

# THTR 1: INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Not open to students with credit in DRAM 1.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 3: Arts & Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- A successful student will analyze and integrate his/her own artistic standards as they relate to theatrical performance and criticism.
- A successful student can use examples from theatrical performances to illustrate his/her own artistic standards.
- A successful student will be able to recognize different theatrical genres and assess the style of current theatrical presentations.

## Description

Live performance in an electronic age—an overview of the status of live theatre, including its historical, cultural, and spiritual roots. Focuses on the relationship of theatre to various cultures throughout history and on the contributions of significant individual artists. Introduces the elements of the production process, including play writing, acting, directing, design, and criticism. A survey of different periods, styles, and genres of theatre through play reading, discussion, films, and critiquing live theatre. Required attendance at live theatre performances.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Relate theatre to the various historical, cultural, ethnic, and spiritual contexts from which it has sprung
2. Measure and value the role of drama in relationship to culture and society, emphasizing theatre in a multi-cultural context
3. Compare the role of theatre and its significance to the arts and culture from which it is born
4. Construct, analyze, and integrate their own artistic standards as they relate to theatrical performance
5. Recognize and differentiate a variety of theatre performance spaces and their effect on the audience-actor relationship
6. Recognize and appraise the present status of live theatre as a result of the historical development of theatre forms in a variety of cultures
7. Analyze the relationship of theatre to current entertainment media: radio, television, motion pictures, etc.

8. Differentiate various styles of stagecraft: setting, costuming, lighting, and their effect on the audience reaction to performance
9. Identify specific acting skills and capabilities and analyze the ability of actors to communicate emotions and ideas to an audience using a variety of skills
10. Observe and analyze current theatrical productions focusing on specific aspects of theatre production: dramatic structure, performance, and design

## Course Content

Through lectures, demonstrations, live theatre performances, panel discussions, and utilization of various electronic media, students are introduced to:

1. Fundamental components of theatre
  - a. The play
  - b. The actor
  - c. The audience
  - d. The acting space
2. Kinds of plays
  - a. Realism
  - b. Romanticism
  - c. Classicism
  - d. Avant-garde drama
  - e. Musical theatre and opera
  - f. Multicultural/multi-ethnic theatre
3. The play in production
  - a. The actor
  - b. The director
  - c. The designers: setting, lighting, costume, properties, sound
  - d. The producer and commercial theatre
4. Historical, cultural, ethnic, social, spiritual roots of drama in all times
5. Relationship of live theatre to the electronic media: radio, television, film
6. Formulation, definition of, and application of a personal and systematic set of evaluative criteria to apply to live theatre

## Lab Content

Not applicable.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Opportunities to attend live theatre.
2. Video playback equipment.
3. Adequate, practical performance space for demonstration of theatre activities.
4. When taught online/virtual or hybrid, ongoing access to a computer with email address, software and hardware, and internet access.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Weekly quizzes

Exams

Written analysis of plays seen, with expected application of concepts introduced in the classroom

Participation in class discussions, exercises, and demonstrations

Papers on theatre topics related to plays read and seen  
Final term paper

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture  
Discussion  
Field work  
Oral presentations  
Electronic discussions/chat  
Independent study  
Field trips

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Cohen, Robert. Theatre, Brief, 13th ed.. 2022.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

Example of first writing assignment: see a live theatre performance and answer the following questions (minimum of 500 words in length):

1. Indicate the name of the play viewed. Include the playwright's name, the director's name, the name of the theatre/theatre company who produced it, and the specific date on which you saw it. If it is a musical, be sure to list the composer and lyricist in addition to the playwright.
2. What did you observe about the actor/audience relationship in the play you attended? Try to be specific about what you observed. What did you see, hear, observe? Did anything surprise you? Did you learn anything?
3. How might this play have been less effective, more effective or different, if you had not seen it performed live (if it had been a film or video) and if it had not had a live audience?
4. Identify one metaphor or symbol in the play and explain its importance or significance to the play, as a whole. (Be sure you understand the meanings of these terms from the classroom and textbook readings, before you answer this question.)
5. How did this play ask you to willingly "suspend your disbelief?" (Be sure you understand the meaning of this expression from the classroom and textbook readings, before you answer this question.)

## Discipline(s)

Theater Arts