



Theatre Arts I
Course Syllabus 2024-2025

Mr. Jesse McCaskill

Room: E6

Planning Period: 7th (2:09-3:00)

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Course Overview:

This course will serve as an introductory course in theatre arts. Emphasis will be placed on all major aspects of theatre production. Students will also explore theatre history, types of theatre, theatre criticism and culture, and scriptwriting. This course will fulfill the fine art requirement for high school graduation.

Methodology:

It is important to note that this course is very different from many other high school classes. While it will consist of traditional methodologies, special emphasis will be placed on student performances, peer evaluations, acting exercises, writing critiques and student projects. Participation in all class activities is required for all students. *Failure to participate in any activity will result in a zero for that assignment.*

Prerequisites: None

Required Materials:

A Good Attitude

Effort

College-Ruled Paper (either loose-leaf or in a perforated spiral-bound notebook)

Binder or Folder (to keep notes, not specifically for this course)

Pens and Pencils

Journal (a college-ruled composition notebook, spiral bound notebook, etc.)

Craft Materials (to be used for specific projects)

Optional Materials:

Highlighters (Highly Recommended)

Colored Pencils (Highly Recommended)

Index Cards

Glue sticks

Scissors

Course Goals and Objectives:

1. Students will write scripts through improvising, drafting, and refining scripts based on experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history.
2. Students will act by developing, communicating, and sustaining characters in improvisations and in informal or formal productions.
3. Students will design and produce by conceptualizing and realizing artistic interpretations for informal and formal productions.
4. Students will direct by interpreting dramatic texts and organizing and conducting rehearsals for informal or formal productions.
5. Students will research by evaluating and synthesizing cultural and historical information to support artistic choices.
6. Students will compare and integrate art forms by analyzing traditional theatre, dance, music, visual arts, and new arts forms.
7. Students will analyze, critique, and construct meaning from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions.
8. Students will understand context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and present.

Course Outline:

1. Introduction, Improvisation, Pantomime, and Mime
2. Voice and Articulation
3. Stage Movement
4. Beginning Acting
5. Beginning Directing
6. Shakespearean Theatre and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
7. Technical Theatre I: Play and Musical Projection
8. Technical Theatre II: Scenic Design
9. Technical Theatre III: Lighting, Sound, and Special Effects
10. American Theatre and Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*

Evaluation Methods:

Students will be evaluated by both traditional methods and student performances and activities. Tests, quizzes, written assignments, daily work, projects, acting exercises, and student performances will be used. *Participation is critical for success in this class.* Students will be given a zero for assignments in which they do not participate.

This course will be highly project-based. Projects will come with well-detailed instructions as well as be discussed in detail in class. All due dates will be posted on the board.

Grading Scheme:

Tests:	20%
Quizzes	10%
Daily Assignments/Participation	40%
Special Projects	20%
Reflection Journal (Homework)	10%

Grading Scale:

- A: 90-100
 - B: 80-89
 - C: 70-79
 - D: 60-69
 - F: Below 60
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Academic Policies:

- Makeup Work
 - Makeup work is the responsibility of the student. Students should check Google Classroom for assignments that they have missed. For worksheets or other instructional materials, see Mr. McCaskill.
 - Assessments must be made up on designated makeup days.
 - Work due on the day of an absence is due upon the students return to class.
 - All makeup work, except for performances and acting exercises, must be completed within five school days of the student returning to class.
 - Student performances and acting exercises will be made up at the discretion of the instructor. These activities will be made up on a designated makeup day. It is the responsibility of the student to let Mr. McCaskill know that he or she needs to make up a performance or exercise.
 - Homework
 - Homework will be given very sparingly.
 - It is important to complete all homework completely and to the best of your ability.
 - Homework is due at the start of class on the designated due date.
 - Homework assignments will be posted on the board.
 - Late assignments will receive 10 points deducted for each school day that they are late unless otherwise noted. Larger projects may have varying late policies.
 - Late Work
 - Most assignments may be submitted late for a grade deduction; however, the instructor reserves the right to refuse any late assignment.
 - Academic Dishonesty
 - Cheating is prohibited. Any form of cheating will result in the student earning an automatic zero for the assignment. No questions asked.
 - Plagiarism is a form of cheating and will result in an automatic zero.
 - If a student has his or her mobile device out during an assessment, the instructor will assume the student is cheating. This will result in the phone being collected and an automatic zero on the assessment.
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Behavior Policies:

- Expectations
 - Come to class prepared to learn (physically and mentally).
 - Arrive on time.
 - Students will be considered late once the bell rings and the door is closed. Tardy students should report immediately for a tardy slip.
 - Use the restroom facilities between classes.
 - Students will only be allowed to leave class in emergency situations.
 - Participate in all class activities and assignments.
 - Do not disrupt the learning environment.
 - Do not steal time from the teacher or from the learning of others.

- o Always be respectful of others and treat them as you would like to be treated.
 - Never be negatively critical of others' performances.
 - Laughter is acceptable when comedy is the goal of the scene.
 - Do not talk during other students' performances.
 - Any form of disrespect during a student performance will result in an automatic zero and potential office referral. There is an absolute zero tolerance of disrespect in Mr. McCaskill's class.
- o Be seated and begin the daily bellringer by the time the bell rings.
 - Bellringers will be found on the board or instructional technology each day. Students are responsible for completing each day's bellringer without prompting. Each week, all bellringers will be kept on the same sheet of paper and turned in on Friday (or the last school day of that week).
- o Familiarize yourself with the student handbook. All school and district policies will be enforced. (Tardy Policy, Cell Phone Policy, Dress Code, etc.)
- o Cell phones should be put away; however, they may be used when the instructor gives explicit permission. Their use will be reserved for educational purposes or extreme circumstances.
- Consequences
 - o Students who violate school policies or classroom expectations are subject to disciplinary action.
 - o Level one consequences may include: verbal warnings, loss of privileges, calls or emails to parents or guardians, or office referrals.
 - o Level two consequences include an office referral.
- Incentives
 - o Positive behavior is also recognized.
 - o Incentives may include special privileges, praise, candy or food, or other incentives.
 - o Students are responsible for making any known food allergies or intolerances known to Mr. McCaskill.

Additional Comments:

Communication is key for success in this class. Any concerns, conflicts, or situations that affect your learning or completing of assignments on time should be communicated to Mr. McCaskill. Additional resources or extensions may be offered at the instructor's discretion. Please be proactive in handling these issues.

I want you to be comfortable in this class. You will be asked to participate in acting exercises and performances. *You will be put out of your comfort zone in this class.* This course may be more challenging to some than others. It is important that you try your best and make an effort even when you are out of your comfort zone. I believe this course has the potential to help you in many ways. Be prepared to be out of your comfort zone, but expect to be welcomed and respected in the environment as well.

You will not be asked to perform in a school theatrical production as a requirement for this course. However, you will be highly encouraged to participate. If you have any interests in acting, set design and construction, working backstage, etc., pay attention to class and school announcements about upcoming productions.