

THTR 201: Intro to Theatre

Monday 11:30am - 1:00pm

Kupfrian Hall 110

Instructor: Rodney Reyes

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Office Location: Kupfrian Hall 113

Office Hours: Monday 3-4pm

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Course Mode: Face-to-Face

Course Description:

An introduction to the fundamental elements of theatre, examined through the roles of the playwright, director, designer, and actor. This course invites students to explore the world of theatre and gain familiarity with the collaborative elements that come together to bring a production to life.

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- **Identify** the fundamental structure of a play, including its theme, dramatic question, turning points, and climax.
- **Examine** the historical and social contexts that shaped each play at the time it was written.
- **Analyze** the complex relationships and reflections of the human condition within each work.
- **Discuss** with confidence the essential elements that contribute to a theatrical production.
- **Perform** selected sides from plays with clarity and assurance.
- **Critically** observe and evaluate live theatre performances.
- **Develop** and present a comprehensive play production proposal.

Required Course Materials:

- *Vietgone* by Qui Nguyen
- *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare (provided on Canvas)
- *Chicago* by Fred Kander and John Ebb (provided on Canvas)
- *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* by Stephen Adly-Gergis (provided on Canvas)
- *Topdog/Underdog* by Suzan-Lori Parks (provided on Canvas)
- Additional Plays (provided on Canvas)

Additional Costs:

- \$15 tickets for NJIT Theatre Production of *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (Nov 6-8)
- Theatre Production in NYC TBD

Instructional methods:

In this class, we'll learn in lots of different ways—through discussions, readings, and watching performances, as well as by getting up on our feet to act out scenes and monologues. You'll get the chance to think about theatre as both an audience member and a performer, learning by doing as well as by analyzing.

Grading Scale :

100 - 92.5 A, 92.4 - 85 B+, 84.4 - 80 B, 79.9 - 77.5 C+, 77.4 - 70 C, 69.9 - 60 D, 59.9 - 0 F

Grading Policy & Assessment Categories:

In-Class Participation (35%): In this class, you'll have the chance to read aloud and try out some short acting activities. Don't worry—I'm not expecting perfect performances. What matters most is that you give it a try, stay open to the experience, and put in your best effort.

Live Performances and Analyses (10%): You'll go see two live performances this semester and write a 2–3 page paper about each one. Instead of retelling the story, focus on your experience as an audience member. What stood out to you? What parts were especially strong, and what didn't work as well? Did anything surprise you? Most importantly—did you enjoy it, and why or why not? Think of this as your chance to reflect and share your honest take on the show.

Quizzes (20%): After we finish each play, you'll take a short in-class quiz to show your understanding of the story and characters. If you have to miss class that day and have an official note from the Dean of Students, you can make up the quiz within one week of the original date.

Monologue (10%): Pick a monologue of 10–20 lines from *Much Ado About Nothing* to perform in class. Make sure it's memorized, and perform it while standing. Don't worry about being perfect—the goal is to give it your best shot, commit to the character, and have fun bringing Shakespeare's words to life!

Acting Scene (10%): You and a partner will get the chance to perform a short 2–3 minute scene (about 2–3 pages). You can pick a scene from one of the plays we've read together in class, or explore another play that interests you. If you choose a new play,

you'll need to read the whole script so you understand the full story and context. I'll approve all scene choices before you begin. Your scene should be fully memorized, and you and your partner should plan at least 2 hours of rehearsal outside of class to bring it to life.

Final Project (15%): For this project, you'll choose a play to read and then imagine how you would bring it to life on stage. You'll write a 4–5 page proposal that explains your vision—sharing background about the play, your take on the script and characters, and your ideas for how it could be staged. To help show your concept, include pictures or design inspirations that capture the look and feel of your production.

Generative AI:

This course expects students to work without artificial intelligence (AI) assistance in order to better develop their skills in this content area. As such, AI usage is not permitted throughout this course under any circumstance.

Feedback:

I will provide detailed feedback on each major course assessment through the comments feature in Canvas. Feedback will be delivered within one week of the assignment's submission to ensure timely and constructive guidance.

Exam Information and Policy for Late Work:

Instead of a traditional final exam, the course will conclude with a final project and presentation. All assignments scheduled for a specific class date must be completed and submitted on that day. Late submissions will be accepted only with prior notification and approval and may incur point deductions.

Academic Integrity Statement:

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: [NJIT Academic Integrity Code](#).

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu

Class Etiquette:

Students are expected to follow [NJIT's Code of Student Conduct](#). Students should be polite, active participants and respect their instructor, classmates, as well as ideas or opinions that differ from their own. While scholarly debates are encouraged, they should not become personal attacks.

Participation:

Active participation is essential for success in this course. Students are expected to:

- Engage fully in class activities and discussions.
- Approach assignments with curiosity, dedication, and creativity.
- Respect diverse perspectives and contribute to a positive learning environment.
Unexcused missed classes or unpreparedness will affect participation grades.
- If you have extenuating circumstances for any reason and miss a class you must contact the Dean of Students Office.

Student Absences for Religious Observance:

Students must notify their instructors in writing of any conflicts between course requirements and religious observances, ideally by the end of the second week of classes and no later than two weeks before the anticipated absence.

Accommodations:

The Office of Accessibility Resources and Services works in partnership with administrators, faculty, and staff to provide reasonable accommodations and support services for students with disabilities who have provided their office with medical documentation to receive services.

If you are in need of accommodations due to a disability, please contact the [Office of Accessibility Resources and Services](#) to discuss your specific needs.

Weekly Course Schedule:**Week 1: Sep 3, 2025**

Introduction and Welcome

Week 2: September 8, 2025 & September 10, 2025

Play Basics, *Much Ado About Nothing* Act 1

Week 3: September 15, 2025 & September 17, 2025

Much Ado About Nothing - Acts 2 & 3

Week 4: September 22, 2025 & September 24, 2025

Much Ado About Nothing - Act 4 & 5 Quiz/Wrap Up, Monologue Choice Due

Week 5: Sep 29, 2025 & October 1, 2025

Perform Monologues In Class, *Topdog/Underdog - Into* pg 1-41

Week 6: October 6, 2025 & October 8, 2025

Topdog/Underdog pg 42-86, 86-115

Week 7: Oct 13, 2025 & October 15, 2025

Topdog/Underdog - Quiz/Wrap-up, Chicago - Intro/pg 9-28

Week 8: October 20, 2025 & October 22, 2025

Chicago - pg. 29-55, Chicago, pg. 57-70

Week 9: October 27, 2025 & October 29, 2025

Chicago - Quiz/Wrap-Up, The Last Days of Judas Iscariot, Acting Scene Choice Due

Week 10: November 3, 2025 & November 5, 2025

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot

Week 11: November 10, 2025 & November 12, 2025

Performance Analysis Paper Due, The Last Days of Judas Iscariot Quiz/Wrap Up, Final Project Play Choice Due, Acting With a Partner

Week 12: November 17, 2025 & November 19, 2025

In-Class Rehearsal, Theatre Design - Sets and Costumes

Week 13: Nov 24, 2025

Perform Acting Scenes In Class, Initial Statement for Final Project Due

Week 14: Dec 1, 2025 & Dec 3, 2025

Vietgone - Intro/pg. 9-37, pg. 38-55, Rough Draft of Final Project Due

Week 15: December 8, 2025 & Dec 10, 2025

Vietgone - pg 57-72, In Class Peer Review of Final Project,

Week 16: December TBD

Final Presentation

Canvas Accessibility Statement:

Instructure is committed to ensuring its products are inclusive and meet the diverse accessibility needs of our users. Canvas LMS strives for WCAG 2.1 Level A/AA and Section 508 conformance. Regular testing (both internal and by a third party) is conducted to identify conformance issues, with processes in place for timely remediation of accessibility issues that are identified. Canvas is a complex and broad system. The statements below are accurate as of the date indicated.

Canvas has been evaluated by Instructure and WebAIM according to WCAG 2.1 standards. Testing is regularly conducted using automated tools, assistive technology (such as screen readers, keyboard testing, etc.), and coding best practices. Third party accessibility evaluation occurs regularly with internal audits conducted with each release. Mechanisms are in place for logging and fixing accessibility defects.

This syllabus may be subject to updates throughout the semester.