

# THEA 4460 Play and Scriptwriting

## Instructor Contact

**Name:** Julie Brinker, MFA

**Pronouns:** she/her/hers

**Office Location:** RTFP 215

**Phone Number:** n/a

**Office Hours:** M/W 9:30-11 am and by appointment (face-to-face or virtual)

**Email:** [Julie.brinker@unt.edu](mailto:Julie.brinker@unt.edu)

**Communication Expectations:** I will post messages and announcements on the Announcements tab in Canvas. You can send me messages through Canvas or my email address ([Julie.brinker@unt.edu](mailto:Julie.brinker@unt.edu)). I will strive to respond to messages within 24 hours on weekdays. Your online quiz/test grades will be available immediately; grades and feedback for other assignments will be posted as soon as possible, but may take a week or 10 days. A grader will be assigned to this course after the census date; we will work together to get grades to you expeditiously.

## Welcome to UNT!

As members of the UNT community, we have all made a commitment to be part of an institution that respects and values the identities of the students and employees with whom we interact. UNT does not tolerate identity-based discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. UNT's full Non-Discrimination Policy can be found in the UNT Policies section of the syllabus.

## Course Description

Dramatic theory, structure, characterization, dialogue and technical media as used by the playwright or the film scriptwriter in both dramatic and comedic works. Study of the scriptwriting process from proposal to production. Marketing of scripts. Practice in playwriting and film scriptwriting.

## Course Structure

This is a face-to-face course with Canvas back-up/support. Due dates will be posted on Canvas, as will Announcements and any syllabus/due date changes.

## Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## Course Objectives

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

Craft short scripts with clear action, developed characters, and precise action.

Contribute productively to a workshop environment with constructive criticism and positive feedback.

Apply feedback to your own writing through revision.

Articulate your choices in the revision process.

Analyze and discuss the craft of plays and film/tv scripts.

## Materials

Required:

*A More Perfect 10: Writing and Producing the 10-Minute Play* by Gary Garrison. ISBN: 1-58510-327-6

Recommended:

*Playwriting: Writing, Producing, and Selling Your Play* by Louis E. Catron. ISBN-10: 0881335649

*Playwriting in Process (a series of exercises)* by Michael Wright. ISBN-10: 1585103403

*Naked Playwriting: The Art, the Craft, and the Life Laid Bare* by Downs and Russin. ISBN-10: 9781879505766

## Course Technology & Skills

### Minimum Technology Requirements

For access to the Canvas materials, and in case you need to isolate/quarantine for Covid, you will need:

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite
- [Canvas Technical Requirements \(https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements\)](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)

### Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software
- Using presentation and graphics programs

### Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

**UIT Help Desk:** [UIT Student Help Desk site \(http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm\)](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)

**Email:** [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)

**Phone:** 940-565-2324

**In Person:** Sage Hall, Room 130

**Walk-In Availability:** 8am-9pm

**Telephone Availability:**

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

**Laptop Checkout:** 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help \(https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328\)](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

### Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual’s experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these [Engagement Guidelines \(https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips\)](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) for more information.

### Course Requirements

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>
<b>2 10-Minute Scripts</b>	<i>500 points</i>
<i>10 In-class exercises and writing assignments</i>	<i>250 points</i>
<i>Attendance</i>	<i>100 points</i>
<i>Participation</i>	<i>150 points</i>
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

## Grading

There are 1000 possible points for this course. Final grades will be calculated using this scale:

A = 900-1000

B = 800-899

C = 700-799

D = 600-699

F = 0-599

**Late work will not be accepted**, except as recommended by the ODA office. This is to guarantee equitable treatment of all students. Please acquaint yourself with the attached calendar. *In the theatre, the curtain rises on opening night and the show must go on.* Consider the “due date” to be the last moment I will take the assignment. Any written work may be turned in early. Time management is a life skill.

## Course Evaluation

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course.

## Course Policies

### Face Coverings

UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions.

### Attendance

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. It is important that you communicate with the professor and the instructional team prior to being absent, so you, the professor, and the instructional team can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. Please inform the professor and instructional team if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community.

*Please note that due to the ongoing pandemic, required and optional performances may be changed, rescheduled, or canceled. You will be notified of any change on Canvas and, if necessary, a substitution will be arranged.*

If you are experiencing any [symptoms of COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or [askSHWC@unt.edu](mailto:askSHWC@unt.edu)) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Team at [COVID@unt.edu](mailto:COVID@unt.edu) for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

### Course Materials for Remote Instruction

Remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. Students will need access to a computer with webcam and microphone to participate in fully remote portions of the class. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found at <https://online.unt.edu/learn>

### Late Work

**Late work will not be accepted**, except as recommended by the ODA office. This is to guarantee equitable treatment of all students. Please acquaint yourself with the attached calendar. *In the theatre, the curtain rises on opening night and the show must go on.* Consider the “due date” to be the last moment I will take the assignment. Any written work may be turned in early. Time management is a life skill.

### Assignment Policy

The official due dates for each assignment, along with assignment instructions, will be found in the attached course calendar and in the corresponding Canvas Module. Assignments should be saved as .DOC or .PDF), and files should be submitted to the Canvas assignment drop box or submission upload.

This course will be using Turnitin software for critical reviews.

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu) or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

**Subject Matter Disclaimer:** Theatre is an art with imitates human life: since sexuality and violence are a part of human living, so materials in this class may deal with sexual and violent images, behaviors, situations, and language. Students who may be offended by such materials may want to reconsider taking this course.

### Syllabus Change Policy

Changes to the syllabus, including assignment due dates, exam dates, and/performance dates, will be communicated on Canvas (under Announcements) and in class.

### UNT Policies

#### Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation.]

#### ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website \(https://disability.unt.edu/\)](https://disability.unt.edu/).

#### Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

#### Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

#### Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written

consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

### Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.

**Withdrawal from the course must be initiated by the student.** Otherwise, you will be subject to a WF or F for a final grade.

### Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: [my.unt.edu](https://my.unt.edu). All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

### Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" ([no-reply@iasystem.org](mailto:no-reply@iasystem.org)) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (http://spot.unt.edu/) or email [spot@unt.edu](mailto:spot@unt.edu).

### Survivor Advocacy

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](mailto:SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-5652648.

### Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

### Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

## Academic Support & Student Services

### Student Support Services

#### *Mental Health*

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

#### *Chosen Names*

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- [UNT Records](#)
- [UNT ID Card](#)
- [UNT Email Address](#)
- [Legal Name](#)

*\*UNT eulDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.*



### *Pronouns*

Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can [add your pronouns to your Canvas account](#) so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

- [What are pronouns and why are they important?](#)
- [How do I use pronouns?](#)
- [How do I share my pronouns?](#)
- [How do I ask for another person's pronouns?](#)
- [How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?](#)

### *Additional Student Support Services*

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

### *Academic Support Services*

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

## Spring 2022 Course Calendar (subject to change)

1/21 Syllabus and Intros; writing exercise #1; formatting guidelines (see Garrison p. 166)

1/28 Exercise #1 due; start first round of readings in class; writing exercise #2;  
Read Catron 45-82; read Garrison Chapter 1

2/04 Exercise #2 due; short scenes; writing exercise #3; read Catron 97-122; read Garrison Chapter 2

2/11 Exercise #3 due; extend the short scene; writing exercise #4; read Catron 153-186; read Garrison Chapter 3

2/18 Exercise #4 due; 1 page scenario/treatment of 10-Minute Play #1; read Catron 187-225; read Garrison Chapter 4

**\*\*UNT Theatre opportunity #1: *Ursula* in the University Theatre 2/16-18\*\***

2/25 First draft of 10-Minute Play #1 due; writing exercise #5; read Garrison Chapter 5

3/04 Exercise #5 due; second draft of 10-Minute Play #1 due; writing exercise #6; skim Garrison Chapter 6

**\*\*UNT Theatre opportunity #2: *Escobar's Hippo* in the Studio Theatre 3/03-6\*\***

3/11 Final draft of 10-Minute Play #1 due; exercise #6 due; writing exercise #7; skim Garrison Chapter 7

SPRING BREAK MARCH 18—NO CLASS

3/25 Exercise #7 due; writing exercise #8; 1 page scenario/treatment of 10-Minute Play #2

4/01 Exercise #8 due; 1 page scenario/treatment of 10-Minute Play #2 due; writing exercise #9

4/08 Exercise #9 due; first draft of 10-Minute Play #2 due; writing exercise #10  
\*\*UNT Theatre opportunity #3: *Spamalot* in the University Theatre 4/07-10\*\*

4/15 Exercise #10 due; second draft of 10-Minute Play #2 due

4/22 Final draft of 10-Minute Play #2 due; Rehearsals of one-acts

4/29 Rehearsals of one-acts

05/06 Final presentations and manuscripts due

Wednesday 5/11: Final self-evaluation due by 11:59 pm

