

Department of Theatre & Dance

INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE  
Fall 2015

**THEA 1310-01**

**Time: TBD**

**Classroom: TBA**

**Professor TBD**

**Office: TAR Room 216**

**Office Phone: 409-XXX-XXXX**

**E-Mail: TBA**

**Office Hours: Tue/ Thu 1-2PM**

**Or by Appointment**

E-mail is always the best way to reach me, and is the official communication means of the University. It is how I will be contacting you; *you are expected to check your Lamar e-mail at least once a day*. Please do not send me a message through Blackboard; make sure it is going straight to my e-mail account.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an overview of many of the different aspects of performance and theatre. The course will take time to explore the various people with different jobs in different kinds of theatre, as well as theatre in different cultures and different eras. The student will gain a greater understanding of the history and workings of theatre & performance in their own community and around the world. The student will gain a sense of how theatre is a conduit and forum for social responsibility, as well as how being an audience member is a development of one's own personal social responsibility.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

1. *Uncle Vanya*, Anton Chekhov
2. *The Late Henry Moss*, Sam Shepard.
3. *Exploring Theatre: A Backstage Pass*, Michael O'Hara and Judith Sebesta.

All books are required and are available at the campus bookstores

Power point presentations will accompany lecture and be posted on Blackboard. *These are a guide; they don't replace taking notes in lecture*. Students should have a notebook for taking supporting notes in class.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

You are required to attend the following Lamar Theatre Productions:

*Uncle Vanya*  
February 27-March 2  
Studio Theatre

*Sweet Charity*  
April 10-13  
University Theatre

Box office hours will be made available closer to the shows. The box office accepts CASH ONLY. Tickets are \$7. You will be required to sign out in order to get the points for the performances. Attendance at each play is worth 10% of your final grade.

You are expected to practice good theatre **etiquette** or behavior while attending these plays. This includes purchasing your ticket in advance, arriving at least 15 minutes before the play begins, turning off your cell phone during the performance, and not engaging in behavior that is rude or disruptive. *Any students who are observed not practicing good etiquette will lose the full 10% for that play and may be removed from the course.*

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

*Student Learning Outcomes;*

Upon Successful Completion of the Course, the Student Will;

1. Have developed their basic academic skills and ability to multi-task.
2. Have further developed their routine, discipline, and work ethic.
3. Have gained a better overall understanding of the workings & history of performance in American Theatre.
4. Understand the basic ways in which theatre can be analyzed and understood as an art form.
5. Have an awareness of the social issues and social responsibilities of the business of theatre, as well as their own personal social responsibilities and etiquette.
6. Have developed their teamwork skills.
7. Have explored classical Creative American artifacts recreated in live performance.
8. Have celebrated the human imagination of great American theater artists.
9. Have learned to communicate their ideas effectively in written, oral, and visual mediums.

## **Core Curriculum Objectives**

1. Critical Thinking Skills (CT): Course instruction and assessment to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
  - Method of instruction: lecture and discussion, reading of course materials, writing and presentation of assigned topics.
  - Method of assessment: Mid-term and Final Exam. Rubric scored essay questions a part of all three exams.
  - Initial performance target: “acceptable” average score on 70% of rubrics
2. Communication Skills (CS): Course instruction and assessment to include effective written, oral, and visual communication.
  - Method of instruction: lecture and discussion, reading of course materials, writing and presentation of assigned topics.
  - Method of assessment: Rubric-scored essay questions (all three exams); rubric-scored team presentation/discussion.
  - Initial performance target: “acceptable” average score on 70% of rubrics.
3. Teamwork (TW): Course instruction and assessment to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.
  - Method of instruction: lecture and discussion, peer-to-peer interaction, and group presentation of research.
  - Method of assessment: Rubric-scored team presentation/discussion.
  - Initial performance target: “acceptable” average score on 70% of rubrics.
4. Social Responsibility (SR): Course instruction and assessment to include intercultural competency, civic knowledge, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
  - Method of instruction: lecture and discussion, reading of course materials, writing and presentation of assigned topics.
  - Method of assessment: Rubric-scored essay questions on exams.
  - Initial performance target: “acceptable” average score on 70% of rubrics

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

- 1-Attendance of two performances, worth a total of 10% of your final grade.**
- 2- One social responsibility and etiquette quiz, worth 10% of your final grade.**
- 3-One small group short presentation, worth 10% of your final grade.**
- 4-Two in class exams, each worth 15% each of your final grade.**
- 5-One final exam, worth 30% of your final grade.**
- 6- In class attendance/ participation, worth 10% of your final grade.**

## **Grades are assessed on the following scale:**

<b>A</b>	<b>86-100</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>76-85</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>66-75</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>56-65</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>55 or lower</b>

**TESTS & EXAMS CAN ONLY BE TAKEN ON THE DAY THEY ARE OFFERED AND THE TIME THEY ARE OFFERED. Make-up tests are only offered if the student has spoken to the professor 24 hours (or one business day) before the test AND the professor has agreed to the accommodation. In extreme circumstances, the professor should be contacted immediately about missing a test and accommodation is at the professors' discretion. Do NOT wait until the next class day to address a missed test or assignment.**

**LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED FOR ANY PERCENTAGE OF THE ORIGINAL VALUE**

**EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT ANY TIME IN THE SEMESTER**

**Please be advised that I do not provide study guides for any of the tests. Any power point info I use in lecture will be made available through Blackboard.**

Theatre Attendance (2)

Students are expected to attend *Uncle Vanya* and *Sweet Charity* this semester, practice good theatre etiquette, and sign out at both performances.

Social Responsibility and Etiquette Quiz

All students will be tested near the beginning of the course on good theatre and classroom etiquette. Near the end of the course, each student will take another quiz on the role of social responsibility in the theatre as well as in their day to day lives.

Small Group Presentation

Each student will present, as part of a group TBA, a brief presentation on a topic assigned by the Professor. These will be about 10 minutes long and are TBD based on the size of the class. More specific guidelines will precede the presentation.

In Class Exams (2)

These are based on material covered in lecture, the textbooks, and performances, and are predominantly multiple choice tests (there may be some short answer or matching). The exact chapters/ lecture notes to be covered will be presented well in advance of the actual exams.

Final Exam

This is a cumulative exam, during the exam period, that will cover material from throughout the course. Types of questions will include multiple choice, short answer, matching, and possibly some longer answer.

**PARTICIPATION/ ATTENDANCE**

Lamar University expects students in this class to attend lecture.

Students are asked to arrive promptly on time and to sign in at the beginning of the lecture. Students who arrive late will be allowed to sign in after lecture.

It is not necessary to inform the professor of an absence from lecture. Do NOT ask the professor to go over material you missed in class- you are responsible for getting all missed material from another student in the class.

If you anticipate that you will be missing a quiz or an exam, see the Professor immediately.

If you miss a test or exam, contact the Professor AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

All readings should be completed by the day they are discussed in lecture.

**COURSE EVALUATIONS:**

Because I value your feedback and want to be sure the class best meets your needs, I encourage you to take advantage of online end-of-semester course evaluations.

**DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY:\*\*\***All cell phones, ipods, and other electronic devices must be turned OFF at the beginning of class. Laptop computers may be used to take notes; HOWEVER, you may only use a word processing program. If you use any electronic devices for purposes not pertaining to class (e.g. text messaging, Facebook, etc), you will be given a warning. Repeated instances will result in dismissal from the class.

There is no food or drink allowed in the classroom, except for water in a capped bottle. Repeated instances will result in dismissal from the class.

Students may not wear sunglasses inside the classroom or put their feet up on the backs of classroom chairs. Repeated instances will result in dismissal from the class.

Different students are likely to have different issues that interest them, different understandings of class materials, and different opinions on a wide range of topics. It is important to the environment of this class that we are able to speak honestly and to disagree openly. It is essential, however, that we do so from a position of respect for each other. Any student who is disrespectful to the instructor, fellow students, or guests will be given a warning. Repeated instances will result in dismissal from the class.

“Disruptive Behavior” generally means conduct that materially and substantially interferes with or obstructs the teaching or learning process in the context of the classroom. Besides the above, disruptive behavior also includes conduct that distracts others in a manner that interferes with instructional activities or fails to adhere to an instructor’s classroom rules, such as: excessive tardies, cell phones ringing in class, talking during lectures, sleeping, and reading materials other than those covered in class that day.

## STATEMENT ON DISABILITIES

Lamar University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is located in the Communications building room 105. Office staff collaborate with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact the DRC at 409-880-8347 or [drc@lamar.edu](mailto:drc@lamar.edu) to arrange a confidential appointment with the Director of the DRC to explore possible options regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus; instructions for severe weather or violence/active shooter, fire, or chemical release can be found at:

<http://www.lamar.edu/about-lu/administration/risk-management/index.html>.

Following are procedures for the first two:

#### **Severe Weather:**

- Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
- Seek shelter in an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building.
- Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors.

#### **Violence/Active Shooter (CADD):**

- **CALL** - 8-3-1-1 from a campus phone (880-8311 from a cell phone). Note: Calling 9-1-1 from either a campus phone or cell phone will contact Beaumont City Police Dispatch rather than University Police.
- **AVOID**- If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
- **DENY**- Barricade the door with desks, chairs, bookcases or any other items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it is safe.
- **DEFEND**- Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack.

In the event of an announced campus closure in excess of four days due to a hurricane or other disaster, students are expected to login to Lamar University's website's homepage ([www.Lamar.edu](http://www.Lamar.edu)) for instructions about continuing courses remotely.

## STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are specifically warned against all forms of cheating and plagiarism. The Lamar University Student Handbook states:

Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. Punishable offenses include, but are not limited to, cheating on and examination or academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. (81)

One aspect of the Handbook's definition of cheating is "purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own any research paper or other assignment" (82). Plagiarism is defined as, "the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or ideas into one's own offered for credit" (82).

Students seeking guidance to avoid plagiarism should consult me, recent handbooks, or the University Writing Center.

Punishments for academic dishonesty range from an F in the course, to an F on the assignment, to re-submission of the work. Punishments are at my discretion, and may be appealed to the dean and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. Flagrant or repeat violations may warrant further discipline by the university including probation and suspension.

The Texas State University System has established the following Disciplinary Procedures for Academic Dishonesty:

(1) Academic Process. All academic dishonesty cases may be first considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she may assign a penalty but must notify the student of his/her right to appeal to the department chair, the dean, and eventually, to the vice president for academic affairs (whose decision shall be final) before imposition of the penalty. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, and opportunity to respond, and an impartial disposition as to the merits of his/her case. After completion of the academic process, the academic officer making final disposition of the case shall refer the matter to the chief student affairs officer for any additional discipline that may be appropriate.

(2) Disciplinary Process. In the case of flagrant or repeated violations, the chief student affairs officer may take such additional disciplinary action as he/she deems appropriate. No disciplinary action shall become effective against the student until the student has received procedural due process under *Subsection 5.6* and following exception as provided under *Subsection 5.15* of the Texas State University System Board of Regents Handbook.

#### IMPORTANT DATES:

January 15<sup>th</sup> - last day of late registration with fee.

February 14<sup>th</sup> - last day to drop or withdraw without academic penalty.

March 25<sup>th</sup> - last day to drop or withdraw with academic penalty.

*This course may contain subject matter related to course content that includes explicit language, violence, and frank sexuality. Students not willing to view such material for personal or religious beliefs are advised not to take the course.*

**COURSE CALENDAR (subject to change- all exam dates should remain the same unless there are extenuating circumstances).**

## **JANUARY**

Tue 14- Syllabus info/ Blackboard.

Thu 16- Go over syllabus/ Unit 1, Introduction to Performance. READ: O'Hara, Chapter 1.

Tue 21- 'Performance' Continued/ Unit 2, 'The Text'. 'Interpreting and communication different ideas about a text.' READ: O'Hara, Chapter 2

Thu 23- Text continued, 'A text can be felt before it is understood.'/ ETIQUETTE QUIZ

Tue 28- Unit 3, 'Audience, Critic, Producer: interpretation & artistic expression.' READ: O'HARA Chapter 3

Thu 30- 'Audience, Critic, Producer: critical thinking and communication.'

## **FEBRUARY**

Tue 4- Unit 4, 'Performance Spaces: creative expression through space.' READ/DOWNLOAD: O'Hara, Chapter 4

Thu 6- Film Screening, *Vanya on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street*

Tue 11- *Vanya on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street* continued

Thu 13- NO CLASS TODAY.

Tue 18- 'Performance Spaces' Continued/ tour of theatres

Thu 20- EXAM I

Tue 25- Unit 5, 'Playwrights.' READ: O'Hara, Chapter 5.

Thu 27- Unit 6, 'The Director.' READ: O'Hara, Chapter 6.



\*\*\**Uncle Vanya*, Studio Theatre, February 27-March 2\*\*\*

## **MARCH**

Tue 4- Unit 7, 'Designers.' READ: O'Hara, Chapter 7, *Uncle Vanya*.

Thu 6- Unit 8, 'Acting'. READ: O'Hara, Chapter 9.

Tue 11- SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

Thu 13- SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

Tue 18- Film Screening: *This So-Called Disaster*. READING: *The Late Henry Moss*.

Thu 20- *This So-Called Disaster* continued.

Tue 25- EXAM II

Thu 27- Unit 10, 'Great American Playwrights; works of the human imagination'

## **APRIL**

Tue 1- Great American playwrights: serious theatre in America and social responsibility.

Thu 3- Social Responsibility Quiz.

Tue 8- Unit 11: 'The American Musical.' READ: O'Hara Chapter 11.

Thu 10- Discussions on social responsibility and the human imagination in American theatre.

\*\*\**Sweet Charity*, University Theatre. April 10-13<sup>th</sup>\*\*\*

Tue 15- Unit 11 Continued

Thu 17- GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Tue 22- GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Thu 24- GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Tue 29- Exam Review

## **MAY**

Thu 1- Summation