at El Paso.
- I do not drop students from class; that is your choice and responsibility.

### **Course Communication:**

**My UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me.** I will make every attempt to respond in a timely manner to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receiving. Please be sure to e-mail me from your UTEP student account and include the course title, course number and day(s) we meet in the subject line, along with your first and last name. If you do not include all the previously stated information in the subject line, I will not respond.

### **Subject Matter**

The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable watching or reading. If you have concerns about discussing specific subjects, please reach out to me as soon as possible to discuss accommodation. As I will respect your individual's rights to choose what plays you work on, I expect all our discussions—including any that may occur outside of class—to be conducted in a respectful and professional matter.

**Announcements:** Please check Blackboard announcements frequently for updates, deadline changes, or other important messages.

## **Respect:**

- All students are in this class to learn. Should a student disrupt that process, the instructor will take the appropriate steps to ensure that all students interact in a safe space that is conducive to the learning process.
- Remember that your instructor is also a human being. She has many other responsibilities outside of this class, just as the student has several responsibilities outside of this one class. Read the syllabus, stick to class/university policies, utilize common etiquette and respect, and know that your instructor wants you to succeed in this course, but she is not responsible for that, you are.
- Work will be graded in a timely manner

## **Security:**

Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm. Do not share your password with anyone. Change your password if you think someone else might know it. Always log out when you are finished using the system.

## **Guidelines for communicating online:**

- Treat instructor with respect, even in email or in any other online communication. Use clear and concise language.
- Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar. Avoid slang terms such as “wassup?” and writing abbreviations such as “u” instead of “you”. Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14 pt. font.
- Avoid using the caps lock feature as it can be interpreted as yelling.
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or offensive.
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and other’s). Do not send confidential information via e-mail.

## **Email Netiquette**

Netiquette = (network etiquette)

- When you send an email to your instructor or classmates, you should: Use a descriptive subject line.
- Be brief.
- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them. Avoid HTML in favor of plain text.
- Sign your message with your name and return e-mail address. Think before you send an e-mail to more than one person.

**Students with Disabilities Policy:** If you have or suspect a disability and need accommodation, you should contact The Cass Office at 747-5148 or at [cass@utp.edu](mailto:cass@utp.edu) or go to Room 106 Union East Building.

**Subject Matter:** The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable watching or reading. If you have concerns about any of plays or discussing specific subjects, please reach out to me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. As I will respect your individual rights to choose what plays you work on, I expect all our discussions—including any that may occur

outside of class—to be conducted in a respectful and professional matter. Disclaimer: Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, is subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor to enhance learning opportunities. All changes will be clearly communicated.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance in class is required as we will only meet **14** times during the semester. Sign-in at the beginning of class. A line will be drawn after class starts. If you arrive after the class has started sign in below the line. If you arrive 15 minutes after class has started, you will be considered absent and will not receive any points for attendance that day but are still welcome to stay for the remainder of the class, so you receive your participation points.

Attendance does factor into the grading breakdown; therefore, it will affect your grade.

### **Attendance Grading Break down**

Students will receive the following points based on their punctuality:

1 point- Arrives on time (before class starts) and ready to work at the start of class

½ point- Arrives up to 15 minutes late

0 points – Arrives 15 minutes or later to class

Absences that will be excused are those for students representing the university in officially recognized university activities. The students must provide the instructor with written notice from the sponsoring faculty or staff member prior to the event.

You have 1 personal day that may be used for a class absence and no points will be deducted.

**It is the student's responsibility to catch up on material that was covered in class.**

**Show Requirements:** You will be required to see at least two (2) shows this semester: Heroes and Saints by the UTEP Theatre and Dance Department and a UTEP Dinner Theatre show of your choosing.

**Heroes and Saints** by: Cherríe Moraga's

Show Location: Wise Family Theatre in the Fox Fine Arts Building

Dates: February 24, 25, March 3 ,4 @ 7:30pm

February 26 & March 5 @ 2:30pm

Ticket Prices: \$18 Adults, \$15 UTEP Faculty/Staff, Alumni, Seniors, Military, Non-UTEP, Students, \$12 UTEP Students

Description of Play: Heroes and Saints sets ablaze the struggles endured by the farmworker community from the fictional town of McFarland California. The fields are riddled with pesticides and toxic waste leading to a high incidence of cancer and birth defects. Heroes and Saints is a searing look at what a community must contend with to earn a meager living in a world where their lives are devalued and minimized. Through elements of surrealism Moraga reminds us that we are responsible for one another and have no right to demand that others sacrifice for our own comfort.

Choose one (1) of the following UTEP Diner Theatre shows to view this semester to fulfill your second requirement. Shows this semester are the following:

**Prom**

Show Location: UTEP Dinner Theatre  
Union Building West, Room 209

**Show Dates:** February 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

Evening Dinner performances begin at 6:30pm, Matinee Dinner performances begin at 1:00 PM, Matinee (No Dinner) performances begin at 2:00 PM

**Description:** Nominated for 6 Tony Awards including Best Musical! *The Prom* is the hit Broadway musical about four fading Broadway stars who are in desperate need of a new stage. When they hear that trouble is brewing around a small-town Indiana prom it's time to kick-ball-change the world! The town's parents want to keep the dance on the straight and narrow—but when one student just wants to bring her girlfriend to prom, the entire town has a date with destiny. *The Prom* is the hilarious musical that won the 2019 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Musical! You don't want to miss this happy, funny, peppy, funny, bursting with love (did we mention it is funny) musical! *Some Adult Language*

### **The Full Monty**

**Show Dates:** April 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, MAY 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Evening Dinner performances begin at 6:30pm, Matinee Dinner performances begin at 1:00 PM, Matinee (No Dinner) performances begin at 2:00 PM

**Description:** Stripping steelworkers? You bet! Seeing how much their wives enjoy watching male strippers during their "Girls Night Out", unemployed steelworkers in Buffalo, New York come up with a bold way to make some quick cash. In the process they find renewed self-esteem, the importance of friendship and the ability to have fun. As these everyday guys with their everyday bodies work through their fears, they come to discover that not only are they stronger as a group, but that the strength they find in each other gives them the individual courage to face their fears and overcome them. This hilarious musical is based on the hit British film that was nominated for **Best Picture** at The Academy Awards. When we staged **The Full Monty** at The UTEP Dinner Theatre in 2006 it sold out every single performance and held over for 5 additional performances, a definite crowd pleaser! **Mature subject matter and partial nudity.**

**UDT Ticket Prices:** The prices listed below are the prices you will pay if you purchase your ticket in person at the UTEP Ticket Center. If you purchase your tickets by phone or at ticketmaster.com additional fees of varying amounts will be added to the cost of your ticket. When purchasing tickets in any discount ticket category the person on the I.D. (student/faculty/military etc.) must be present when purchasing the tickets.

**\*Children 3 years and under are not allowed in the theatre, Up to 4 Tickets per valid ID. One ticket per valid UTEP ID.**

### **Friday & Saturday Dinner Performances - Reserved Tables**

Adult \$53.50 • UTEP Faculty/Staff/Group (20+) \$51.50 • UTEP Alumni Association Members \$51.50 • Children (4-12 yrs. old) \$51.50 • Non-UTEP Student \$51.50 • Military \$51.50 • UTEP Student \$43.50

### **Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday Matinee Dinner Performances – Reserved Tables**

Adult \$48.50 • UTEP Faculty/Staff/Group (20+) \$46.50 • UTEP Alumni Association Members \$46.50 • Children (4-12 yrs. old) \$46.50 • Non-UTEP Student \$46.50 • Military \$46.50 • UTEP Student \$38.50

### **Sunday No Dinner Matinee Performances – Reserved Tables**

Adult \$32.50 • UTEP Faculty/Staff/Group (20+) \$30.50 • UTEP Alumni Association Members \$30.50 • Children

(4-12 yrs. old) \$30.50 • Non-UTEP Student \$30.50 • Military \$30.50 • UTEP Student \$22.50

\*Children 3 years and under are not allowed in the theatre.

\*\*Up to 4 Tickets per valid ID.

\*\*\*One ticket per valid UTEP ID.

### **Written Show Observation Papers:**

A written observation paper of these productions is part of your grade for this course. Papers must include observations/critiques on the direction, acting, scenery, lighting/sound, and costumes. How did these all work together? What stood out to you? Was there something you liked/disliked? Was there anything you did not understand/was not sure worked out? How are these productions relevant to today's world and the social and cultural events happening every day? Use what we learned in class to dissect the production. At the end of the show you attend, you will either scan the QR Code at the Wise Family Theatre or sign the hardcover sheet at the UDT shows as proof that you stayed for the duration of the performance.

**There are ushering opportunities for these shows which will allow you to see them at no cost.** Use the following link to sign up to usher for *Heroes and Saints*. **Prior** to signing up please make sure you can **fully commit** to the day and time requirements for ushering. If you take a spot and later can no longer make it, remove yourself immediately so other students have an opportunity to sign up.

**Ushering opportunities are on a first come, first served basis**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-J4OppxrwyrGpAn4A8KLfIZU-OLzGF5xxVxGvZaTh3Y/edit?usp=sharing>

To usher for either *Prom* or *The Full Monty* at the UDT please contact Valerie Cadena, Associate Director, for the Dinner Theater at [vfcadena@utep.edu](mailto:vfcadena@utep.edu) for further instruction.

**All show observations papers and supporting materials are due**

**no later than the last class meeting day May 4<sup>th</sup>**

### **WHERE YOU CAN PURCHASE TICKETS:**

- The UTEP Ticket Center – Main Location 2901 N. Mesa El Paso, Texas 79902 Monday-Friday: 8 A.M.-6 P.M. Saturday: 8 A.M.-4.PM. Closed on Sundays (915) 747-5234
- UTEP Ticket Center – Union East Location Union Building East, Room 111 (1st Floor) Hours of Operation Open only Fall & Spring Semesters Monday - Friday: 9am - 2pm (Hours subject to change)

**Chapter Reflections:** You will be assigned reading materials throughout the semester. All reading materials are found digitally at no cost through the Course Reserves. See PowerPoint on Blackboard for directions in accessing the readings. After each chapter there will be a small quiz on the material and a section for reflection. The Reflection will be a brief synopsis of the content covered and at least 3 new things that you learned. Please See Blackboard for due dates.

**Extra Credit Options** You may see any other theatre arts production for extra credit. An observation paper, ticket stub and program must be submitted to receive the extra credit. The more theatre you expose yourself to the better.

**Grading Breakdown:** This is a point-based class, you can earn up to 151 points, but you only need 141 to get an A

0 -92 = F

93-113 =D

114-129 = C

130-140 = B

141-151 = A

Syllabus Quiz- 2 points

Attendance- 28 points

Blackboard Units: Quizzes and Reflections- 3 points each (33 total)

Show Observation Papers- 30 points (each paper)

Participation- 28 points

\*\*Optional Extra Credit Show- 10 points each

**SEE BLACKBOARD FOR ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE AND DUE DATES**

### **Helpful Resources:**

**Technical Support** If you do not know how to use Blackboard or have technical issues with Library access – visit the Technology Support Center located in the Library at Room 300. You can contact the Help Desk via email, [helpdesk@utep.edu](mailto:helpdesk@utep.edu), by phone 747-5257. Hours are M-F 7a-8p, Sat 9a-10p and Sun 12-4pm.

**UTEP Writing Center** To get help with writing please check out the writing center – their procedure has changed due to the virus, and you must plan accordingly. <https://www.utep.edu/uwc/>

**Student Health Center** UTEP Student Health Center is here to meet the health care needs of all students so they can focus on their studies. As a student you have paid a medical service fee that allows you to be seen at the clinic as often as needed. Office visits are low cost as well as medications, supplies and any lab tests needed (747-5624).

**UTEP University Counseling Center** located at 202 Union West can assist you to decide on a career or work through personal concerns. They provide confidential counseling services, assist with stress management, and offer an after-hours crisis support line (747-5302).

**Copyright Statement:** some materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of the student currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further distributed.

**Scholastic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs. 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 as one's own. 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. 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) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit <https://www.utep.edu/hoop/section-2/student-conduct-and-discipline.html> I expect all your work to be original, as I do read all your work.

**Syllabus Change Policy:**

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