

# Introduction to Theatre

THR 115 ; Fall 2017

M/W/F 9-9:50 ~ KNT 104

~TENTATIVE COURSE SYLLABUS~

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Office: Tattnall Square Center for the Arts, RM 031

Office Hours: W/F 3:00-5pm (and by appointment)

## Course Description:

"A study of the nature of the art of theatre, its evolution, and its importance to the development of human relationships and culture. This course will include a brief survey of theatre history, and introduction to script analysis, and an exploration of each facet of theatre production, including acting, directing, and design."-*undergraduate catalogue*

In short, we are discovering what theatre is, why it matters, and how the work of theatre gets done.

## Objectives:

Students will be able to describe and explain the basic production process related to theatre performance as well as the fundamental principles of acting, directing, play analysis, design, technical theatre and history of theatre. Students will also be able to discuss logically and creatively about live performances and entertainment using proper terminology in connection to other areas of study.

## Course Outcomes:

In order to successfully complete this course, students will:

- Attend and participate in a productive, authentic, and appropriate manner
- Read all course material as assigned
- Demonstrate appropriate ensemble, leadership, and analysis skills through dedicated and engaged productive participation in successful group projects
- Display a solid record of passing grades on all required tests and papers.
- Stay current with checking Mercer Email as all course related correspondence will be sent through email (assignment adjustments, class cancellations, etc)

## Textbook/ Course Materials:

### **Required Books:**

-*An Introduction to: The Art of Theatre: a comprehensive text- past, present, and future.* Marsh Cassady. 2007. ISBN: 9781566081177

-*James and the Giant Peach.* Dahl. 2007. ISBN 9780142407912

-*Tartuffe.* Moliere. 1988. ISBN: 9780822211112

-*The Crucible.* Arthur Miller. 1953. ISBN: 9780822202554

### **Course Materials:**

A way to take notes (notebook/binder or laptop/tablet) is required everyday

3x5 note cards and a pen/pencil for quizzes/questionnaires is required everyday

A reliable computer to access supplemental materials, take exams, and turn in assignments.

### **Other Readings:**

Handouts distributed by the instructor or posted online

Independent research performed by the student

### Attendance Policy:

This is a discussion and presentation driven class so attendance is required for a full understanding of the material covered for this course. If you accumulate more than 10 unexcused absences, you cannot pass this class since the bulk of the grade for this course will be based on attendance and effort. Appropriate documentation of excused absences or lateness must be turned into the professor for absences not to be reflected in your final grade. Athletes and performers: Please contact your coaches and instructors for season travel excuse forms. Any/all unexcused absences will be taken into account for your final grade.

**Attendance/ participation counts for 30% of your grade.**

### Assignments:

*Please make sure you read the instructions both on the syllabus AND in the appropriate instructions folder on Canvas. More information and guidelines for assignments can be found online.*

### Extra Credit:

There are no opportunities for extra credit in this class.

#### *- Reading Responses/ Project Responses (5):*

There are 5 reading/project response questions throughout the syllabus that relate to the assigned readings for class. Students are asked to write a 2-3 page response addressing the question asked or project proposed, connections made to the required text, and any other outside connections the student finds useful for exploring their response. Project responses that do not follow a written format are exempt from this page requirement. Please include your own personal thoughts, and **DO NOT SUMMARIZE THE TEXT**. These are informal projects/responses designed to let the student think more personally about the topics addressed in class and in the reading. These responses must be typed and submitted into the appropriate "assignment turn in" location on Canvas before the start of class on their due dates. Reminder that SafeAssign is used in this class. Late work will be accepted up to 1 week after the assigned due date, but late work will be marked down.

**Reading/ Project Responses count for 15% of your grade**

#### *- Performance Responses (3):*

Students are responsible for scheduling the attendance of 3 live performances for themselves during the term. (Two of these performances must be an evening of staged readings, and *James and the Giant Peach*.) After attending a performance, the student must write a 4-5 page response paper discussing their personal reactions, relevant connections to the assigned reading from *The Art of Theatre*, and their general 'take away' from the piece. Discuss your thoughts on the performance by taking into account at least 3 SPECIFIC THEATRICAL ELEMENTS such as acting, direction, costumes, scenery, lighting, music/sound, etc. You must include the date, location, and time of the performance you attend. And please, do not summarize the plot. Reminder that SafeAssign is used in this class.

Responses must be typed and submitted into the appropriate "assignment turn in" location on Canvas no later than 3 days after the student sees the performance. Late work will not be accepted.

**Performance Responses counts for 15% of your grade**

### Quizzes

There will be up to 10 small pop quizzes given in class during the semester that relate to previous class discussions, the assigned reading for that day, or ask you to explore your creativity.

QUIZZES CANNOT BE MADE UP IF MISSED.

**Quizzes count for 5% of your grade.**

### Exams

There will be (3) three online 50 multiple-choice exams during the semester. The first exam will cover the material we read about and discuss before October 4<sup>th</sup>. The second exam will cover the material we read about and discuss before October 25<sup>th</sup>. The third exam will cover all of the material we will have read about and discussed this semester. All exams have a 30-minute time limit, and will be open to complete for 15 hours on the exam day (from 7am to 10pm). **Class will not meet on exam days.** Exams can be made up if the student reschedules their exam via email within 24 hours of the missed exam (You must receive email confirmation from the professor of the reschedule no later than 48 hours after the exam missed for the accommodation). More information and guidelines for the exams can be found in the appropriate course area folder on Canvas. *(and please, do not rely on WiFi... plug in)*

**Exams count for 15% of your grade**

### Final Group Performance Project:

The final project will be something we work on/ work towards all semester. The class will be divided into groups of 5-6 students and asked to produce and support a 10-minute piece to perform for the class at the end of the semester. There is an 'individual' portion of this assignment that must be typed and included in your final show binder. A final project rubric worksheet can be found at the end of this syllabus, but we will go over these requirements in more detail during class. More information and support for the final project can be found in the appropriate course area folder on Canvas.

**Final Project counts for 20% of your grade**

### Grading:

Grades will be posted in a timely manner on Canvas. Please check on this information regularly to confirm your submission of assignments and to track your performance in this class. Please let your professor know of any found discrepancies or inaccuracies ASAP so that the problem can be resolved.

#### Grade Percentages:

Attendance/ Participation: 30%  
Final Group Performance Project: 20%  
Exams: 15%  
Performance Response Papers: 15%  
Reading/Project Responses: 15%  
Quizzes: 5%

#### Point Break-Down (1000 pts total possible)

- Attendance/ Participation:	300 pts
<i>each day of 33 = 8pts</i>	
<i>(+ 36pts for active, positive participation during class)</i>	
- Final Group Performance:	200 pts
<i>75pts group, 125pts individual</i>	
- Exams (3)	150pts
<i>each exam = 50pts</i>	
- Performance Responses (3):	150pts
<i>each response = 50pts</i>	
- Reading Responses (5):	150pts
<i>each response = 30pts</i>	
- Quizzes (10):	50pts

each quiz = 5pts

Grading Scale (no rounding)

A = 1000-920pts	B+ = 919-850pts	B = 849-800pts	C+ = 799-750pts
C = 749-700pts	D = 699-650pts	F = 649-0pts	

Important Dates:

**Response/Project Response Due Dates:**

Response/Project 1:	Wednesday, September 6 <sup>th</sup>
Response 2:	Monday, September 11 <sup>th</sup>
Response/Project 3:	Monday, October 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Response 4:	Wednesday, October 11 <sup>th</sup>
Response/Project 5:	Wednesday, November 15 <sup>th</sup>

**Exams:**

EXAM # 1:	Wednesday, October 4 <sup>th</sup>
EXAM # 2:	Wednesday, October 25 <sup>th</sup>
EXAM # 3	Monday, November 20 <sup>th</sup>

**Other Important Academic Dates:**

Fri August 25 <sup>th</sup> :	Getting to know Canvas Assignment Due
Fri October 13 <sup>th</sup> :	Mid-Semester
Wed October 27 <sup>th</sup> :	Course Withdrawal Deadline
Wed December 13 <sup>th</sup> :	Reading day- no exams
<b>Sat December 16<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>Final Class Period, 9-12am at Tattnall Square Center for the Arts</b>

**Performances:**

REQUIRED:

*Staged Readings*

Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> and 21-23 @ 7:30; Sept. 17 & 24 @ 2:30 Tattnall Square Center for the Arts

“James and the Giant Peach”

Nov. 2-4 @ 7:30; Nov 5 @ 2:30 Tattnall Square Center for the Arts

-Travel show TBA to Forsyth

(highly)SUGGESTED:

“And Then There Were None” (*ten guilty strangers trapped on an island.... One by one start to die.*)

August 25<sup>th</sup>-September 3<sup>rd</sup>; Macon Little Theatre

“Rumors” (*a classic farce with a host bleeding in the other room with guests beginning to arrive.*)

September 8<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup>; Theatre Macon

“Kinky Boots” (*winner of 6 Tony awards including Best Musical; huge hearted, high heeled hit!*)

March 14-15; Grand Opera House

For Mercer tickets, visit the Grand Opera House website.

(I've put links to these and other theatre performances on Canvas: Course Content → Theatres)

## Weekly Schedule

### **Introduction to Theatre**

TENTATIVE/ SUBJECT TO CHANGE

**Assigned readings and response questions/projects are to be completed for the date listed**  
Please make sure you read the instructions for assignments in the appropriate folders on Canvas.

#### WEEK 1

W, Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>: Intro/ Canvas/ Syllabus

F, Aug 25<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 1: What are Theatre and Drama?

**GETTING TO KNOW CANVAS ASSIGNMENT DUE**

#### WEEK 2

M, Aug 28<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Class Discussion of Theatre and Drama

W, Aug 30<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 4: Architecture and Space

F, Sept 1<sup>st</sup>: No Reading Due: Class Discussion of Architecture and Space

#### WEEK 3

M, Sept 4<sup>th</sup>: NO CLASS- LABOR DAY

W, Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 10: Audience and the Critic:

**READING/PROJECT RESPONSE 1 DUE**

F, Sept 8<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Class Discussion of Audience and Critic

#### WEEK 4

M, Sept 11<sup>th</sup>: *The Crucible* (read entire play for class, bring script to class)

**READING RESPONSE 2 DUE**

W, Sept 13<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Class Discussion of *The Crucible* (bring script to class)

F, Sept 15<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Class Discussion of *The Crucible* (bring script to class)

#### WEEK 5

M, Sept 18<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 8: Designers & Supporting Artists (pgs 168-183) *scenic+lighting*

W, Sept 20<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 8: Designers & Supporting Artists (pgs 183-204) *costume-discussion questions*

F, Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>: No Reading Due: Class Discussion of *The Crucible* and Design (bring script to class)

#### WEEK 6

M, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 5: The Playwright (pgs 93-114)

W, Sept 27<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Class Discussion of The Playwright

F, Sept 29<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Introduction to Final Group Project

#### WEEK 7

M, Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>: No Reading Due: In Class work on playwriting

**READING/PROJECT RESPONSE 3 DUE**

W, Oct 4<sup>th</sup>:

**EXAM 1**

F, Oct 6<sup>th</sup>:

NO CLASS- FALL BREAK

**WEEK 8**

M, Oct 9<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 6: The Actor

W, Oct 11<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: In Class work on Actors

**READING RESPONSE 4 DUE**

F, Oct 13<sup>th</sup>: Final Group Project Group Selection **\*\*YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS TODAY\*\***

**WEEK 9**

M, Oct 16<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 3: Dramatic Style and Genre

W, Oct 18<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 7: The Director

F, Oct 20<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: In Class work on Style, Genre, and Directors

**WEEK 10**

M, Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>: *James and the Giant Peach (JGP)* (read entire play for class, bring script to class)

W, Oct 25<sup>th</sup>: **EXAM 2**

F, Oct 27<sup>th</sup>: NO CLASS

**WEEK 11**

M, Oct 30<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: In Class work on *JGP* and Final Group Project (bring script to class)

W, Nov 1<sup>st</sup>: Class Meets at Tattnall Square Center for the Arts (theatre) @ 9:10am

F, Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>: No Reading Due: In Class work with *JGP and Final Group Project* (bring script to class)

**WEEK 12**

M, Nov 6<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Final Group Project in class work

W, Nov 8<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 11: Theatre's Beginning (pgs 245-260)

F, Nov 10<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 12: Medieval Theatre (pgs 261- 272)

**WEEK 13**

M, Nov 13<sup>th</sup>: *Tartuffe* (read entire play for class, bring script to class)

W, Nov 15<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: In Class work with *Tartuffe* and Renaissance Theatre

**READING/PROJECT RESPONSE 5 DUE**

F, Nov 17<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 13: Renaissance Theatre (pgs 273-289)

**WEEK 14**

M, Nov 20<sup>th</sup>: **EXAM 3**

W, Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>: NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK

F, Nov 24<sup>th</sup>: NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK

**WEEK 15**

M, Nov 27<sup>th</sup>: Final Group Project Rehearsals (schedule on Canvas)

W, Nov 29<sup>th</sup>: Final Group Project Rehearsals (schedule on Canvas)

F, Dec 1<sup>st</sup>: Final Group Project Rehearsals (schedule on Canvas)

**WEEK 16**

M, Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>: Final Group Project Rehearsals (schedule on Canvas)

W, Dec 6<sup>th</sup>: Final Group Project Rehearsals (schedule on Canvas)

F, Dec 8<sup>th</sup>: No Reading Due: Wrap up and Final Project review

**Sat. December 16<sup>th</sup>: 9-12am :**

**FINAL CLASS - TATTNALL SQUARE CENTER FOR THE ARTS (theatre)**

*\*General note about this class: There will be few reminders about assignments. Please plan ahead and organize the work for all of your courses accordingly. If you receive a failing grade on any assignment or if you need help with managing your work load, please come meet with me to discuss the assignment in question and/ or to discuss academic organization.*

**NOTES:**

**Religious Observance Policy:**

Students are permitted to miss class in observance of religious holidays and other activities observed by a religious group of which the student is a member without academic penalty. Students who will miss class in observance of a religious holiday or event are required to make this absence aware to the instructor before the end of the first week of the semester, and is required to make up the coursework missed as a result from the absence. The nature of the make-up assignments and the deadline for completion of such assignments are at the sole discretion of the instructor. Failure to follow the prescribed procedures voids all student rights under this policy.

**Assistance for Student Needs Related to Disability:**

“Students requiring accommodations or modifications for a disability should inform the instructor at the close of the first class meeting or as soon as possible. The instructor will refer you to the ACCESS and Accommodation Office to document your disability, determine eligibility for accommodations under the ADA/Section 504 and to request a Faculty Accommodation Form. Disability accommodations or status will not be indicated on academic transcripts. In order to receive accommodations in a class, students with sensory, learning, psychological, physical or medical disabilities must provide their instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Form to sign. Students must return the signed form to the ACCESS Director. A new form must be requested each semester. Students with a history of a disability perceived as having a disability or with a current disability who does not wish to use academic accommodations are also strongly encouraged to register with the ACCESS and Accommodation Office and request a Faculty Accommodation Form each semester. For further information, please contact Katie Johnson, Director and ADA/504 Coordinator, at 301-2778 or visit the ACCESS and Accommodation Office website at <http://www.mercer.edu/disabilityservices>” \*

**Academic Honesty:**

The integrity of students and their written and oral work is a critical component of the academic process. The submission of previous academic work, or another’s work as one’s own is plagiarism and will not be tolerated. Period. All suspected violations of the University Honor Code will be forwarded to the Honor Council. Remember that allowing another student to copy one’s own work violates standards of academic integrity.

**Professionalism in the classroom:**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. In this class, as with the rest of your life, respect and trust relating to this topic should be honored at all times. This course will tackle topics that may be considered taboo and extreme in some cases. If at anytime you are uncomfortable with the material covered or the expectations of this class, please contact me as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made.

**Electronic Submission of Assignments:**

Students bear sole responsibility for ensuring that papers or assignments submitted electronically to a professor are received in a timely manner and in the electronic format(s) specified by the professor. Students are therefore obliged to have their e-mail client issue a receipt verifying that the document has been received, and are strongly advised to retain a copy of the dated submission.

**Electronic Recording Policy**

Electronic video and/or audio recording is not permitted during this class unless the student obtains permission from

the instructor and every student present. If permission is granted, any distribution of the recording is prohibited. Violation of this policy is grounds for removal from the class.

**Starfish:**

This course will use Mercer's web-based success platform, Starfish. Throughout the term, you may receive Starfish emails containing feedback. These communications are sent to support your success at Mercer. You can access Starfish through your MyMercer portal.

**FERPA Disclaimer for Assessment:**

The College of Liberal Arts is keenly interested in assuring the quality and integrity of its General Education Program. Every semester, randomly-selected students from each General Education course will be required to submit samples of their work to an independent and objective assessment by faculty. No personally identifiable information about any student will be used for the purposes of this assessment, and assessment results will have no bearing whatsoever on student grade.

## Final Group Project- 200 points

*The point values listed are the highest number of points available to you. Simply completing the assignment will earn you SOME of the points. Completing the assignment at an excellent level will earn you ALL of them.*

### **GROUP GRADE- 75 pts**

Presented Scene- Production/ Design/ Direction/ Script/ Spectacle. 20 pts

Presented as a group during last class. All members in the group must contribute to the final performance in some way. Presentations must be between **8 and 12 minutes.**

Final Show Binder - Clean/ Neat/ Labeled. 20pts

Include at minimum:

Copy of Script, copy of publicity poster, copy of program, photo of diorama, and all of the group members' individual grade paperwork neatly organized with group work in front, individual work in back.

Extras to include:

Costume renderings, character analyses, props lists, rehearsal notes, blocking notes, class work etc. - all highly encouraged.

**Due on final day of all group presentations.**

Completed Model- Quality/ Neatness/Appropriateness/ Creativity. 15pts

A box representation of what your set would look like if you had the resources to build a fully realized set. Remember- this is a tool to help the director and actors know what it WOULD look like if you COULD build it. Be true to the work the actors and directors are doing- we should see how the space works with the imagined scenery.

**Physical model to be on display on date of performance.**

**Photo of model must be included in final show binder.**

Publicity Poster- Interesting/ Informative 10pts

A 1 page poster promoting your show. What, when and where?

Presented by? Imagery? Suitable for all ages? Use the publicity posters you see around campus as a guide. Be sure it is something that can be



copied and distributed (think “can I photocopy this?”)  
**Hard copy to be on display on date of performance.**  
**Copy must be included in final show binder.**

Program- Clarity/ Thoroughness/ Extras.

10pts

The program must list all group members and their positions. You should include extras such as directors notes, dramaturgical notes, and/or ‘sponsors/ads’. Please look at and read (maybe even save for reference) the programs you receive at your performances. There are some distinct style choices that are made in programs (for example: how to write a bio).

**Hard copy to be on display on date of performance.**  
**Copy must be included in final show binder.**

## Final Group Project- 200 points

*The point values listed are the highest number of points available to you. Simply completing the assignment will earn you SOME of the points. Completing the assignment at an excellent level will earn you ALL of them.*

### **INDIVIDUAL GRADE- 125 pts**

All individual work is due on the final day of group presentations in your group’s final show binder.

Reflection Paper- Articulation of thought/ / Value Recognition/ Detailed

60 pts

A detailed description of process, and an explanation of what it is that you learned/ gained from this experience (or didn’t).

Please write your reflection paper before your present. After you have presented, I’ll ask you to write-in 10 sentences by hand at the end of your reflection paper about the final product: your ‘end of project’ thoughts etc.

**Due on final day of group presentations in final show binder.**

Individual Contribution- Your contribution and value to group

30 pts

Tell me what contributions you made to the group, detailing why they were essential for this collaboration. Things that you might see as small (like attending every rehearsal on time and prepared) are big contributions. This is your time to show me all the work you did that I couldn’t see. Bullet points are fine.

**Due on final day of group presentations in final show binder.**

Support of Contribution- Recognition of work contributed by others

20pts

Tell me all of the contributions from each member of your group, **and** how you feel about their contributions. This is your time to give credit to or highlight inconsistencies of other group members during this process that I couldn’t see. Bullet points are fine.

**Due on final day of group presentations in final show binder.**

Assessment of Other Groups- Appropriate, objective, and honest evaluation

15pts

Complete the group assessment sheet that will be provided for you honestly and appropriately. Your grade will be based on how accurately you assess each group, and will be compared to your classmates assessments as well as my own for accuracy and objectivity.

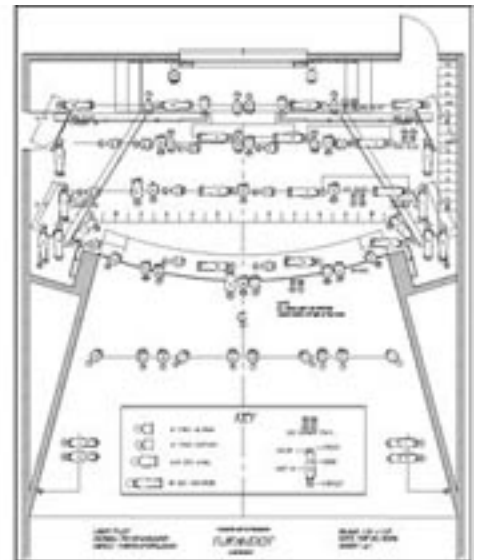
**Due on final day of group presentations in final show binder.**

*\*For Individual work, it has worked best in the past if all group members bring their individual work, printed out and hole punched, to the final performance. There will be time at the end of all of the performances for groups to finalize binders, look at the design work of other groups, complete their Assessments of Other Groups paperwork, and say goodbye to this class.*

franirollins.com



"Some might say I've taken Method acting too far."



I...DAMN...THEE!!!



"We'll resurrect it later."



IMPORTANCE OF A BIT OF THEATRE IN PLUMBING



"The classic masks of Comedy and Tragedy, or as they're now known, emoticons."