

About the Professor

Name: Johanna Schmitz, Ph.D.

Professor of Theater History

Email: johasch@siue.edu

Office Hours: Almost any time by email, happily, set times and by appointment over Teams

Note: I am travelling and will be in London for some of our term (six hour difference).

Welcome

Hello and welcome to THEA 111-WS1 online-asynchronous section of "The Dramatic Experience."

This is a course about theater, which I define broadly to include all stories and storytelling, dance, art, movies, video games, and other kinds of performance. "Performance theory" and "performance studies" can be about any kind of human performance: sports, public speaking, journalism, nursing, education, ... more about this soon!

What is fame? Why do we applaud? Is it important to see "live" events, anymore?

We will see some interesting things, think deeply about a few concepts that will serve you in your major studies and future ambitions, and have a good laugh with comedy theory.

IMPORTANT: The first task is due on December 16th (video) and the first assignment is due Wednesday, December 19th by 10:00 PM. Students who miss these early deadlines may be dropped from the course for non-attendance/no participation.
We have 17+ days rather than the usual 16 weeks to complete this course. We will go fast.

Also important: You will need a good internet connection and the ability to record yourself for video assignments through January 4th. Please make sure your SIUE Yuja, email and TEAMS accounts are active.

Bio

My undergraduate degree is in Theater from the University of Oregon and my Ph.D. is also in Theater from the University of California, Davis, where I focused my academics on Shakespeare Studies and critical theory. I worked at the Seattle Repertory Theatre, for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and became a member of the summer faculty at the International Shakespeare's Globe for seven years and for the Huntington Library's Shakespeare Institute for three years after that. Twenty years ago, I became associated with the Rose Playhouse in London and have been returning to London annually (except for 2020-2021) to participate in the preservation of this Elizabethan playhouse Shakespeare would have known well.

My work as a university professor requires three main areas of activity: research, service, and teaching theater history, dramatic literature and critical theory/performance studies. I also bring students to London for short, intensive travel studies in the summer term.

Recent writing includes a book chapter "'You are Here': Curatorial interventions for the displaced visitor at the Rose Playhouse archaeological site, 1989-2019" in *Shakespeare and Tourism*, Routledge. Before that, I published an article on site-specific performances of Shakespeare and Fletcher's *King Henry VIII* (or, *All is True*) in *Shakespeare Bulletin*. My main area of research is my association with the Rose Playhouse (1587-c.1605) in London where I am building a material and digital archive to preserve the story of this Elizabethan theatre since its discovery in 1989. I am in London this year to continue my participation in the "Rose Revealed" project, an effort by the Rose Theatre Trust to complete the excavation

and create public presentation of the only playhouse from Shakespeare's time that is available for future access, study and performance.

This year, my service work for university includes serving as a member of the Faculty Promotion and Tenure Committee for the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS); Program Review team for English undergraduate and graduate programs; as affiliated member of the Honors Program; and International Studies with a new travel study for 2026 in the works; as a member of the faculty advisory board for the IRIS Center, SIUE's digital humanities institute; and on various committees in the department of Theater and Dance.

In November and December, last year and in April to June this year, I performed in *You Me Bum Bum Train* in London. It is a world-famous immersive, experimental theatre experience for only 70 people for each performance. The audience goes into the play one at a time! (Look it up, if you are curious.) In May, I was able to cast ten SIUE students who joined me there and performed four times! So fun! I am preparing to lead a SIUE study abroad program to London for three weeks this May and June of 2026.

Would you like to come with me to London in the Summer of 2026? Ask me for details!

Teaching Philosophy

• You are welcome here. Theater is about us; it is about human potential. It is about what can happen. In many ways you are already an expert on the material of this class: You spend a lot of time recognizing effective performances and criticizing lazy ones. You see professional actors at work almost every day on television and on film (and you are probably very good at being able to recognize when you or your friends are "acting"). You know what you like to watch and probably appreciate that other people like things that you do not. To study theater and is to study everything. Anything can happen in the theatre. It can re-create history, produce magic, or display pure illusion and fantasy. We know that language is insufficient to express all that we know, investigate and feel. We use language, but we also use signs and symbols, color, pattern, rhythm, music, movement, contrast, and on and on. Theater, like dreams, helps us reset and reorder our thoughts and feelings about things. It is an empathy machine - it helps us understand events outside of our direct experience, imagine causal outcomes, and see things from other points of view. "If this then this" is not only a scientific hypothesis - we use this research tool to explore human potential, not only on the stage but also within the imagination of the audience member.

I hope that you will approach this course with an open mind to see if you might find new kinds of theater and performance that intrigues you. While this course focuses on live theater in performance you will be able to use the skills developed during the semester to effectively define, describe, and develop critical scholarship about a wide range of artistic and creative endeavor.

Theater studies includes film, dance, literature, performance art and architecture, etc. It is one of our institutions that asks the biggest questions. **Asimov said that it is in the theater where the invisible and visible interconnect.** What does that mean? Let's find out.

I believe this course will help you develop your academic, personal and professional interests, abilities and ambitions.

Communicating with the instructor

Email is the best way to reach me. I will respond within two days (usually faster Monday through Friday). When emailing, please include your name, course and issue to be engaged in the subject line. I prefer emails that include a salutation and that end with your name in the closure. Emails are not texts. This class is a good time to practice your professional style.

I am also available on Teams during office hours and by appointment.

I am working from London this semester where we are six hours later than Central Time. This means that when it is 3:00 PM CT it is 9:00 PM BST in London. You will likely get emails from me first thing in the morning (your time) and you will not be able to reach me in real time after about 2:00 PM CT.

About the Course

Course description

Introductory course to give student understanding of how essential components of theater work together to produce dramatic experience. IAI Course F1 907.

Attribute(s): Breadth-Fine & Performing ArtsIAI GECC-Fine Art

Prerequisite knowledge and credit hours

There is no pre-requisite. Please let me know if you have not yet taken a basic writing course in English.

Course goals and objectives

The purpose of this course is to develop your critical skills and broaden your factual and theoretical understanding of theatre and performance from the point of view of an audience member. It will help you find your own scholarly voice as you see, read, discuss and write about various dramatic works and issues.

Course objectives and outcomes:

- * Expose students to live theater performance (online) and interact with theater practitioners.
- * Introduce constituents of theater production and scholarly activity in the field.
- * Encourage development of student writing (develop useful thesis statements, enlightening conclusions, MLA format, etc.)
- * Develop critical thinking skills, scholarly vocabulary and academic writing ability.
- * Engage in the various academic resources on campus.
- * Prepare for scholarly engagement in upper division coursework in all fields.

Learning objectives and outcomes:

- ❖ Differentiate and practice various critical approaches including prescriptive and descriptive criticism. Develop scholarly writing to include objective and authoritative analysis of subjective written and visual texts such as plays in performance and in dramatic literature.
- ❖ Appreciate creative and re-creative art forms as sites of cultural investigation and understanding.
- ❖ Gain understanding of elementary critical theory in performance studies including multiple authenticities and semiotics.
- ❖ Practice basic script analysis including conventional and unconventional plot structure, character development, and thematic (philosophical) impact.
- ❖ Gain understanding of the process of theatrical production from play selection, dramaturgy, auditioning and casting, directing, scenic design (lighting, costume, sound, special effects, etc.), marketing and basic reception theory.

Course textbooks

The textbook is an e-book available in your Blackboard shell in the Coursework folder for our class.

(Please note: "The textbook provides a good introduction to the topic of the course and supplements, but does not always follow what is going on in class... This reading is part of the active learning component of the course." I do not outline the reading in my lectures or other classroom activities. The book is a supplement to what happens in class.)

Other course materials

Additional course materials will be available on Blackboard and as links to YouTube, etc.

Course requirements

Course activities/assessments

There are no timed exams in this section of THEA 111. There are three 'take-home' quizzes, a final project, and 10 tasks which include short paper assignments. (Note: "Tasks" are required. Missing a task will lower your final grade by 10% for each missed task). There will be discussions and presentations you will complete by making recorded videos over our three-week course.

Submitting work

All work must be submitted into Blackboard on time (before the due dates). Please NEVER type your responses directly into Blackboard. Upload a document instead. We will be working consistently through this course. I do not want late work - it will probably not be accepted. (See the assignment guidelines). You must upload a document file that does not link to an outside URL, different software, require a download, etc. I must be able to access your work on Blackboard without leaving Blackboard. This means that I should be able to open and read/watch your file. Plan for extra time for dealing with large files, etc.

Please do not email assignments to me. Please put all assignments into Blackboard.

You will be asked to record short videos and upload them to Blackboard using your SIUE Yuja account. If you need help, contact ITS. Do not import .mov files, etc. directly into Blackboard; it is not equipped to manage them.

Writing tips (just a few)

See the About this Course area of Blackboard for more complete guidelines. These are a few I really care about.

- Use MLA formatting
- Avoid using contractions in your formal, academic or professional writing (Use "does not" instead of "doesn't")
- Refer to people by their full name and then by their last name. It is not appropriate to use first names only in your formal writing.
- Provide useful titles for your documents. The assignment (i.e. Paper 1) is not a useful title. Titles of major works are put into italics (i.e. Hamlet). Lesser titles like journal articles are put into quotation marks. Plays, books and films are major titles. Your titles for class should be in the same font as the body of your paper (not in bold, in quotation marks or italicized).
- IMPORTANT: When you use a source to support your writing, cite those references. See MLA guidance.

Online discussions

This is from the syllabus template. I include it here in case it becomes useful:

- **Reflect** before you post an emotional response and reread what you have written to be sure it is professional. Communicate as if your comments are printed in a newspaper.
- **Communicate** effectively.
 - Do not use all caps or multiple punctuation marks (!!!, ???, etc.).
 - Be sure to define or explain acronyms, jargon or uncommon terms so everyone can understand and participate in the discussion.
- **Sign your name.** Take responsibility for your comments in order to build a strong classroom community.
- **Foster community.** Share your ideas and contribute to ongoing discussions. Make comments that add to, not detract from, a positive learning environment for the course.
- **Be constructive.** Challenge ideas and the course content, but do so in positive ways. It's fine to disagree, but when done politely you stimulate and encourage helpful discussion, and you maintain positive relationships with fellow students.
- **Keep the conversation on topic.** Online dialogue is like conversation. If there is a particular dialogue going on, please add to it, but if you have something new to say, start a new thread.

Online class behavior

- **Reflect** before you post an emotional response and reread what you have written to be sure it is professional. Communicate as if your comments are printed in a newspaper.
- **Communicate** effectively.

- Do not use all caps or multiple punctuation marks (!!!, ???, etc.).
- Be sure to define or explain acronyms, jargon or uncommon terms so everyone can understand and participate in the discussion.
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- **Be constructive.** Challenge ideas and the course content, but do so in positive ways. It's fine to disagree, but when done politely you stimulate and encourage helpful discussion, and you maintain positive relationships with fellow students.
- **Keep the conversation on the topic.** Online dialogue is like a conversation. If there is a particular dialogue going on, please add to it, but if you have something new to say, start a new thread.

Technology requirements

This course is online and asynchronous (this means that we will not meet together in real time on Zoom, etc.) You will need a good internet connection and the ability to record and upload videos using Yuja. Remember using an ethernet cable (a physical wire) is often more reliable than wi-fi. Mobile files (from your phone) are difficult to upload into BB. Technical requirements for students can be found in this [ITS KnowledgeBase article](#).

Technology capabilities

Your assignments must be document files you upload to Blackboard (BB). You may not provide links to other services (google, etc.), OneDrive, Sharepoint, etc.

Students in an online course should be able to:

- Use a word processor, such as MS Word, to compose assignments and communicate with others in class
- Attach files to emails or upload into course areas
- Navigate websites and course materials
- Reach out to tech support staff when issues arise and troubleshoot to resolve problems

Additional guidance for taking online courses can be found on the [Online at SIUE site](#).

Course Policies and University Policies

Academic integrity/plagiarism

(From the SIUE template)

Students are reminded that the expectations and academic standards outlined in the [Student Academic Code \(3C2\)](#) apply to all courses, field experiences and educational experiences at the University, regardless of modality or location.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, or dismissal from the University, per the [SIUE academic dishonesty policy](#). Students are responsible for complying with University policies about academic honesty as stated in the [University's Student Academic Conduct Code](#).

Unless expressly allowed by the instructor, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and applications (including ChatGPT, DALL-E, and others) to produce content for course assignments and assessments is a violation of SIUE's academic policy and is prohibited.

From me, again: Remember, paraphrasing is also using someone else's intellectual property. The definition of plagiarism covers more than using direct quotations.

Turnitin

From the syllabus template:

This course will utilize the Turnitin plagiarism detection software. A Turnitin link will be available anywhere written work is to be submitted in the course. [Find out more about using Turnitin](#).

Grading

There are 500 points total but our grade has ungraded participation as part of our assessment.

There are no timed exams. There is no final exam. Quizzes are open-book, open-note, etc.

200 points - Ten Tasks = 20% of final grade, complete all 10 and receive 100%, 9 = 90%, etc.

These are required and will be scored up to 20 points each. Missing one will lower your final grade by 10%. Why? We are learning how to do something with a task assignment, so the points are low. Because we are learning during these activities they are important to the overall learning outcome of the class, so missing one drops your final grade.

100 points - Quizzes (3 open-book) these will be video projects, record yourself responding to some prompts

200 points - Final project (take notes on course materials along the way. The final project will use all of our materials covered from Day 1.)

Grading scale

The final grades will be based on a 100 point scale: 90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, 70-79 = C, etc.

Missing tasks will affect your final grade. Late assignments may not be accepted and will affect your final grade.

Grading rubric

See each assignment for guidelines and grading criteria. Using MLA format is essential.

Feedback and grading timeline

Assessing written work is often as time consuming as writing it. Graded work will sometimes be returned to you right away, within a day or two. Some assignments will take longer for me to process. I will post your score or grade for an assignment in approximately one week but it may take longer for me to provide written feedback for your longer papers, especially in larger classes. This will be true for your final paper which is due the last day of our class. You can find your grade by clicking the My Grades link on the left menu of the Blackboard course.

Late or Missed Assignments

IMPORTANT: make sure your assignments successfully upload into Blackboard. Partially loaded, or “stuck” assignments (blue circle) are not turned in and your work will be assessed as not submitted. You will receive a yellow confirmation icon when your file has fully landed in Blackboard. Sometimes assignments will get stuck if you click submit and then close the application too quickly. It may be helpful to you to click “submit” and then stay in Blackboard to make sure your file transfers successfully.

Late work is not in the plan. The first week there are due dates on Wednesday and Friday. Every week after that your assignments will generally be due on Wednesdays and Fridays by 10:00 PM. There will be one optional make-up assignment that you can take advantage of for any reason. This option will not replace the final papers, which are required and should be turned in on time. There are no extra credit assignments.

Rewrites

You may revise your work BEFORE the due date. After the due date, I do not accept revisions of assignments. There will be an optional “make-up” assignment that you may complete to replace one missed or failed minor assignment. This option will be available in Week 3. This is not an option for the major paper, which must be turned in on time.

Participation

Please check our Blackboard course at least once each day Monday through Friday. Our class continues through the weekends but I have designed the course to be manageable with regular contact Monday-Friday. We are doing a 16-week course in only three weeks. There is no time to miss assignments. There is too much material in this course to try to do it all at once. The course is accretive. You will be asked log in to Blackboard and work on this class every weekday for three weeks. *We have 15 days rather than the usual 16 weeks to complete this course.*

IMPORTANT: The first task is due on Tuesday, December 16 by 10:00 PM. The first projects and a quiz are also due the first week. Students who miss these due date(s) may be dropped from the course.

Again, from the syllabus template: It is vitally important that our classroom environment promotes the respectful exchange of ideas, including being sensitive to the views and beliefs expressed during online discussions. Your success in this course will depend on your communication, consistent engagement, and active participation in all course activities. Success in this course requires that adhere to the deadlines given (in the course schedule) as you complete assignments,

discussions, and other course activities. (If we use the discussion board,) Timely participation in online discussions is very important and is not optional. You are expected to post and reply to discussions in a timely manner consistent with the requirements contained within the course syllabus and discussion rubric.

Regular and Substantive Interaction

Regular and substantive interaction (RSI) is required as part of new U.S. Department of Education regulations for distance (online) education and it supports student learning in all learning environments (online, face-to-face, hybrid, hyflex, etc.). SIUE faculty participate in RSI by initiating frequent and timely opportunities to engage with students. Because there are several ways to implement RSI, such as facilitating online discussions, scheduling a Zoom conference with a student, or holding regularly scheduled review sessions before tests, RSI may look different in every class. To learn more about RSI, use the Online Tips links for Faculty and Students in your Blackboard course websites or visit the Faculty Resources for Regular and Substantive Interaction webpage.

Recordings of Class Content

Faculty recordings of lectures and/or other course materials are the property of the faculty at SIUE and meant to facilitate student learning and to help facilitate a student catching up who has missed class due to illness or quarantine. As such, students are reminded that the recording, as well as replicating or sharing of any course content and/or course materials without the express permission of the professor of record, is not permitted, and may be considered a violation of the University's Student Conduct Code (3C1), linked here: <https://www.siu.edu/policies/3c1.shtml>. (SIUE template)

Diversity and Inclusion

From the syllabus template:

SIUE is committed to respecting everyone's dignity at all times. In order to learn, exchange ideas, and support one another, our virtual and physical classrooms must be places where students and teachers feel safe and supported. Systems of oppression permeate our institutions and our classrooms. All students and faculty have the responsibility to co-create a classroom that affirms inclusion, equity, and social justice, where racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and other social pathologies are not tolerated.

The [Inclusive Excellence, Education, and Development Hub](#) is an excellent resource for students for support and community. Any person who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment can contact the Office of EOA/Title IX Coordination (618) 650-2333 or eoatitleix@siue.edu.

Pregnancy and Newly Parenting Policy

This policy and procedure are established to ensure the protection and equal treatment of pregnant students, students with pregnancy-related medical conditions including as a result of the termination of pregnancy, and students who become new parents including parents adopting or fostering to adopt for the first 12 weeks a child is in the home, in accordance with Federal and State guidelines and regulations. "New Parents" refers to a parent who has recently welcomed a newborn or adopted a child or is fostering to adopt a child and needs support to mitigate the disruption in academic progress within the first 12 weeks of parenting or a parent that needs support due to medical necessity attributed to pregnancy or delivery of a child; care of newborn; or lactation within the first year of child's life or legal adoption/fostering. Visit [Policies & Procedures - Student Rights and Conduct - Newly Parenting Policy - 3C15](#) to view the full policy and learn how to request accommodations through the Office of Equal Opportunity, Access, and Title IX Coordination (EOA).

Technology Privacy Information

We will be using Blackboard in this course. View the [Anthology Blackboard Privacy Statement](#) to review how your data is being used and stored.

Additional Support

Services for Students Needing Accommodations

Students needing accommodations because of medical diagnosis or major life impairment will need to register with Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support (ACCESS) and complete an intake process before accommodations will be given. Students who believe they have a diagnosis, but do not have documentation, should contact ACCESS for assistance and/or appropriate referral. The ACCESS office is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1203. You can also reach the office by emailing us at myaccess@siue.edu or by calling [618-650-3726](tel:618-650-3726).

Academic and Other Student Services

As an enrolled SIUE student, you have a variety of support available to you, including:

- [Lovejoy Library Resources](#)
- [Academic Success Sessions](#)
- [Tutoring Resource Center](#)
- [The Writing Center](#)
- [Academic Advising](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Campus Events](#)
- [Counseling Services](#)

If you find that you need additional support, please reach out to me and let me know.

Cougar Care

Dealing with the fast-paced life of a college student can be challenging, and I always support a student's decisions to prioritize mental health. Students have access to counseling services on campus (Student Success Center, 0222). Make an appointment by visiting cougarcare.siu.edu or by calling [618-650-2842](tel:618-650-2842).

Student Success Coaches

[Student success coaches](#) work across campus to serve the SIUE student population with the tools and resources to adjust to and meet the demands of the college experience. Success coaches provide direct services such as time management support and referrals to campus resources. If you find yourself in need of academic or personal support, or in a situation that is preventing you from being successful in the classroom, please utilize [Starfish](#) to connect with a coach as soon as possible. The sooner you engage, the sooner you can access the information or tools you need that may help you get back on track.

Technical Support

Since this is an online course, you are expected to have reliable Internet access on a regular basis. It is your responsibility to address any computer problems that might occur. Such problems are not an excuse for delays in meeting expectations or for missing course deadlines.

Contact ITS at [618-650-5500](tel:618-650-5500) or at help@siue.edu with any technical concerns. You can also check the functionality of University systems, including Blackboard, at the [ITS System Status page](#), or search the [ITS KnowledgeBase](#) for various how-to and troubleshooting guides.

Tips for taking online assessments:

- Set up a wired (Ethernet) Internet connection on your computer
- Do not use a mobile device, such as a phone or tablet
- Read the instructions and directions carefully
- Be prepared to complete the assessment in the allotted time

Subject to change notice (tentative and subject to adjustment)

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your professor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.

There are due dates throughout each week. Please, no late assignment submissions. I will endeavor to keep our activities focused on working Monday through Friday. There may be occasions when due dates may occur on the weekend. The final paper, for example, will be due on a Saturday. Please plan your winter break activities (trips, etc.) with this course in mind.

Course Schedule:

Week	Learning Activities	Assignments	Due Dates All due at 11:59 pm CST
Week 1 12/15 - 12/20 Introduction, and elements of performance	What are we doing here? Watch/read everything in coursework folder for Week 1 Read Barranger Part 1 and 2	Task 1: introduction video Task 2: many professions in theater, concert analysis Quiz #1 Task 3: Find an actor	Tuesday, 12/16 Wednesday, 12/17 Friday, 12/19 Friday, 12/19
Week 2 12/22 - 12/27 Acting, Directing, Design, Architecture	What are the 11 components of theater performance? Aristotle to Schechner Watch/read everything in coursework folder for Week 2 Read Barranger - Part 3 and 4	Task 4: TBA Task 5: TBA Task 6: TBA Quiz #2	Tuesday, 12/21 Wednesday, 12/22 Thursday, 12/23 Friday, 12/24
Week 3 12/29 - 1/4 Plays and playwrights, Finding critical/ essential thinking	Watch/read everything in coursework folder for Week 3 Comedy Day! Read Barranger - Part 5	Task 7: Comedy, part 1 Task 8: TBA Task 9: Comedy, part 2 Task 10: Review materials Quiz #3 Optional make-up assignment Final project	Monday, 12/29 Tuesday, 12/30 Wednesday, 12/31 Friday, 1/2 Friday, 1/2 Saturday, 1/3 Sunday, 1/4