

DIRECTING 1

TPP3310C-16Fall 0001

Course Info

Course Number

TPP 3310C-0001

Meeting Time: T/TH 11AM-12:50 PM

TPP 3310C-0002

Location:

Instructor Info

Cynthia White

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CynthiaW@orlandoshakes.org

Office Hours: T/TH 1–3 pm except September

20–October 13 when by appointment only.

Or By Appointment.

Course Description

The course is designed to give the student an introduction to the collaborative art form and fundamentals of directing for the theatre. The class will focus on analysis of scripts, design, research, rehearsal, staging techniques and work with actors (physical and psychological actions for example), directorial vocabulary, and other areas of directing for the stage. Through research and investigative participatory viewing, the course will also introduce the student to contemporary and classic writers through the selection of plays for student scenes.

Objectives

- Introduce the student to the basic tools needed to analyze a play script.
- Introduce the student to the basic tools needed for directing scenes.
- Develop an understanding of the collaborative art form of directing.
- Give the student required opportunities for the practical application of directing theory and practice.
- Give the student required opportunities to observe and critique professional theatrical productions by writing critical analyses.
- Develop a vocabulary for communication with actors, designers, producers, and facilitate critical analysis.

Required Reading

- *A Sense of Direction: Some Observations on the Art of Directing* by William Ball
- Various online theatre reviews and handouts as assigned
- Research on writers and directors as assigned
- All of the four to five plays from which semester's scenes are selected

Cheating / Dishonesty

See The Golden Rule.

Attendance

Theatre training is a progressive process; therefore, every class is valuable to your process.

- **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY MATERIAL MISSED DUE TO AN ABSENCE.**
- You are allowed ONE “unexcused” absence from this class without penalty.
- EACH ADDITIONAL “unexcused” absence after that will result in a ½-letter grade reduction. I will process this by reducing your final percentage grade (for example, a 94%) by FOUR points (will be reduced to a 90%) at the end of the quarter when calculating final grades.
- If an absence from the class is “excused,” the student will not be penalized for missing that class, unless it affects their overall understanding of the material covered during the semester. Therefore, they must make up the work assigned for the day they missed and they must be prepared to participate fully in class exercises or performances upon the day of their return.
- Whether or not an absence is eventually “excused,” you will be held accountable for missed performances (either for scenes that you are directing or that you are performing in). You are responsible for trading performance times with another scene BEFORE you miss the performance/work time in class. And you are also responsible for notifying the instructor by email or text at least ½ hour before the start of that class with the information about the changes.
- All “excused” absences require official documentation from the student (doctor’s notes, obituaries, notification from the athletic department or other university organizations). **It is the student’s responsibility to provide a hard copy of this documentation for the instructor with it clearly noted for which class date the student is excused. If you do not provide this documentation, the absence will be considered “unexcused.”**

The following will be counted as excused absences:

- University functions, including participation in sporting events, teams clubs academic functions, scholarly conferences—these should be noted with instructor IN ADVANCE.
- Illness that is documented by a doctor’s note
- Death in the immediate family with written proof
- Observance of religious holy days—these should be noted with instructor IN

ADVANCE.

*** You must notate in writing the dates and names of any religious holy days that you must observe during the course of the semester and hand it into the instructor no later than the second day of class. Likewise, you should get to instructor **in writing during the first week of class** any planned excused absences for the rest of the semester.

- If you are absent during a group performance or presentation, makeups will be scheduled at the discretion of the instructor and are not guaranteed. You should recognize that your absence is probably going to affect the grades of your fellow actors and directors involved in the scene as well.
- *** Missing class for participating in a show outside of UCF that pays you will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If allowed, extra-credit work may be required to make up the missed class. ***

Late Work and Tardiness Policy

All written assignments must be submitted to instructor no later than the time designated as DUE TIME. If a hard copy of assignment is required, then you must submit it at the beginning of class on DUE DATE.

B-	< 84%	to	80%
C+	< 80%	to	77%
C	< 77%	to	74%
C-	< 74%	to	70%
D+	< 70%	to	67%
D	< 67%	to	64%
D-	< 64%	to	60%
F	< 60%	to	0%

DESCRIPTION OF SEVERAL OF THE PROJECTS: PLAY AND SCENE ANALYSIS:

Group of directors working on same play will join together to present the play analysis and then individually submit their scene analysis (after working on their scenes together/doing peer review of their analysis work)

Your *group presentation* of information about the play from which your scenes are drawn will include:

1. Dramaturgical analysis: Together you will tell the story of the play using these terms:

Inciting action: introduction of a source of conflict among the characters or within a single character that you are defining as the guiding action of the play.

Crisis: The point at which the protagonist is forced to make a decision that will determine his/her ensuing intentions, objectives, and tactics.

This decision determines his/her course of action until it eventually reaches the climax.

Rising action: the detailed structure of the characters to overcome the conflict.

Climax: the identification and exorcism of the irritant through violence, argument, hilarity, or some other means. It is at the point of climax that the central character (the protagonist) learns something, sees something differently, the course of his journey is altered.

At the CLIMAX, the protagonist makes a discovery and learns something new about his/her world.

Resolution: the reestablishment of the sense of order and calm that existed before the inciting action.

See handout from *Creative Play Direction* by Robert Cohen and John Harrup, pages 22-24. Also see Dean/Carra *Fundamentals of Play Direction*.

2. Each of the members of the group will explore a different source for production history and critical responses to earlier productions of the play.

You will present some of the details of your findings in your group presentation.

Your *individual analysis* for your play and scene will include:

1. In your individual one- to two-page play analyses that you are including in your prompt book, you will revisit the list above of *inciting action*, *crisis*, *rising action*, *climax*, and *resolution* but this time you will be presenting it for the SCENE that you are directing. You will then discuss your production research and CITE your sources, following the form from *The Chicago Manual of Style* or MLA. Lastly you will tell in one paragraph your *directorial goals* in directing this scene. This may include things like: what impacts you most about this scene? What ideas or themes do you hope to present to your audience?

GRADES: directors will receive up to **10 points** for their play presentation/panel/discussion. Each team will be graded together for their joint effort and results.

Each director will write a one- to two-page play analysis that will be included in the prompt book (and will be graded as part of that prompt book).

There will be time in class for the directors to work together to review each other's analysis on individual scenes. These analyses will be turned in at this time and reviewed/noted by Instructor but grade will be assigned when it is resubmitted as part of the final prompt book.

Prompt books will be due on the day of your "Opening Presentation." It is, of course, a cumulative project that you should begin as soon as you write your play analysis and do your scene breakdown (breaking the scene into beats).

PROMPT BOOK:

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| 1. 1- to 2-page written play analysis | 30 points |
| 2. Scene broken down into beats scored in scene with each beat described and discussed in attachments; other elements of scene noted and discussed in scene analysis as well | 50 points |
| 3. Casting | |
| Description of each character | |
| Sides for auditioning | |
| Casting discussion and choices | 30 points |
| 4. Floor plan | |
| Discussion of needed elements in this plan | |
| Rendering of floor plan with entrances and Exits as well as location of stage in room and Location of audience seats | 20 points |
| Discussion of the spatial relationship you chose And why you chose it | 20 points |

5.	Blocking noted in your working directing script	50 points
6.	Acting/Dress Rehearsal journal: notes on each rehearsal and your thoughts on how to get beyond obstacles	50 points
7.	Your written analysis of how your scene worked: this is to be shared in a ten-minute meeting with Instructor—an honest assessment of what were challenges and how successful you were at overcoming challenges	50 points
TOTAL points possible for prompt book:		300 points

SCENE PRESENTATIONS DURING SEMESTER:

ON DAYS WHEN YOUR PLAY IS PRESENTING (when your scene goes up for table work, for blocking rehearsal, etc.) you will receive up to **10 points** for your professional presentation, for your efforts to respond to questions, address issues with a healthy mindset, not placing blame or complaining but looking for the issues and addressing them with ways that you can improve the work.

BOOK DISCUSSIONS:

We have two textbooks: *A Sense of Direction—Some Observations on the Art of Directing* by William Ball and *Fundamentals of Play Directing* by Alexander Dan and Lawrence Carra. You will each be assigned to lead a discussion on one of the reading assignments. For this discussion, you will need to *together* plan how you will cover the key points in your material. You will need to submit an outline (again, together one outline to show your collaboration) at the beginning of the discussion. And you will need to provide a journal-writing prompt for your classmates at the end of the discussion. Points possible: **10** for the outline and writing prompt; **10** for a lively and shared discussion where the scene partners engage in a conversation and others participate too. Journal responses are due on web courses at the beginning of the following class period.

Journal responses to Book Discussion Prompts:

Each student including the class discussion leaders will submit a journal entry responding to the discussion prompt before the beginning of the following directing class session. **Each journal entry will be worth up to 5 points.**

ANALYSIS OF DIRECTION OF PLAY PRODUCTION (ADPP):

You are required to see *Clybourne Park* and *Cloud Nine* at UCF and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* at OST during their runs.

You will each write three ADPPs based upon the UCF productions of *Clybourne Park*, *Cloud 9*, and the OST production of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

- We will discuss these three productions in class, the directorial challenges that you can identify for that particular play, and the choices

- that you think the director made. We will try to have a discussion in class with each of the directors.
- You will each write your papers, you will peer-review your papers with your classmates, and then submit a final copy of *one* of your papers for a grade.
 - Each paper will be typewritten, double-spaced, 500-600 words max.
 - If you have more than four typos, spelling or grammatical errors, you will get your paper back ungraded to be submitted for a maximum $\frac{3}{4}$ grade credit on the assignment.
 - Drafts for in-class peer review (and draft to instructor) of ADPPs are due as listed below in daily schedule, after our in-class discussion of that particular play. Remember that you are to write THREE of these papers for use in the peer-review work, and submit three of these drafts of ADPPs, and then you are to submit ONE of these papers for a grade.
 - Possible grade for ADPP: **50 points**
 - ADPP for ONE of the three written ones is due to cynthiaw@orlandoshakes.org by 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, November 29. The subject line should read: YOUR NAME.ADPP.PLAYTITLE.DATE

Clybourne Park by Bruce Norris directed by David Reed
September 22-October 2

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by Jeffrey Hatcher directed by Cynthia White
October 12-November 13

Cloud Nine by Caryl Churchill directed by Julia Listengarten
November 10-November 20

PLAYFEST PARTICIPATION

Everyone in this directing class is expected to participate in this year's PlayFest.

1/ There are five new plays being presented in readings Thursday-Sunday, November 3-6. In addition there will probably be a panel discussion on Saturday or Sunday in which the playwrights discuss this theme-based PlayFest (all plays are somehow thematically linked to the tragedy at the Pulse in June). These first five plays will rehearse Monday-Wednesday October 31-November 2 with tech rehearsals later in the weekend.

2/ Also these weekend, probably on Saturday evening, November 5, there will be a reading of several of the *After Orlando* three-minute plays that have been collected from playwrights around the country.

3/ During a second weekend, there will be rehearsals for a special reading of *The Laramie Project* and a reading on Saturday, November 12, along with a keynote speech by its playwright Moises Kaufman.

4/ There will be a writing assignment related to your participation/viewing of PlayFest that will be due and will be one of the writing assignments that meets the Gordon Rule for this course.

There will be several ways in which students from this directing class (and other UCF students) can participate in PlayFest: as actors in the readings, as assistant directors, in tech or stage management positions, as dramaturgs or as guests in rehearsals. I would like each of you to follow one reading through its entire rehearsal process (15 hours total maximum) but I realize that some of you will have other show conflicts probably. Auditions for PlayFest will probably happen September 9-14 at OST and auditioning is the first step toward being in a reading.

***** This course is a Gordon Rule Writing Course. *****

The UCF's definition of "College-Level Writing" is as follows:

- Your paper will have a clearly defined central idea or thesis.**
- Your writing will provide adequate support for that idea.**
- Your paper will be organized clearly and logically.**
- You will demonstrate understanding of the conventions of standard written English.**
- The paper will be formatted appropriately. (Double Spaced. 12 point Times New Roman Font.)**

Specific assignments that will be used to meet the Gordon Rule Writing Course are:

- Play Analysis and production history pages of prompt book**
- ADPP**
- Journal writing prompt for PlayFest Participation**
- Self-reflection paper that is part of final exam**