

DIRECTING I - THTR 350
PAHB 102
Spring 2016
Tues. & Thurs. 2:30 – 4:30

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DIRECTING I

Course Summary

This course is designed to provide students with a systematic approach to the process of play production and directing. While our study will investigate various methods of script analysis and directing techniques, we will take a phenomenological approach to the process that will enable a beginning director to undertake the challenges and responsibilities of production direction—from conception to completion, rooted in the given circumstances of the play being produced.

Students will undertake processes for the various stages of play production and directing including: play selection, analysis, blocking, composition and picturization, auditions & casting, rehearsals, actor coaching, and production design and realization.

Though theatre is a collaborative art form, the majority of a director's work is done alone, analyzing and understanding the script's action and structure, in preparation for the moments when they must communicate their ideas to the actors, designers, and ultimately their audiences. Toward this end, we will seek to develop the tools that will assist the director in presenting their artistic concepts to the other physical and visual artists involved in production. Plan on doing and re-doing a good deal of thinking and writing during the course.

“Each piece of the puzzle, both when found and when put in place, changes and redefines the shape of the whole.”

Our goals for the course are:

1. to establish a demonstrable understanding of the intellectual and physical aspects of the Director's task;
2. to establish a process for enabling the essential action of a play script to be realized through analysis and production;
3. to establish a demonstrable routine for the continued practice of directing techniques toward mastery.

Course Requirements

1. Successful completion of all performance deadlines, all readings and assignments. As additional assignments will be given out daily in class, and as syllabus time-lines naturally adjust themselves during the course, you are responsible to keep account of and in time with both the syllabus and daily class assignments. A good director anticipates their deadlines. Late work is NOT acceptable. If you are not turning in work - you will fail the course.
2. Along with all assigned readings in your texts, you are also required to read each play being produced in class. All directors are required to provide two copies of their chosen script to the class, in order to accommodate timely reading.
3. Quizzes based on the texts, and assigned plays. (15%)
4. All students must be prepared to show their work and ready to discuss and/or respond to the ideas and plays presented in class on a daily basis. Those students ready to participate and engage in class discussions, ready to take risks, show their work, or otherwise attempt to demonstrate conceptual

directorial ideas will, simply stated, be the ones getting the opportunities to work. Unprepared students and students who are not actively engaging in the course will be asked to withdraw from the class. (1, 2, & 4 = 15%)

5. A completed Prompt Script containing the following:

Hodge Analysis	Ground Plan
Root Action Analysis	Pre-blocking Notation
Character Spines/Spine of Play	Communication with Designers
Units of Action/Titles	Set Design/Costume Design
Character Objectives	Summary Essay

The more organized you are the easier your work will be. (30%)

4. A Rehearsal/Idea Journal marking your travel, what you intended– what you got, your discoveries, your losses, etc. These are to be written in daily- as you think of your play, as well as, possibly before but definitely after, each rehearsal. Rehearsal and personal directing issues recorded in your journals will become material discussed in class weekly. (15%)

5. Preparation of a 5 - 7 minute, 3 - 5 character scene from a **full-length contemporary realistic play**. Some of the scenes will be seen during the class as rehearsals-in-progress and presented as the final at the end of the course. (25%)

6. Attendance policy- Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend all classes. If you miss classes, you will fail this course. After 2 absences (official or un-excused), your final grade (based upon the average of the whole of your work) will be lowered one full letter grade. For each subsequent absence your grade will be lowered another full letter grade. Students missing 5 classes will automatically receive a failure for the course. Absences on the day of your presentations will count as double. Three late class arrivals will equal one absence. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes from fellow students.

7. Due to the performance laboratory nature of the class, evening auditions and final performances will be scheduled. You are required to attend.

Texts

Hodge, Francis: Play Directing: Analysis, Communication, and Style (useable addition) Prentice Hall
Sophocles: Antigone
All scripts performed in class

Grading Policy

1. Preparation, Participation, Class work, Effort, and Commitment 10%
2. Quizzes 10%
3. Mid-Term 20%
4. Prompt Book (Completed) 25%
5. Rehearsal Journals 15%
6. Scene Work 20%
(Remember, I well understand that this is your first directing process and that even if it was your 100th production process, you may not be successful. Therefore, be advised that hard work, commitment, participation, and growth figure into this percentage.)

7. Attendance Policy- As it effect your final average

Grading scale:

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 65-70 F = 0-64

- A = Exceptional ability. Always thoroughly prepared. Extremely focused. Shows substantial evidence of required outside practice and discipline. Excellent written assignments. Always works hard.
- B = Above average to average ability. Prepares for class and assignments - at times thoroughly. Shows evidence of required outside practice discipline. Above average written assignments. Works hard.
- C = Average ability. Preparation average or inconsistent. Inconsistent evidence of required outside practice and discipline. Lacks consistent focus. Average written assignments. Average work.
- D = Average to below average ability. Preparation inconsistent to poor. Little to no evidence of required outside practice or discipline. Doesn't work very hard. Turns in some work.

Additional Course & Student Information

The "Actual" use of any alcoholic beverages, drugs or drug paraphernalia, or nudity, is forbidden. Props, for the portrayal of such activities, if necessary, will be suggested with a similar substitute. The smoking of tobacco products in class, if necessary, is permitted only during an actual scene.

Students are allowed to bring a bottle of water to every class; no other food or drink is permitted.

Cell Phones / Electronics – Cell phone use is not permitted in the classroom or during any class activity. Phones and other electronic devices are to be turned completely off (not just silenced) the moment you enter the studio and must remain off during the class period. Likewise, text messaging is prohibited in the classroom or during any class activity. Students utilizing the phone or messaging during class will be asked to leave the classroom and will receive an absence for the day. Messaging during an exam will be considered an act of academic dishonesty. Computers and iPads can be used in class for the purpose of note taking and research. Students misusing their computers (i.e. being on-line, or on social media) will lose their computer privileges for the duration of the course.

Special Needs – Students who experience stress or other difficulties during exams may arrange to have special examinations through the office of Student Support Services. Students needing special accommodations in order to accommodate specific testing / learning needs should contact Student Support Services located in Sherman Hall (Academic IV Building: B-Wing), Room 345 or online at www.umbc.edu/sss or over the wires at (410) 455-3250. Students utilizing Students Support services are responsible to inform the faculty member at least one week in advance of each test so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

Students who experience stress or other difficulties and find themselves in need of talking with someone regarding personal issues, trouble adjusting to the challenges of college life, anxiety, depression, or concerns about course work, social life, or the everyday pressures of being a college student are encouraged to contact University Counseling Services located in the Student Development & Success Center or online at www.umbc.edu/counseling or over the wires at (410) 455-2472.

Academic Honesty – Students are expected to abide by all policies of conduct as specified within University policy.

UMBC Honor Code statement:

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include suspension or dismissal. To read the full policy on academic integrity, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC directory.

Directing I – Course Timeline

January				
1	T 26	Course Outline, Syllabus	Read Plays- Get Ideas	Read: Hodge Chpt. 1-3, & 6
2	R 28	Director's Vision Field Trip		
February				
3	T 2	Director's Vision Review Given Circumstances Play Selection Ideas		Read: Little Red Riding Hood
4	R 4	Given Circumstances Script Discussions Quiz/Chpt. 1 - 3	Play Selection Ideas Due	Read: Antigone
5	T 9	Structural Analysis Red Riding Hood Script Discussions		Antigone Actions
6	R 11	Structural Analysis Antigone Actions	Play Selection Ideas Set	
7	T 16	Dramatic Structure Action Analysis/Spines Terms & Definitions	Script Copies Due	Antigone R. A. Analysis
8	R 18	Action Analysis/Spines Antigone Root Action	Antigone Spines & R. A. Statements Due	Read: Hodge Chpt. 4 & 5 ***Read All Plays***
9	T 23	Action Analysis Antigone Spines / R.A. Wrap-up Quiz/Chpt. 4 & 5		Begin Hodge Analysis Unit/Beat Worksheets
10	R 25	Units of Action Beats & Objectives Hodge Character	***Read All Plays***	1 st R. A. Analysis/Spines
March				
11	T 1	Units of Action/Beats Audition Forms & Stg Mngr.	***Read All Plays***	1 st R. A. Analysis/Spines Work on Your Play
12	R 3	1 st Analyses Due/Discussed Completed Spines Post Audition Notices	1st R.A. Analysis Due ***All Plays Read***	Character Spines Work on Hodge Analysis
13	T 8	1 st Analysis Due/Discussed Completed Spines Due	Choose Scenes	Work on Hodge Analysis Work on Units of Action
14	R 10	Discuss Auditions 1 st Analysis Discussed Mid-Term Assignment	Audition Forms Brought In	Work on Analysis Mid-Term Assignment
9 / 10 Auditions To be Determined			7:00 - 9:00 pm ?	

	T 15	No Class – Spring Break	Work on Analysis	
	R 17	No Class – Spring Break		
15	T 22	Discuss Casting Post Cast List & Catch-up Mid-Term Exam Due		Contact Sheet & Rehearsal Schedules
16	R 24	Discuss Read-Throughs Rehearsal Schedules & Catch-up		Read: Hodge 9 & 10
17	T 29	Finding Environment of Play Quiz/Chpt. 9 & 10 Ground Plan/ Staging	Work on Prompt Book Units/ Titles/ Objectives	Ground Plans Rehearsal Journals
18	R 31	Ground Plans/Staging Discussed/ Worked Mid-Terms Returned/ Discussed	Rehearsal Schedules & Contact Sheets Due	
		April		
19	T 5	Ground Plans/Staging Discussed/ Worked ** Conversation w/Designers		Read: Hodge 12 - 14 Read and Know: Chpt. 7 (Blocking)
20	R 7	Composition, Blocking, & Picturization Quiz/Chpt. 12 - 14 ** Conversation w/Designers		Actors' Class Excuse Notes
21	T 12	Composition, Blocking, & Picturization Blocking Notation	Unit Titles & Objectives Due	
22	R 14	Prompt Book Discussions Blocking Notation		Read: Hodge Chpt. 15
23	T 19	Open/Catch-up	Work on Blocking Notation	Work on Prompt Books
24	R 21	Scenes in Class 1st Presentation of Scenes _____ 1st Presentation of Scenes _____	Nyalls in Rehearsals	Work on Designer Notes _____ _____
25	T 26	Scenes in Class 1st Presentation of Scenes _____ 1st Presentation of Scenes _____		Work on Designs _____ _____
26	R 28	Scenes in Class 1st Presentation of Scenes _____ 1st Presentation of Scenes _____		_____ _____
		May		
27	T 3	Questions/Catch-up/Journals Communication with Designers	2nd Analysis Completed	Rehearsal Time/ Work on Promptbooks

28 R 5 Questions/Catch-up/Journals **Design Statements &
Set & Costume Designs Completed**

M 9 Tech & Rehearsal in Black Box 6:00pm – 11:00pm

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

T 10 Tech & Rehearsal in Black Box 6:00pm – 11:00pm

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

29 T 10 Questions/Catch-up/Journals **Work on Summary Statements Finish Prompt Book**

30 W 11 **Study Day** **Presentations of Final Scenes**

R 12 1:00pm – 3:00pm Final Exam Prompt Books Due