

EDISON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THE-121S-801: Introduction to Theatre

Online Summer Eight-Week Term | 2026

Instructor Information

Professor William Loudermilk

M.A. in English, Wright State University, 1997

M.A. in Communication, Regent University, 2005

Office: Room 213, West Hall

Office Hours: Posted in Blackboard or by appointment

Phone: (937) 657-6703 (texts OK — include name and course)

Email: wloudermilk@edisonohio.edu

Virtual Meetings: Teams or Zoom by appointment

Course Information

Course: THE-21S-801 — Introduction to Theatre

Section: 801

Format: Online Asynchronous

Term: Summer Eight-Week, 2026

Orientation: Monday, June 8, 2026

Week 1 Opens: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 — 8:00 a.m.

Final Deadline: Friday, August 1, 2026 — 11:59 p.m.

 Attendance Notice: Students who do not submit the Letter to Instructor #1 by Thursday, June 12 at 11:59 p.m. will be removed from the course for non-attendance.

Course Description

THEA 121S is an introduction to the art of theatre from three perspectives: the practice of theatre professionals, values and criticism in theatre, and a survey of theatre history. The course aims to help students better understand, appreciate, and enjoy the diverse elements that make up the art of theatre.

No performance is required for this course.

Recommended preparation: HUM 121S. Students will read plays, view productions, conduct research, and complete creative projects organized around the key practitioners of theatre.

Instructor Bio

Professor Loudermilk is a theatre director, playwright, and performer who has been involved in over 50 productions — including 14 at Edison State, most recently Pygmalion. He has always been drawn to theatre as a way to explore both the world and himself, and brings that passion to every course he teaches. In addition to his work in theatre, he regularly performs as a vocalist and pianist and teaches in the closely related fields of English and Communication. When he is not teaching, directing, writing, or performing, he is probably hiking or traveling.

Course Goals

Cognitive Goals — Students will:

- Define theatre as a distinct art form
- Identify key features of theatre — architecture, staging, acting and directing styles, production, and societal values — from major historical periods
- Recognize major playwrights and their important works from throughout Western history
- Identify basic features of non-Western and global theatre styles
- Analyze a play script from critical perspectives
- Understand the crafts of acting, directing, design, and production as practiced today
- Identify the title and function of personnel in the modern theatrical company
- Read and view representative plays and write critiques of plays and performances
- Conduct and present research on theatre history and style
- Make, present, and display creative projects
- Explore the application of theatre to real life

Affective Goals — Students will:

- Analyze and predict personal responses to theatre
- Tolerate and appreciate free expression and diverse opinions

Edison State Core Values

Communication • Ethics • Critical Thinking • Human Diversity • Inquiry / Respect for Learning • Teamwork

Textbook

- Theatre Appreciation — free online through the Open Textbook Library (required)
- Additional readings, videos, and viewing links provided in Blackboard each week

Weekly Schedule

Each week opens Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. and closes Monday at 11:59 p.m. Week 8 ends Friday, August 1. Weekly discussions, responses, and activities are covered through assignments posted in each weekly Blackboard folder.

Week	Dates	Topic / Focus
Orientation	Mon, June 8	Access course shell, read syllabus, review course introduction
1	Tue June 9 — Mon June 16	The Director
2	Tue June 17 — Mon June 23	The Playwright
3	Tue June 24 — Mon June 30	The Actor
4	Tue July 1 — Mon July 7	The Designers
5	Tue July 8 — Mon July 14	The Producer & The Critic
6	Tue July 15 — Mon July 21	The Review

7	Tue July 22 — Mon July 28	Theatre History
8 🏠	Tue July 29 — Fri Aug 1	Global Theatre & Applied Theatre Course Wrap-Up

🏠 Week 8 is a shorter week. All coursework must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, August 1, 2026.

Assignments & Point Values

Specific due dates and instructions are posted in each weekly Blackboard folder. Weekly discussions, responses, and activities are covered through assignments as indicated in Blackboard.

Assignment	Points	Due
WEEK 1 — The Director		
Letter to Instructor #1	25	Thu June 12 — non-attendance deadline
Weekly Discussions & Activities	50	End of Week 1
WEEK 2 — The Playwright		
Letter to Instructor #2	25	Week 2
Ten-Minute Play (begins Week 2)	100	Due end of Week 3
Weekly Discussions & Activities	50	End of Week 2
WEEK 3 — The Actor		
Ten-Minute Play (due)	—	End of Week 3 (see Week 2)
Weekly Discussions & Activities	50	End of Week 3
WEEK 4 — The Designers		
Letter to Instructor #3	25	Week 4
Playbill / Play Program Project	100	End of Week 4
Weekly Discussions & Activities	50	End of Week 4
Exam/Reflection #1	100	End of Week 4
WEEK 5 — The Producer & The Critic		
Weekly Discussions & Activities (includes review writing practice)	50	End of Week 5
WEEK 6 — The Review		
Formal Play Review (live or approved video)	200	End of Week 6
Weekly Discussions & Activities	50	End of Week 6
WEEK 7 — Theatre History		
Theatre History / Style Research Project	100	End of Week 7
Weekly Discussions & Activities	50	End of Week 7
WEEK 8 — Global Theatre & Applied Theatre Final Week		

Costume Project (begins earlier — due Week 8)	200	By Fri Aug 1 — 11:59 p.m.
Final Discussion (includes final projects)	400	By Fri Aug 1 — 11:59 p.m.
Exam/Reflection #2	100	By Fri Aug 1 — 11:59 p.m.
Active, Positive Participation (–50 pts per week not logged in)	200	Weeks 1–8
TOTAL	1,775	

Assignment Descriptions

Letters to Instructor (3 × 25 pts)

Three short reflective letters submitted across the term. Each letter asks you to report on your progress, your thinking about theatre, and any questions or concerns. Letter #1 confirms your enrollment.

Weekly Discussions & Activities

Each week includes readings, viewings, discussions, and written responses posted in the Blackboard folder. These are designed to build your knowledge and critical thinking about theatre week by week. Specific instructions are in each folder.

Ten-Minute Play (100 pts)

Write an original short play or dramatic scene of approximately 10 minutes. Begun in Week 2 (The Playwright) and due at the end of Week 3 (The Actor). Detailed instructions in the Week 2 folder.

Playbill / Play Program Project (100 pts)

Design a playbill for an approved production. Graded on design quality, thoroughness, and accuracy. Covered in Week 4 alongside the designers unit. Details in the Week 4 folder.

Formal Play Review (200 pts)

View and write a formal critical review of one production — live or approved video. The production must be approved by the instructor in advance. Review writing is practiced in Week 5; the formal review is due in Week 6. Your review should address the production's style, design, acting, direction, and overall effectiveness. Contact the instructor early to discuss production options.

 A list of local productions and approved video options will be posted in Blackboard. Financial help and free options for live theatre attendance will be made available.

Theatre History / Style Research Project (100 pts)

A research project — typically a presentation — exploring an approved topic in theatre history or dramatic style. You will choose your topic and share your work with the class. Topics must be approved by the instructor. Covered in Week 7.

Costume Project (200 pts)

Select a character from one of the plays we are reading or viewing. Using the principles of costume design, create a costume for that character and present your design choices to the class. This project begins earlier in the term and is due in Week 8. Detailed instructions will be posted in Blackboard.

Final Discussion (400 pts)

The culminating discussion of the course. Summarizes your learning across the term and incorporates your final projects. This is your opportunity to demonstrate the full range of what you have studied, viewed, created, and discovered about theatre.

Exams / Reflections (2 × 100 pts)

Two assessments covering reading and viewing content — which may take the form of an exam, a written reflection, or a combination of both. If participation and progress are strong, the instructor may modify the format and will announce this in Blackboard.

Active, Positive Participation (200 pts)

Treat this course as a professional commitment. Log in and participate each week, complete all assignments thoughtfully, communicate professionally, cite your sources, and meet deadlines. You may forfeit 50 points for each week you do not log in and participate. To earn an A or B, all major projects must be completed.

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	90–100%
B	80–89%
C	70–79%
D	60–69%
F	Below 60%

To calculate your grade: divide points earned by 1,775. To earn an A or B, complete all major projects thoughtfully and maintain regular weekly participation.

Course Policies

Participation

Weekly participation is mandatory. Missing a full week may result in a 50-point deduction. To earn an A or B, you must complete all major assignments and maintain consistent weekly engagement.

Communication

Use your Edison State email. Include your name, THEA 121S, and section number in all messages. Responses within 36 hours — resend if you haven't heard back. Texts are fine for brief questions (include your name). Virtual meetings available via Teams or Zoom by appointment. Feel free to follow up — the instructor wants to hear from you.

Late Work & Extensions

Every student has an automatic 24-hour grace period on any assignment — no need to ask. If you need more than 24 hours, email the instructor with your reason and a plan for catching up. Plans are generally approved — just make sure it is on record. A late assignment is always better than no assignment.

Hard Deadlines

Two hard deadlines apply:

- All work from Weeks 1–4 must be completed by Monday, July 21 at 11:59 p.m.
- All work from Weeks 5–8 must be completed by the final deadline: Friday, August 1 at 11:59 p.m.

Exceptions require a verified medical or work-related excuse negotiated with the instructor in advance.

Revision Policy

Students may redo any assignment earning lower than a C. Students earning below a B on any non-final assignment may revise once by agreement with the instructor. Contact the instructor within one week of receiving your grade.

Academic Integrity & Citations

Document all outside sources. Directly quoted material must be in quotation marks with a citation. Paraphrased material must also be cited. Weekly discussions may use informal in-text citations; formal projects require MLA format. Failure to cite sources may result in an F on the assignment or in the course.

Artificial Intelligence Policy

You must be the primary author of your work. AI tools may be used for brainstorming only — sparingly and with acknowledgment. Any use of AI must be disclosed with a statement explaining how it was used and how the output was verified. Undisclosed AI use will be treated as plagiarism.

"The author generated this text in part with [insert name/URL of AI platform]. Upon generating draft language, the author reviewed, edited, and revised the language to their own liking and takes ultimate responsibility for the content of this submission."

Incompletes

Incompletes may only be recorded for a documented medical condition when at least 60% of coursework has been completed at a passing level. Documentation is required. An Incomplete automatically becomes an F 30 days into the next semester.

Disability & Special Needs

Edison State will make reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Contact the instructor privately with your Self-Identification Letter, or reach Disability Services at accessibilitysupport@edisonohio.edu or (937) 778-8600, Room 160.

Syllabus Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus. Changes are generally designed to make the course more direct and doable. All changes will be communicated via Blackboard.

Important Dates

Date	Event
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Monday, June 8	Classes Begin Course orientation
Tuesday, June 9	Week 1 Opens — 8:00 a.m.
Thursday, June 12	Letter to Instructor #1 Due — 11:59 p.m. Non-attendance deadline
Sunday, June 15	Refund Deadline — Summer Early
Thursday, June 19	Juneteenth — Buildings closed Support services unavailable
Monday, June 22	Refund Deadline — Summer Semester Payment Due — 1st installment
Tuesday, June 23	Pell Lock
Sunday, June 29	Last Day to Withdraw — Summer Early
Friday, July 3	Independence Day observed — Buildings closed Support services unavailable
Monday, July 13	Last Day to Withdraw — Summer Semester
Monday, July 21	Hard Deadline — All Week 1–4 work due by 11:59 p.m.
Tuesday, July 29	Week 8 Opens — Final week of course
Friday, August 1	FINAL DEADLINE — All work due by 11:59 p.m. Classes End

Student Support Services

Advising Services

MyESCC or (937) 778-7850

Library Services

(937) 778-7950 | library@edisonohio.edu

Tutoring Services

(937) 778-7959 | tutoringcenter@edisonohio.edu

Technical Support

Blackboard issues: contact instructor first

Other tech: support@edisonohio.edu | (937) 778-8600

After hours:

edisonohio.freshservice.com/support/home

Mental Health & Wellness

Student Wellness Center, Room 060 | CARE Team referrals available through instructor

Food Pantry — Charger Station

Room 060, Piqua campus | ResourceCenter@edisonohio.edu

Career & Job Services

edisonohio.edu/Career-and-Job-Services

Bookstore — eCampus

edisonohio.edu/services-support/student-resources/bookstore-information

Title IX / Non-Discrimination

edisonohio.edu/TitleIX/

Testing Your Faith Act

Students may be absent up to three days per semester for faith-based observances without academic penalty. Complete the Testing Your Faith Act Accommodations Form and provide a copy to the instructor within 14 days of the course start.

Policy: https://www.edisonohio.edu/sites/default/files/2025-06/Student_Handbook.pdf (page 19)

Form: https://www.edisonohio.edu/sites/default/files/2024-05/Testing_Your_Faith_Absence_Notification.pdf

If you have questions, contact Professor Loudermilk at wloudermilk@edisonohio.edu.