

USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 305: Directing – 63024
TERM: SPRING 2018
DAY/TIME: Tuesday/Thursday, 8 – 9:50 am
LOCATION: PED 208
INSTRUCTOR: Christopher Shaw
OFFICE: JEF Building 2nd floor #211
OFFICE HOURS: By appointment
CONTACT: shawchri@usc.edu
(213) 821-5558 (o)
(323) 632-4894 (c - Text OK)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will actively examine the fundamental principles of directing for the stage. Topics covered in this course will include thorough theoretical script analysis, practical approaches to staging theatrical realism, directorial presentation skills, techniques for communicating with actors, rehearsal techniques, and the creation of the director's prompt book.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

A Sense of Direction by William Ball

Tips: Ideas for Directors by Jon Jory

Plays chosen TBD / Translation of "A Doll's House" TBD

Two 3-Ring Binders (½"-1") (purchased by the third class) and labeled divider tabs for binders equal to sections dictated in Director Prompt Book (per PDF document provided)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Conceive and direct a 1-2 minute scene based on a visual image selected by the student.
2. Direct a 3-5 minute scene from "*A Doll's House*" by Henrik Ibsen
3. Direct a 3-5 minute scene from a contemporary play TBD
4. Conduct an in-class rehearsal and do a final presentation for all scenes.
5. Conduct oral directorial presentation for scenes.
6. Conduct a minimum of two rehearsals per week outside of class time for all scenes.
7. Submit the following written documentation for each of the above mentioned scenes:
 - a) Director presentation material
- due after your presentation
 - b) Director prompt book, complete sections per PDF guidelines
- due the first class after your presentation.

8. Show readiness and fully engaged participation in all class discussions and text readings as well as complete all assigned readings.
9. Provide fully engaged participation for all exploratory and analytical work.
10. Each student must agree to act in your fellow director's scenes
11. Equal time must be given in each group to each scene / director project in outside rehearsals.

FINAL EXAMINATION

The final examination in this class will be the scene presentation and written documentation of your final scene. Based on time we may or may not do 3 scenes within the semester.

GRADES

Scene work in class rehearsal (2 graded at 10 points each) :	20 points
Scene work final presentations (3 graded at 10 points each) :	30 points
Director presentations (two graded at 7.5 points each):	15 points
Written prompt books, completed per guideline (two graded at 10 points each):	20 points
Class participation and collaboration:	15 points

GRADE BREAKDOWN

1. **SCENE WORK** For each directed scene assignment, the student is expected to perform well in each of four distinct categories:

- A. Follow directions of the assignment (in guidelines, in rubric and explained in class).
 - B. Lead a rehearsal that demonstrates skills being taught in class (in guidelines, in rubric and explained in class)
 - C. Demonstrate that the scene is well prepared, and exciting to watch, and in service of a clear and vivid story
 - D. Display a creative physical use of the space and the actors through staging and ground plan choices, guiding of performances, and creative and economical design choices
- Grading rubric for both in class rehearsals and final presentations will be made available to review.

2. **DIRECTOR PRESENTATION** Each directorial presentation must be no longer than 5 minutes and incorporate visual aids. Details will be discussed in class.
Grading rubric for director presentations will be made available to review

3. **WRITTEN WORK THAT ACCOMPANIES SCENE WORK** The student is expected to perform well in each of the following categories:

- A. Your prompt book must be neat, following the directions that are given, thoroughly documented, and show creative insights into text analysis and realization of directorial ideas on paper.
- B. Your written self-assessment must include detailed working objectives and a clear description of the extent to which you achieved them.

For more specific requirements, please see guidelines and grading rubric.

4. PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION GRADE BREAKDOWN GUIDELINES, EXPECTATIONS AND HINTS

I expect students who want to be in the classroom, and want to perform well. “Performing well” means that spelling and grammar are perfect, the assignment is well thought out, clearly understood and presented, and that you perform beyond the simple limits of the instructions. I also expect students to communicate if they have questions about instructions or vocabulary. As the course moves quickly, you may have to attend an office hour in order to get your questions answered. But ask them.

In general, if you do exactly as you are told, that is considered average and will earn the grade of “C”.

For scene work and written work, grades will be earned as follows:

“**A**”- Performance of the student has been at the highest level, showing sustained excellence in meeting all course requirements and exhibiting an unusual degree of intellectual and creative initiative.

“**B**”- Performance of the student has been at a high level, showing consistent and effective achievement in meeting course requirements.

“**C**”- Performance of the student has been at an adequate level, meeting the basic requirements of the course.

“**D**”- Performance of the student has been less than adequate, meeting only the minimum course requirements.

“**F**”- Performance of the student has been such that minimal course requirements have not been met.

When the GPA falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class have been excellent or good and toward the negative end of the scale for those with average or poor attendance and participation.

GRADING SCALE

A = 96-100 points

A- = 91-95 points

B+ = 88-90 points

B = 85-87 points

B- = 81-84 points

C+ = 78-80 points

C = 75-77 points

C- = 71-74 points

D+ = 68-70 points

D = 65-67 points

D- = 61-64 points

F = 60 or below

The final course grade is articulated as a Letter Grade. This grade is translated into a G.P.A using the following scale: **A = 4; A- = 3.7; B+ = 3.3; B = 3; B- = 2.7; C+ = 2.3; C = 2; C- = 1.7; D = 1; F = 0**. When the average falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class has been good, but will be weighted toward the negative end of the scale for those with poor attendance and participation.

ATTENDANCE:

Absences/Tardiness:

Learning in class depends on the layering of intellectual and emotional discovery resulting from the consistent active exploration of **100%** of the Ensemble **No absences or tardies are allowed.** **Cumulative active class participation points will be lost.** *Attendance is weighted at no more than 15% as per University Guidelines*

Note: *If a deadline is missed because of a classmate/ project partner's unavailability, the available partner/s will not be penalized. **If problems arise, a discussion with the professor with all involved must be arranged before the day of the scheduled scene or everyone will be held equally accountable.***

All written work turned in will contain the following or will not be accepted:

1. Your name
2. Course name, number, and section
3. Assignment label
4. Date
5. Must be stapled or in binder in orderly fashion

DUE DATES All assigned due dates must be met on time with proper preparation. No late papers will be accepted. Students absent from presentation date without an official excused absence will receive a 0 for that portion of assignment. All directors are required to have a back up exercise to work on with the actors (s) if an actor is missing from in-class rehearsal portion of project.

RESPECTING THE COURSE AND SPACE Everything you do in class is reflected in your grade, especially your participation and collaboration with your colleagues. Please respect the space, your colleagues, and the working environment. This includes arriving early, being proactive and prepared, being helpful to others in class when they ask for it, and returning the room to its "status quo" condition at the end of class.

MISSED WORK DUE TO EXCUSED ABSENCE Because of the compacted schedule, you cannot make up a presentation, in-class rehearsal, or final scene rehearsal. Exceptions will not be made to this policy. Check your calendars to ensure that important dates in this class do not fall on important dates for you during the semester. Due to the nature of this workshop class, in-class participation (and any collaborative exercises done in class) cannot be made up. Homework assigned on the day of your absence can be obtained from one of your colleagues. I do not accept late work for any unexcused absence.

REHEARSAL ETIQUETTE Being absent for an in-class or scheduled out of class rehearsal is not acceptable. Be early and ready to work for all rehearsals. Be responsible for creating a good

working environment. Be respectful of others. Set up agreed rehearsal times and honor them. Any physical demands must be simulated and properly discussed and rehearsed so as not to endanger yourself, your actors or scene partners, or classmates. This includes the use of or throwing of properties. No smoking, eating, drinking or littering in class. Clean up room after your work: it must be in order for classes. Weapons of any sort (real knives, guns etc...) are not to be used in scene work, ever. If your scene requires a weapon of any sort, request a fake "prop" one from me for the in class rehearsal. These policies apply to all in-class exercises and outside rehearsals.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE The material covered may adjust to accommodate change in student numbers, or a necessity in student learning. This is due to the large amount of in-class work and scheduling of rehearsals and presentations. Please be flexible, if needed.

ATTIRE Wear comfortable clothing that is easy to move in. No flip flops are allowed in class. Wear appropriate clothes for presentation and performance days.

SAFETY Use common sense when rehearsing and when in class. You are responsible for your own safety and the safety of your classmates and scene partners. Be sensible.

PHONES Please turn off phones and electronic equipment before entering class. Please be respectful of your professor and colleagues. Individuals who are repeat offenders will be asked to leave class.

FINAL DAY OF CLASS:
Thursday April 26th

FINAL EXAM:

Wednesday, May 9th, 8am-10am , 2018

The Final is dictated by the creative process of the class so specifics will be discussed later in the semester.

Additional Policies

- *Except for water, no food or drinks are allowed in class at any time.*
- *Please use restroom before class and during break, do not interrupt the flow of class with leaving studio unless for an emergency at which point you must inform instructor by raising hand and entire class will take the one 2 minute break at that time*
- *There is absolutely no technology allowed in the classroom. No cellphones, no computers. No texting , no social media – TURN THEM OFF AND PUT THEM AWAY Anyone caught using cellphone in class will be held responsible for destroying the working atmosphere in the classroom and graded accordingly Exceptions will be for director presentations and effects needed for scene presentations*
- *All students must help with the set up and strike of every class*
- *Students must place all extraneous belongings, (backpacks, sweaters, jackets, skateboards, laptops, cell phones, etc.) in the designated corner of the classroom at the start of class*
- *Students must be in proper rehearsal clothes (whatever they may be and understand that they change throughout the semester) at the start of class. NO FLIP FLOPS UNLESS THE SCENE OR CLASS TAKES PLACE AT THE BEACH!*

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP:

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>. Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options/ resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.