

**THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS**

DIRECTING STUDIO

-Modus Operandi-

Part A. The Foundation:

I. Goals:

It is the design of the Directing Studio to provide all theatre students with an interest in directing, the physical facilities (a theatre space) and creative support (an advisor), for the mounting of a scripted directed project. Here in the studio setting, students will have the opportunity to hone their craft working on the complexities of directing. From the processes of script analysis to the physicalization of the script in performance, the student will be given the opportunity to meet the challenges that face a director in her/his process of trying to create a living breathing art form.

II. Focus:

The focus of the Directing Studio will be placed on the work of the director- applying theory (analysis) to performance, blocking and physicalization, actor/director communication, the taking of risks, (the trials and the failures that lead to success), and the final communication of the theatre piece as a whole to the audience.

III. Operating Principles and Conventions:

1. Since the focus of the studio is on the directing and the coherent physicalization of the dramatic action contained within a script, we hereby establish as a **Convention of the Studio**, that rehearsal and performance props be kept minimal, utilizing only “essential” props required to undertake or complete the dramatic action. [Couches constructed of rehearsal blocks keep the audience (along with the artists) focused on the acting and provide the director and actor opportunities to strengthen their control of craft.]

2. Again to ensure this focus, we hereby establish as a **Convention of the Studio**, that all costumes will be kept minimal, utilizing only “essential” costume props required to undertake or complete the dramatic action. If nudity is to be portrayed, a body stocking (covering) is to be worn underneath all removable clothing, again keeping the focus of the piece on the acting and directing.

3. Therefore, in facilitating our objectives and conventions:

A. All Departmental shops will be off limits to all Studio Directors, Actors, and Productions. There will be no lending and no borrowing. Further, due to our limited space, our objectives and conventions, there will be no storage facilities available for props or costumes.

B. Nothing is to be left in either the rehearsal or performance space. Like all rehearsal space in New York City, this will be a ‘Carry-in, Carry-out’ Studio. The director is responsible for removing any and all rehearsal related props, papers, and furniture at the end of every single rehearsal and/or performance. Further, the rehearsal space is to be left in better condition than found. Floors are to be swept, chairs stacked, platforms returned to holding locations, all trash disposed of, and the rehearsal and/or performance space returned to its original operating diagram. (A diagram for each space follows.)

C. With above in mind, non-production (script required) use of Smoking, Food and Drink is absolutely forbidden in the theatre or the theatre’s rehearsal spaces, either during rehearsals or performances. Sealable bottled water containers will be the only exception to this rule and may be utilized in the theatre. In keeping with the department’s building restrictions, studio directors whose

productions contain cigarette smoking are asked to be extremely frugal in its use, if not removing it

Operating Principles and Conventions continued:

completely from their shows. Productions that utilize smoking must place warning signs outside the theatre informing the audience of its usage. Directors failing to follow this guideline, or to ensure its use, will be removed from the studio season. (You are responsible for your actors behavior.)

D. Due to insurance liability, all means of egress (entrance and exits) must be utilized from existing theatre doors. Absolutely no egress will be permitted, or tolerated from any windows, or non-code authorized entrances or exits. Further, due to past disrespect, the studio has lost the ability to utilize the design room as a means of egress.

4. In our desire to help you succeed, a student lighting technician will be provided to assist in securing light for the production and to help oversee the technical operation of the studio. Again in light of our objectives and our limited equipment, we establish as a **Convention of the Studio**, that all lighting will be kept minimal, utilizing only “essential” light cues required to undertake or complete the dramatic action. (Mainly being seeing the actors and the action.) Again in this end, in light of our objectives, we happily borrow from Mr. Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, and re-establish ‘Spoken Decor’ as a **Convention of the Studio**.

4 a.) The Student Laboratory Technician is a direct representative of the Directing Studio Advisor and the Technical Director. The Technician will work closely with both the director and Studio Advisor to facilitate the smooth, orderly, and ‘contracted’ operation of the studio season productions.

IV. Operating Guidelines, Prerequisites, Criteria:

1. The directing studio is only available to registered full-time students (12 credits undergrad, 9* credits graduate [6 with a Teaching Assistantship]) who have successfully completed Directing I (TA 330) (C+ or higher). Any student who wishes to utilize the studio must first complete both TA 330 and TA 391. Any student wishing to utilize the studio who has not completed the prerequisite but feels an exception to the requirement is in order, can and must utilize the Full Faculty Petition Clause, in order to gain permission to participate. (See Full Faculty Petition Clause below.)

2. All students wishing to utilize the studio, must complete a formal application. In order to be in primary consideration for a performance slot, applications for each semester are due no sooner than the 1st. Friday of the intended production semester and no later than the 2nd Friday of that same semester. (This will assure a fair and equitable distribution of spaces and slots.) Application forms can be found in the theatre office and filled out further in advance of the first deadline. However, no final decisions as to production slots or merits of production will be made until after the 2nd deadline of the specific production semester has passed.

2 a.) Applications received after the 2nd deadline are welcome and will be given full consideration based on merits of production, but will be subject to choice of remaining available production slots and spaces.

2 b.) Decisions about who utilizes the studio will fall under the following preliminary consideration format. However, and most importantly, do not to be discouraged as secondary considerations (listed under- 2 c.) can and may well take priority over the following format: (Class #'s refer to last completed level.)

* TA 692 students will be first in consideration and hold priority- depending on the strength of their application, analysis, and process.

* TA 530 students (Directing III), will be next in consideration and hold priority- depending on the strength of their application, analysis, and process.

* TA 430 and 330 students (Directing I & II) will be next in consideration and hold priority-
depending on the strength of their application, analysis, and process.

* TA 395 students (Senior Projects) - on next page -

Operating Guidelines, Prerequisites, Criteria continued:

* TA 395 students (Senior Projects) must receive academic advisor's approval of project before applying for a studio slot. Approved TA 395 students will be given primary consideration above 692 during the initial application timeline at the beginning of each semester. TA 395 students missing the Studio application deadline will be accommodated with priority, as per item 2a. above.

2 c.) Secondary considerations are based on the strength of your submissions. If your project and application process has greater merit, intrigue, thoroughness, commitment, and/or clarity, you will be given priority regardless of class ranking.

2 d.) In order to facilitate the smooth and equitable running of the directing studio, and to accommodate all interested directors, whenever possible, it will be the intention of the Studio to facilitate the production of two different shows or an evening of One-Acts during one evening/slot.

2 e.) In the extreme instance of a shortage of performance time slots, we will add performance opportunities on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings, so as to accommodate student directors.

2 f.) In the event of any un-preventable, unforeseen extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the director, which result in the cancellation of a production, **or**, in the event that due to scheduling complications an approved project cannot be provided with a feasible performance slot, - **Hold-Over Status** - will be assigned to the project and it will be given early priority in the production schedule during the following semester's studio. However, directors who are unable to meet their production schedules due to complications within their control, resulting in the cancellation of a production **will not** be granted Hold-Over Status and must reapply for production during the following semester's studio.

3. Since it is the Directing Studio's goal to make your directing experience a successful and positive one, and knowing that even the simplest of plays is incredibly difficult, the following guidelines will be observed: (Again, class #'s refer to last completed level.)

*TA 330 / 430/ 530 students (Directing I, II, & III) who have never mounted a one-act, can direct:
a One-Act play, up to but no more than one hour's time; or a scene or act from a full-length play, up to but no more than one hour's time.

*TA 430/530 students (Directing II & III) who have already successfully directed a one-act previously in the studio can direct: a One-Act play of any length.

*TA 530 students (Directing III) who have already successfully directed two One-act plays previously in the studio can direct a full length play of no more than 2 hours.

*TA 692 students (Independent projects) will be able to undertake projects appropriate to the level of their own experience and course standing (in the breakdown that precedes above) with the permission of their advisor.

*TA 395 students (Senior projects) will be able to undertake projects appropriate to the level of their own experience and course standing (in the breakdown that precedes above) with the permission of their advisor.

3 a.) Anyone who feels an exception to the requirement is in order, can and must utilize the Full Faculty Petition Clause, in order to gain permission to participate above the stated level. (See Full Faculty Petition Clause below.)

4. Any student **or** any studio artist, designer, teacher, or performance artist that wishes to produce in the Directing Studio Season who through extenuating circumstances, or credentials different than above, does not meet the above requirements, can submit the application form along with the 'Full Faculty Petition Clause' and be guaranteed consideration!

5. As the studio exists to strengthen all aspects of the student director; since our art does not exist in a void; and since it is also the goal of the department to build stronger actors, all directors approved for the studio season must hold open auditions for all roles in their show. Pre-casting is strictly

Operating Guidelines, Prerequisites, Criteria continued:

forbidden. Auditions and casting must be posted in accordance with building decorum only on appropriate bulletin boards. Further, and more pointedly, in order to help polish your casting skills, it is also recommended that all directors require monologues and cold readings from all actors during their auditions.

6. As rehearsals and performances will likely coincide and run simultaneously with Main-stage and other studio rehearsal and production times, all studio directors are seriously discouraged from casting any actor already in use on another show, be it main-stage or studio. Further, no Actor already committed to a production may audition for and/or be cast in any studio production without the written permission of the Faculty director, (or the studio director for that matter,) **and** the Directing Studio Advisor.

7. Due to the laboratory nature of the Directing studio, its objectives, focus, and operating budget (none), it is our understanding that no royalties will be paid. However, in order to secure and maintain this courtesy from the publishers and playwrights, no advertising of any kind for the production may exist outside of the building. No student will be allowed to “pay out of pocket” for royalty expenses in order to be able to reach a greater audience. Also in keeping with the Dean’s request for the maintenance and beautification of the building, all advertising must be placed on existing bulletin boards. No advertising of any production will be place on entrance or exits doors.

V. Specific Requirements

1. Once approved, Studio Directors must sign-up for practicum credit in order to undertake the Studio or reserve rehearsal space. Since this is a graded practicum project, it will follow the already established practicum guidelines. The studio is ONLY available for TA 591 credit. (There will be no Pass/Fail practicum option for the Studio, and as stated in IV 1. above, studio directors must have met the 391 pre-requisite.) In addition to procedures associated with practicum credit, in order to secure a studio space and receive practicum credit, the student is required to submit the following materials and adhere to the following time-line schedule:

1 a.) Along with the completed practicum form, in order ensure the proper maintenance of the theatre space refundable \$25.00 (cash)Room Use Deposit Fee will be required of all directors utilizing the studio. This fee is to be paid to the Studio Advisor and will be kept (non-interest bearing) in the Directing Studio Fund. This fee will be returned to the director at the end of the completed project, pending an - **Exit Room Review**. Directors failing to follow room use requirements either during the rehearsal process or upon completion of their production, will forfeit their deposit and/or be removed from the studio season. Directors meeting all the room use guidelines will receive their deposit refund upon the signed completion of the Exit Room Review.

1 b.) After approval of the proposal, practicum registration, and the Room Use Deposit Fee, the student is required to submit (to the Studio Advisor) a completed prompt book containing: a detailed analysis, character spines, a root action statement, pre-blocking notations, intentions/actions, beat/unit breakdowns, and a preliminary rehearsal schedule indicating a clear approach to the process- at the latest- two weeks before the first rehearsal or casting begins.

1 c.) Along with the prompt book, the student director is required to provide the Studio Advisor with a copy of the script to be utilized as a reference through-out the process.

1 d.) The student director will be required to meet with the Directing Studio Advisor for a minimum of three meetings. The first to be held upon the review of the completed prompt book. The second while in process sometime before performance. And the third, as a 'closure review', no later than two weeks after the production closes.

1 e.) The student director will also be required to write a process response at the end of the project, where-in she/he will objectively discuss their growth, learning, successes, failures, and other

Specific Requirements continued:

such insights into their production, along with what they see as their next stage of work or area of growth. This is to be turned in to the Directing Studio Advisor prior to the 'closure review' so it can be read and discussed over coffee, or latte.

1 f.) The student director, as a representative of the department and acting under the guidelines of the Directing Studio Advisor, is required to carry out all rehearsals, castings, meetings, and all other actions related to their production in a courteous and professional manner. You are required to be conscientious of people's time and maintain a great sense of humanity. Likewise, as with your actors, production and rehearsal spaces are to be left in better condition than they are found. As one of the most important aspects of directing is integrity (Right Action) you should get used to being responsible for **and** accommodating (problem solving) everything. If your name is on it, or even associated with it- its yours to deal properly with.

1 g.) Failure to meet any one or all of the above established requirements will result in the immediate cancellation of your studio production, the loss of your deposit, and the failure to gain your practicum credit- leaving the mark of 'E' on your transcript neatly placed across from the practicum slot.

1 h.) Students gaining credit under TA - 395, or 695, will be subject to specific guidelines determined in accordance with the nature of their project and their advisors. Some or all of the above requirements may apply to their work as well. Detailed specifics will be determined separately in a meeting between the student, the advisor, and the directing studio advisor, before approval of time slot is assured.

1 i.) Students who gain permission to produce through the Full Faculty Petition Clause, will be subject to specific guidelines determined in accordance with the nature of their project and their advisors. Some or all of the above requirements may apply to their work as well. Detailed specifics will be determined separately in a meeting between the student, the advisor, and the directing studio advisor, before approval of time slot is assured.

1 j.) Any and all changes, special requests, or unique addendum's to the modus operandi concerning specific rehearsal or performance guidelines, studio operation, or space requirements must go through the Studio Advisor. Request that go through the Studio Lab Technician MUST still be requested of and secured by the Studio Advisor. No requests following a different procedure will be honored, tolerated, or permitted by the Studio Advisor during the Studio season.

VI. Securing of and Maintaining Performance Space:

1. Once approved for production, with an agreed time-slot, and in accordance with above stated procedure, the Directing Studio Advisor will secure your performance space for a total of (3) three evenings- (Thurs., Fri., & Sat.) and (2) Dress Rehearsals- (Tues. & Wed.) These spaces will belong to the production no sooner than the end of the individual academic day for that performance space.

1 a.) Load-out is to immediately follow each and every rehearsal and/or performance. For theatre space care please refer to the above criteria.

VII. Securing of Rehearsal Space.

1.) The securing of any and all rehearsal space will be the responsibility of the directing student and will adhere to all previously established room request procedures already in place by the department. The directors are again reminded about the appropriate decorum in facilitating their needs.

1 a.) Rehearsal space may be secured only after approval of the project, submission of practicum credit, and room use deposit fee.

Securing of Rehearsal Space continued:

1 b.) Priority will be given to academic use. No rehearsal rooms may be secured until the end of the academic use period for that day.

1 c.) The Studio Advisor reserves the right to adjust and alter any pre-established rehearsal time slot in order to facilitate the integrity and smooth running of the studio season as a whole.

VIII. Choosing a Different Artistic/Academic Advisor

1. Students are able to utilize any Theatre Faculty Director as an Artistic Advisor during their studio production. All regular studio required materials, timelines, analyses, etc., must still be provided to the Directing Studio Advisor. After consideration these will be shared with the Artistic Advisor.

Failure to meet regular studio requirements through the Directing Studio Advisor, will result in the actions set forth above under section V - 1 f.

1 a.) Students utilizing an alternative Artistic Advisor must secure the advisor's signature at the bottom of the application form before submitting it to the Directing Studio Advisor for approval.

IX. Full Faculty Petition Clause:

1. If a student feels that her/his request, though failing to meet the above criteria, is still valid and applicable, they may petition the full faculty for an exception.

1 a.) To utilize this clause, the student must produce a document stating their desire to utilize the clause, along with their supported reasons for doing so, and the completed Studio Application form.

X. Failure to Meet or Breaking of Modus Operandi

1. Students failing to meet requirements or who knowingly disregard the operating principles and procedures for their own gain will be immediately terminated from the Studio Season. All rights and privileges will be and revoked and along with the actions set forth above under section V - 1 f., will risk the possible loss of future studio production opportunities.