

### Preface

We all know we're still living in uncertain times. Materials for this course, including the syllabus, schedule, lessons, projects, assignments, and deadlines may need to change at a moment's notice. Let us all agree to remain flexible and open-minded throughout the semester, remember that we're all people first, and get through this together. Please let me know if you have questions about this. Also, please reach out to me at any time about anything that you need to help you learn and perform in my class, as well as about anything that makes you uncomfortable or that you need me to know. I am always available to listen and help.

### COVID-19

It is expected that you will follow all RIT policies in accordance with fighting the spread of COVID-19. This may mean any, or more, of the following items:

- Wearing a face mask while in class.
- Sanitizing your hands.

If you have specific concerns related to the pandemic, please see me.

### Time & Place

Mon., Wed., and Fridays from 1:00pm - 1:50 pm | Liberal Arts Hall (LBR) 3225 Modality: In-Person (P)

### Instructor Info

Alexa Scott-Flaherty | Email: [Asfgla@rit.edu](mailto:Asfgla@rit.edu)

Office: Eastman Hall 01-2130

Office Hours: M, W 12:00 – 12:50 pm or by appointment. **It is my strong desire and my practice to be available to you so please reach out whenever you have questions or need something!**

### Course Description

An introduction to theatre as a performing art. Students develop skills in reading, analysis, and evaluation through an examination of theatre's forms, constituent elements, and its cultural, stylistic and historical development.

### Course Goals

1. To acquaint students with the uniqueness of drama and theatre as art forms
2. To expose students to a broad sampling and timeline of major theatrical movements and periods
3. To familiarize students with the collaborative contributions of various theatre artists

4. To acquaint students with how historical and cultural conditions influence theatrical expression
5. To develop an understanding of the role theatre plays in a culture and society, and to engage actively with theatre as an audience member
6. To help students develop effective techniques for participating in discussions
7. To improve students' reading and writing skills
8. To emphasize the creative and collaborative nature of theatre-making
9. To develop your own unique relationship to the theatre as an art form

## Content & Language

Theatre training uses both classical and contemporary works of dramatic literature. These works may contain strong language, adult themes, adult situations, and explorations of human sexuality uncomfortable to you. If you are unable, for whatever reason, to explore this breadth of dramatic literature you should discuss this with the professor to determine the best way to proceed! Please reach out with any questions or concerns about this.

## Materials

### Required play scripts (I will provide)

Please be aware that many dramatic texts do contain serious topics and cover difficult emotional material. Please reach out with any questions or concerns about this.

- *Rockets and Blue Lights* by Winsome Pinnock
- *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder
- *Antigone* by Sophocles
- *Everybody* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

Various articles and readings (I provide these), including selected chapters from:

- *Theatre Brief, Thirteenth Edition* by Robert Cohen and Donovan Sherman

## Academic Integrity

As an institution of higher learning, RIT expects students to behave honestly and ethically at all times, especially when submitting work for evaluation in conjunction with any course or degree requirement. The Department of Performing Arts encourages all students to become familiar with the [RIT Honor Code](#) and RIT's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

RIT is committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the free exchange of ideas. In the case of students, Academic Honesty demands that, at all times, student work be the work of that individual student, and that any information which a student uses in a work submitted for evaluation be properly documented. Any violation of these basic standards constitutes a breach of Academic Honesty and hence becomes Academic Dishonesty. Academic Dishonesty falls into three basic areas: cheating, duplicate submission, and plagiarism.

It is each student's responsibility to read and understand the RIT's Academic Integrity Policy. Violation of this policy can result in course failure, academic suspension and even dismissal from the Institute. For more information, the policy is available at the Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Management Services. For definitions of Cheating, Duplicate Submission, or Plagiarism please visit <https://www.rit.edu/twc/academicintegrity/>.

### **Statement on Reasonable Accommodations**

RIT is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request accommodations such as special seating or testing modifications due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Office. It is located in the Student Alumni Union, Room 1150; the website is [www.rit.edu/dso](http://www.rit.edu/dso). After receiving accommodation approval, please contact me so that we can work out a suitable arrangement for you.

### **Policy Prohibiting Discrimination & Harassment**

The RIT community is committed to a diverse and dynamic learning, working, and living environment. It is committed to an environment which encourages, promotes and protects free inquiry and free expression. Members of the RIT community have the right to hold, express vigorously, defend and openly promote their ideas and opinions. The RIT Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment is not intended to restrict freedom of speech or any form of artistic or visual expression. The Policy is also not intended to restrict discussion and debate in the classroom or academic forum. Protecting these values, however, does not include protecting acts of discrimination or harassment.

RIT will not discriminate in terms and conditions of employment, admission, and participation in programs or residential life. It prohibits discrimination and harassment on campus, or at any RIT activities off campus, by its administrators, faculty, staff, students and student organizations, and external organizations and individuals in their operations with RIT. This includes [RIT's Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#). For more info, visit: [RIT Academic Affairs](#).

### **Attendance and Tardy Policy**

Students at RIT are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually, and are responsible for all material covered during class. Participation is graded and is negatively impacted by not being in class. My hope is that you will be present for every class period.

This is an in-person class. I will not be providing zoom links. This class is not designed as a hybrid or online class. If you miss class, together we will work to catch you up.

**That said, if you are sick, stay home.** This is not the time to go to class when you're ill. My standard attendance policy is suspended for COVID flexibility. A few absences are fine, *so long as you let me know*. If you have more than four absences, each subsequent absence will need to be made up with a new assignment that you and I will agree on.

### **Technology Policy**

Ultimately, technology that negatively impacts your ability to participate and fully engage while

in this class is discouraged. **If you are using technology for learning purposes (Ex. DSO approved devices), than that is, of course, fine!**

- **Cellphones:** When class begins, please put your phone away. There may be times that I ask you to take it out again and use it. If you have a situation that you need to tend to, feel free to quietly step out to the hall to do so.
- **Email:** Email is the best way to communicate with me outside of class. All emails will be answered within 48 hours. If you have any questions or unexpected emergencies, *please always email me*. So long as you let me know when something is going on, we can work around it.
- **Computers:** Many of my classes are participatory and have you moving around and actively talking and engaging with your classmates. Please only use your computer as needed, no one needs to be on it for long periods of time unless you are using a device for accommodations.
- **Submission of work:** Please don't wait until the last minute to submit work online. MyCourses can be glitchy and you may miss the deadline. Please reach out with any issues as they happen so I can help. If you are having technical issues with myCourses, please contact TLS Support (**585-475-2551**). Unfortunately, I can't trouble shoot technical issues.

### Participation

Participation is highly encouraged in my classroom for all aspects of class exercises and assignments. Please come prepared to exhibit the courage to share yourself and your work in class in a safe environment. We will engage in discussions, activities, theatre exercises, and group work, so please come ready to join in. All class activities assume that you have done the homework. I will assess participation continuously. Participation points will be given each day based on the following rubric: 1 point for being present and on time, and 2 points for being prepared and saying or doing something constructive. **In turn, it is my deeply held belief that what you have to share is important and unique and we need every voice in our class to have meaningful discussions.** Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns about your participation. I am here for you.

### Grading

The following is a breakdown of the course assignments, points, and letter grades for the course. The grading scale for this course is the same scale used by the College of Liberal Arts.

- In-Class Participation (126 points/3 points per class period)
- Discussion Posts (40 points/20 points each)
- 3 Play Responses for *Rockets and Blue Lights*, *Our Town*, and *Antigone* (60 points/20 points each)
- 1 Production Response for *Everybody* (20 points)
- 1 Quiz (20 points)
- 4 Exercises/assignments for Shakespeare, Realism, Theatre for Social Change, and Musicals (60 points/15 points each)

- Final Project (174 points) Aesthetics and why, take a play and connect it...
- **Total – 500 points**
  - Extra credit option: see a production and complete a review. More details available upon request. (Up to 25 points)

500-465 – A | 464-450 – A- | 449-435 – B+ | 434-415 – B | 414-400 – B- | 399-385 – C+ | 384-365 – C | 364-350 – C- | 349-300 – D | 299 – F

100-93% - A | 92.99-90% - A- | 89.99-87% - B+ | 86.99-83% - B | 82.99-80% - B- | 79.99-77% - C+ | 76.99-73% - C | 72.99-70% - C- | 69.99-60% - D | 59.99% - F

### **Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRATE)** [rit.smartevals.com](http://rit.smartevals.com)

I highly value student feedback. Each semester I ask students to help me improve a course for the next offering. If this class achieves at least an 85% completion rate for the SRATE surveys, I will give all students a 2% raise in their final grade.

### **Assignments**

#### **In-Class Participation (126 points)**

Participation is extremely important to this class. You will be offered points for each class period, which you can collect based upon your contribution to in-class work. One point for being present, 2 points for being prepared and sharing while in discussions. There will be much discussion and sharing. We all learn the most when we are *engaged* while in class, not simply present, and that is the expectation.

#### **Discussion Posts (40 points/20 points each)**

For this course, you will be required to engage with questions on a discussion board. Responses are due on MyCourses. Details for each response will be provided in class.

#### **3 Play Responses (60 points/20 points each)**

For this course, you will be required to read and engage with a variety of theatrical texts, then submit a response to each text. Responses are due on MyCourses. Details for each response will be provided in class.

#### **1 Quiz (20 points)**

An Online quiz will be given for one area of study in our class: Roles in a theatre production. Quiz is 15 questions long and should take approximately 30 minutes. It will be available until **class time** on the date they're due.

#### **4 Exercises/assignments for Shakespeare, Realism, Theatre for Social Change, and Musicals (60 points/15 points each)**

For this course, you will engage with these topics in fun ways. Responses are due on MyCourses or in class. Details for each response will be provided in class.

### 1 Production Response (20 points)

For this course, you will attend 2 live performances and complete a Production Response for the second performance.

- The required performances are *Spamalot* (**Sept. 8**) at Blackfriars Theatre and *Everybody* (**NOV 11-13**), being performed on the RIT/NTID campus.

### Final Project (174 points)

The Final Project will be either a group project, or individual project, in which you and your groupmates, or just yourself, create a production concept for one of the scripts we've read during the semester, and take a role in producing that play-ex. Actor, Director, Designer, etc.

*OR:*

You will take a play of your choosing (I will also provide options) and look at how it exemplifies a type of theatre and what aesthetics it uses and why. Details below give you an idea of the project expectations. More details will be given in class.

- A complete director's concept, as if you were directing a production of the play.
- A detailed character analysis paper of any major character from the script.
- A design vision that tackles the scenery, lights or costumes for your production.
- Other creative opportunities like writing a deleted scene or other creative expression welcomed as well. Discuss with me in advance!

### Late Work

Things happen... You will get one Late Pass that you can use in this course. Please contact me when/if you wish to use this Pass and we'll discuss the details.

### Writing Standards

In this course, you will be submitting several written assignments electronically through myCourses and Turnitin. Unless otherwise instructed, all written work is due by the start of class on the date assigned, **not during class**. Be sure to carefully proof your work for all components prior to submission, as I consider all issues of content, completeness, organization, spelling, grammar and punctuation in grading. All work is to be typed and formatted in size 12 font. All files must be in a DOC or DOCX format.

### Disclaimer

As instructor, I may modify this document during the semester, if necessary, to ensure that we achieve course objectives. **This is especially applicable to the course schedule—which is tentative and may change.** You will receive advance-notice of any changes.

## Course Overview and Topics

Date	In Class	Homework due for <u>Next</u> Class
Week 1		
M 8/22	Introduction to class. Syllabus. Community Agreements Doc. What is Theatre? TO YOU.	Answer survey, Read <i>Chapter 1 What is Theatre?</i> in myCourses
W 8/24	What is Theatre? Paradoxes. Video Clips. Theater exercises + What do you care about?	Read article on Lin Manuel Miranda in myCourses and short reading on <i>Theatre Today</i> in myCourses
F 8/26	Theatre Today Intro. Video clips. Theatre Exercises.	Read <i>Chapter 2 What is a Play?</i>
Week 2		
M 8/29	What is a Play – Genre, Structure and components of plays. Cultural and historical context	
W 8/31	Overview and then start watching <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> by Winsome Pinnock, watch and discuss	Read <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> by Winsome Pinnock
F 9/2	Continue watching <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> by Winsome Pinnock, watch and discuss	Read <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> by Winsome Pinnock
Week 3		
M 9/5	NO CLASS-LABOR DAY	Play response 1: <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> <b>DUE 9/12</b>
W 9/7	Continue watching <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> by Winsome Pinnock, watch and discuss	Play response 1: <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> <b>DUE 9/12</b>  Thursday, Sept. 8 OPTIONAL to go see <i>Monty Python's Spamalot</i> , the musical book and lyrics by Eric Idle and music by John Du Prez at Blackfriars Theatre (FIELD TRIP!)
9/8	<b>OPTIONAL-Monty Python's Spamalot @ Blackfriars Theatre at 7:00 p.m.</b>	(\$5.00 cost per student)
F 9/9	Continue watching and <b>Discuss</b> <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> by Winsome Pinnock	Play response 1: <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i> <b>DUE 9/12</b>
Week 4		
M 9/12	The Playwright and finish <i>Rockets and Blue Lights</i>	Reading on Playwrighting in myCourses

	<b>DUE: PLAY RESPONSE 1: Rockets and Blue Lights</b>	
W 9/14	The Playwright	
F 9/16	The Director	Reading on Directing in myCourses
Week 5		
M 9/19	The Director	Reading on Acting in myCourses
W 9/21	The Actor	
F 9/23	The Actor	Read <i>Chapter 5 Design and Technology</i> in myCourses in sections (set, lighting, costumes, sound/special effects)
Week 6		
M 9/26	Designers! ( <b>Erin Auble attending class</b> ) Set/Lighting presentation	Read <i>Chapter 5 Design and Technology</i> in myCourses in sections (set, lighting, costumes, sound/special effects)
W 9/28	Set design and stage directions	Read <i>Chapter 5 Design and Technology</i> in myCourses in sections (set, lighting, costumes, sound/special effects)
F 9/30	( <b>Eric Moslow attending class</b> ) Lighting Technical Theatre Costume and make-up	Read <i>Chapter 5 Design and Technology</i> in myCourses in sections (set, lighting, costumes, sound/special effects)
Week 7		
M 10/3	Costume and make-up Sound	<b>Complete Quiz on your own time on these different roles and aspects of theatre due 10/7</b>
W 10/5	Bringing it all together – <i>Our Town</i> by Thorton Wilder	Read <i>Our Town</i> by Thorton Wilder in myCourses and do <b>Play response 2, DUE 10/12</b>



F 10/7	<b>QUIZ DUE</b> Discuss <i>Our Town</i> by Thornton Wilder	Read <i>Our Town</i> by Thornton Wilder in myCourses and do Play response 2, DUE 10/12 Play response 2 due 10/12
Week 8		
M 10/10	NO CLASS-FALL BREAK	
W 10/12	<b>DUE: PLAY RESPONSE 2</b> <i>Our Town</i> by Thornton Wilder <b>Production possibilities</b> , A variety of ways to produce the same play	Discussion Post 1 on Theatre Traditions
F 10/14	Historiography exercise, Cultural and Historical Context Theatre Traditions Overview Introduce Final Projects	Discussion Post 2 on The Poetics, Greek Drama and read <i>Antigone</i> by Sophocles Play response 3, part 1 DUE 10/19
Week 9		
M 10/17	Greek Drama and The Poetics Introduce <i>Antigone</i> by Sophocles	Read <i>Antigone</i> by Sophocles Play response 3, part 1 DUE 10/19
W 10/19	<b>DUE: PLAY RESPONSE 3, part 1</b> Discuss <i>Antigone</i> by Sophocles	
F 10/21	Watch <i>Antigone</i> excerpts Classical Theatre of Harlem 2019 production and discuss, and watch <i>Antigone</i> excerpts National Theatre 2012 production and discuss	Play response 3, part 2 DUE 10/28
Week 10		
M 10/24	<i>Antigone</i> continued, Final projects more info., introduce Shakespeare	
W 10/26	Shakespeare	Exercise/Assignment 1 due 10/28 in class
F 10/28	<b>DUE: PLAY RESPONSE 3, part 2</b> Shakespeare and intro. to Stanislavski and Realism	Readings on myCourses
Week 11		
M 10/31	Realism and Stanislavski (HALLOWEEN)	Exercise/Assignment 2 due 10/31 and 11/2 in class

W 11/2	Realism and Stanislavski. Introduce Theatre for Social Change	Readings on myCourses
F 11/4	Introduce <i>Everyman</i> and <i>Everybody</i> Read in class	Read <i>Everybody</i> by on myCourses
Week 12		
M 11/7	<i>Everyman</i> and <i>Everybody</i> <b>(Andy Head coming to class)</b>	Read <i>Everybody</i> by on myCourses
W 11/9	Theatre for Social Change – Brecht & Boal	Exercise/Assignment 3 due 11/9 and 11/11 in class
F 11/11	Theatre for social change continued Final Project touch-in	Exercise/Assignment 3 due 11/9 and 11/11 in class
Week 13	See <i>Everybody</i> Nov. 11-13	Everybody Play Response due by 11/21
M 11/14	Final Project Work day	Read <i>Chapter 9 Musical Theatre</i> on myCourses
W 11/16	Musical Theatre!	
F 11/18	Musical Theatre!	Exercise/Assignment 4 due 11/18 in class
Week 14		
M 11/21	<b>DUE: Everybody Production Response</b> Final Projects Work Day	Final Project due 12/2
W 11/23	NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING BREAK	
F 11/25	NO CLASS-THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Week 15		
M 11/28	Final Project Class Presentations	
W 11/30	Final Project Class Presentations and SRATE's	
F 12/2	<b>DUE: Final Projects</b> Final Project Class Presentations	
Week 16		
M 12/5	<b>LAST CLASS – wrap up and positive feedback to each other</b>	
Finals		
12/7-12/15		