



SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS

Directing for Theatre I TPP3310C-0001 Directing for Theatre I Tpp3310C-0002

Class Location 001: PACT0115

T/TH: 11am–12:50 pm

Class Location 002: AHA 0101

T/TH: 2:30 pm–4:20 pm

Instructor: Cynthia White

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Cynthiaw@orlandoshakes.org

CW Office PAC T218

CW Office Hours: T/TH: 9:30–10:30 am
or By Appointment

TA:

TA office hours: By Appointment

Course Syllabus

COURSE OVERVIEW

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, physical and psychological action, rehearsal, staging techniques, 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 directors and contemporary/classic writers, their techniques and genres in addition to theatrical literature of historical significance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

General Goals

- A practical and hands-on understanding of the role of director in contemporary theatre
- The vocabulary to communicate with other theatre practitioners such as designers, stage managers, and actors
- An understanding of the collaborative art form of directing

Specific goals:

- Introduce the student to the basic tools needed to analyze a play script.
- Introduce the student to the basic tools needed for directing scenes.
- 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.

REQUIREMENTS

Text and Materials

- *Directing Plays, Directing People: A Collaborative Art* by Mary B. Robinson
- *Tips: Ideas for Directors* by Jon Jory
- Various online theatre reviews and handouts as assigned
- Research on writers and directors as assigned
- A notebook dedicated to taking notes on lectures and scenes in class. You will occasionally be writing short responses to scenes in class in this notebook.

POLICIES

Attendance is mandatory and will be strictly monitored.

- Perfect attendance is assumed.
- For any absence, excused or unexcused, it is the responsibility of the student to get notes related to material covered in that class and to work with the instructor and TA to make up any missed assignments.
- A third unexcused absence will result in your final semester grade dropping a full letter grade.
- Four unexcused absences will result in your dismissal from the class.
- Lateness is disrespectful. It is not tolerated in the professional world or in this class.
 - 3 lates = 1 unexcused absence
- If you are unavoidably detained, enter quietly and offer the class an apology at your first opportunity. **Talk with the instructor at the end of class if you wish to be credited with a tardy rather than an absence.**
- NEVER enter during a presentation; wait until it's completed.
- Guests will not be permitted in class (without prior consent of the instructor and the class.)
- The following will be counted as excused absences with no penalty:
 - Authorized UCF functions, including participation in sporting events, academic functions, scholarly conferences, etc.
 - Illness that is documented by doctor's note or prescription.
 - Death or serious illness in the immediate family.
 - The observance of religious holy days – you must submit in writing the dates and names of any religious holy days you must observe during the course of the

semester and hand it into the instructor no later than the end of the second week of class.

- ... ALL MUST BE DOCUMENTED within one week after returning to class. No late documentation will be accepted.
- All missed class work (excused or otherwise) must be made-up within two weeks of return. Finding out what is missed is the responsibility of the student NOT THE PROFESSOR.

Technology

The use of phones and other handheld electronic devices in class is forbidden unless requested by the professor.

- Any interruption caused by your cell phone, or other non-approved electronic device, will result in your removal from that day's activities and a forfeiture of all points associated with that day. Your phone needs to be off and put away at the beginning of class and not used or checked until the end of the class period.
- Notes need to be taken on paper *not on your device*. I repeat, DO NOT TAKE NOTES ON YOUR PHONE. ALSO DO NOT USE YOUR PHONE FOR READING YOUR SCRIPT IN CLASS.
- If you have questions, please ASK THE PROFESSOR!
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Academic Integrity

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow:

- University's Rules of Conduct (<http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/>)
- The Golden Rule (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>).
- **Cheating of any kind will result in the suggestion of failure for the semester**
- Make sure you understand your professor's guidelines about working with other students on assignments, receiving assistance from other students on assignments, citing sources, and using notes or exams from previous classes. If in doubt – ASK YOUR PROFESSOR!

University-Wide Academic Participation Verification

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity, Financial Aids Requirement Quiz, by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 25 at 5PM. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Disability Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to

discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Ferrell Commons 185, phone (407) 823- 2371, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Syllabus

- This syllabus may be modified by the course instructor.
- Notice of such changes will be made by announcement in class, on the webcourses site, or by email notice.
- Any handouts provided to the student with guidelines for written or performance projects are to be considered part of the syllabus. In addition, verbal or written changes to the syllabus as announced during class, a lesson or via electronic means, are the responsibility of the student.

GRADING CRITERIA

Your final grade will be based on the accumulation of points for the following areas:

- Practical Directing Assignments and Director Concept Packets (60%)
- 2 Production and Research Papers (20%)
- Short papers on class texts, Midterm, and Final (including a self-reflection paper) (10%)
- In-Class Participation (10%)
 - Willingness and consistency when rehearsing with partners outside of class time
 - Professionalism, including attitude in general and toward criticism, and respect for fellow classmates
 - Leadership of class discussion for one segment of assigned reading with outline
- This class will observe the plus and minus grade system. Realize that C is considered to be a failing grade for a BFA student.

A = 100–94.0%

A- = 93.9–90.0%

B+ = 89.9–87.0%

B = 86.9–84.0%

B- = 83.9–80.0%

C+ = 79.9–77.0%

C = 76.9–74.0%

C- = 73.9–70.0%

D+ = 69.9–67.0%

D = 66.9–64.0%

D- = 63.9–60.0%

F = 59.9–0%

ASSIGNMENTS

- **Practical Directing Assignments and Director Concept Packets (60% of grade)**

Each student will be required to direct 2 projects to be presented in class. If time allows, you will present each scene twice: first in a working session with time for feedback from instructor and classmates, and then, a few classes later, in a final presentation. There will be specific requirements for each scene and since you will be casting these scenes from outside of your class, you may not have more than four actors *without special permission from the instructor in the second project*. You also may not direct a musical scene for the first project; you will need special permission to direct a musical scene for the second project.

Handouts detailing this assignment will follow shortly.

- **2 Production and Research Papers (20% of grade)**

Each student is required to see two UCF or OST productions during the fall semester and to write “Analysis of Direction” Papers on the direction of these two productions. Handouts detailing this assignment will follow shortly.

- **Short papers on class texts, Midterm, and Final (including a self-reflection paper) (10%)**

Directing is a process that requires you to observe carefully, to analyze, and to coach with sensitivity. It is a process that requires you to consider the skills that you have developed as actors, designers, stage managers, and dramaturgs, etc., and to apply those skills in a new situation or in a familiar situation where you are playing a new role. These short papers required occasionally throughout the semester will ask you to consider and apply the material in the course texts as well as asking you to consider and apply what you learn from your own rehearsals during the semester. Handouts with specific assignments will follow.

- **In-Class Participation (10%)**

With a classmate, you will lead a class discussion for one segment of the assigned reading. For this discussion you will also turn in an outline that the two of you create together.

This part of your grade will also evaluate

- Your willingness and consistency when rehearsing with partners outside of class time
- Your professionalism, including attitude in general and toward criticism, and your respect for fellow classmates and their work

- **Extra-Credit Participation in PlayFest 2017 at Orlando Shakes**

PlayFest 2017 at Orlando Shakes takes place over two consecutive weeks this year:

Monday, October 23–Sunday October 29

Monday, October 30–Sunday, November 5

There will be four plays given public readings each week. You may receive extra credit for directing class if you volunteer to participate in PlayFest as an assistant director, a stage-directions reader, or an actor (you need to audition for this). This is a great opportunity to watch a professional stage director, playwright, and actors work together to develop a new play. You will be able to voice opinions and participate more or less, depending upon the particular play and the dynamics of that particular rehearsal process. You will be required to be at 3–4 rehearsals and the public reading and to write a short reflective paper on the process.

Auditions for PlayFest 2017 are scheduled for Sunday–Tuesday, September 10–12, 5-10 pm. Sitting in on these auditions and assisting with casting the various readings is another option for extra-credit participation.