

## **THTR 333 Stage Management I**

**Units:**

**Fall 2018—Monday—Time: 10:00AM – 12:30PM**

**Location: PED 114E**

**Instructor: Scott Faris**

**Office: MCC 101D**

**Office Hours: by appointment**

**Contact Info:**

**Office: (213) 740-9449**

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### **Course Description**

Students will learn the basic skills of stage management. We will analyze the stage manager's responsibilities to each element of the production, department by department. Script analysis, the prompt book, schedules, props lists, reading a ground plan, costume plots, electrics, audio, blocking notation, cueing technique, computer skills, maintaining rehearsal scripts, rehearsal and performance reports, etc., will be included.

### **Learning Objectives**

Students will achieve familiarity and facility with the various forms of stage managerial paperwork and will begin through this introductory course to develop a technique of stage management that stresses planning and adaptability to changing circumstances for effective leadership. Specific learning objectives include the ability to manage schedules, communication, and organization of space, people, materials and time needed to realize a theatrical production. They will create an abbreviated but working production prompt book, which accurately records all production details from script analysis, running a production meeting, tracking of props, scenery, costumes and placement of design cues.

**Prerequisite(s): THTR 131A**

**Co-Requisite (s):**

**Concurrent Enrollment:**

**Recommended Preparation: THTR 131A**

### **Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required:**

Have own laptop plus familiarity with Word, Excel and any other organizational software.

## Required Readings and Supplementary Materials:

- The textbook will be “The Back Stage Guide to Stage Management”, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, by Thomas A. Kelly

You are expected to bring your textbook with you to class. You are required to select at least one play script on which your promptbook will be based. The play must be challenging for a stage manager – look for moderate to large casts, with costume changes, multiple scenes in multiple locations, many props, and ample opportunities for lighting and sound cues. You may choose the SDA play you’ve been assigned.

## Description and Assessment of Assignments

Attendance and Class Participation are very important. Asking questions and contributing to the conversation will result in an overall higher grade. All homework should be clean, clear, precise and well organized. All paperwork must be meticulously prepared on a computer – unless otherwise specified. **All paperwork must be original for this class.**

**FOR SDA GRADING CRITERIA:** Each assignment must be turned in on time and include the title of the document, the date, the version number and the student’s name. All graphs must be complete, with appropriate borders. The student must check all spelling and syntax in every document. Points will be deducted for each instance the above criteria are not met. Instructor will describe all other requirements for paperwork in class, applicable.

## Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Class Participation		15
Homework		20
Midterm Examination		15
Final Examination		25
Prompt Book		25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>

## Grading Scale (Example)

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

## Assignment Submission Policy

Late homework will not be accepted for credit unless advance arrangements have been made with instructor or unless exceptional circumstances occur. If pre-approved by instructor, you may email assignments to [scottfar@usc.edu](mailto:scottfar@usc.edu). All emailed assignments must be in PDF format. **All paperwork must be original for this class.**

## Class Participation

As punctuality is an essential component of good stage management, your prompt attendance at each class session is mandatory. If you must be late or absent, you are required to inform instructor prior to 9:30AM on the morning of the class. The telephone number and e-mail addresses for instructor are at the top of this syllabus. If you miss a class for whatever reason – you are responsible for the material covered and the homework assigned.

## Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown (subject to change)

**Week 1**  
**Aug 20**

**Introduction: Review class requirements**

**Review Syllabus & assignments**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

What is Stage Management:

- Background – yours!
- Career paths
- Discuss SDA auditions protocols:
  - Casting

**Textbook:**

- Back Stage Guide to Management, by Thomas A. Kelly's, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Back Stage Books

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

- Thomas Kelly – Chapter 1, “What Does a Stage Manager Do?” pp. 20-27
  - Bring questions for discussion next week

**Bring textbook to class on next week**

**Week 2**  
**Aug 27**

**SDA Auditions – review & discuss**

**Review reading/Discussion:**

Qualities of a Stage Manager

- List Qualities

What Does a Stage Manager Do?

- List duties you didn't expect
- Production Roles:
  - Creative
  - Production
- Hierarchy in professional theatre
- How to run a production meeting:
  - 45 Minutes — 5 minutes each department
    - scenic
    - sound
    - lights
    - props

- costumes
- TD/Elecs
- General

**Explanation of Prompt Book Assignment due Nov. 26**

Begin creating a production book from the play you choose.

Your prompt book must include the following:

- Production Analysis
- Contact sheet
- Schedule – (Calendar or Word doc)
- Cast list
- Character/scene breakdown
- Prop list including location of use
- Costume plot
- Sample of blocking notation

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

- T. Kelly – Chapter 2, “Preproduction” pp. 28-57

**Choose your play from SDA productions and read script**

**Week 3  
Sept 3**

**Labor Day – University Holiday**

**Week 4  
Sept 10**

**Review reading/Discussion:**

Preproduction:

- Script analysis
- Meeting the Director
- Meeting the Producer
- Staff/crew
- The Production Meeting

Getting ready for 1<sup>st</sup> day of rehearsal

- Meetings with designers
- Reading a ground plan.
- SM’s toolkit

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

- Chapter 4, "The First Rehearsal" pp. 64 – 89

**Review play choices**

- Start your prompt book
  - Do production analysis of your chosen play.

**NOTE: ALTHOUGH PROMPT BOOK IS NOT DUE UNTIL END NOVEMBER 26, THERE WILL BE WEEKLY CHECK-UPS THROUGHOUT SEMESTER ON YOUR PROGRESS.**

**Week 5  
Sept 17**

**Review reading/Discussion:**

"First Rehearsal"

- 1<sup>st</sup> day
- Welcome packet
- Create an agenda
- Setting up the room
- Taping the set
- Supplies

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

Tom Kelly: Chapter 5, "The Rehearsal Period" pp. 90-102

**Create** a welcome letter/1<sup>st</sup> day speech to present to class next week

**Week 6  
Sept 24**

**Review reading/Lecture:**

"The Rehearsal Period"

- Play v. Musical
- Blocking
- Rehearsal script
- Running script
- Conflicts by director
- Prioritizing;
  - Dealing with panicky phone calls

**"Talk to the actors" – Present 1<sup>st</sup> day speech**

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

- Continue Chapter 5, "Rehearsal Period" pp. 102-112
- Chapter 6, "Automation" pp. 113-122

Homework:

- Get ground plan for your play from the designer
- Create your contact sheet

**Week 7**  
**Oct 1**

**Share your Ground Plan & Contact Sheet**

**Review reading/Lecture:**

Rehearsals continued:

- Running rehearsals
- Fight calls
- Rehearsal reports
- Production Meetings
- Communication with team
- Reports
- Programs
- Discipline
- Visitors

**Assignments for next week:**

Discuss Midterm:

- Taping the floor

Review for mid-term:

- Review Chapter 4, pp. 67-74 “The Ground Plan” & “Taping the Floor”

**Homework**

- Bring in your Production Analysis:
- Create your Production Calendar

**Week 8**  
**Oct 8**

**Turn in Production Analysis**

**Midterm: Taping the set – location TBD**

**\*\*Bring a tape measure & scale ruler (if you have them)**

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

Read Tom Kelly: Chapter 7, “Load-in & Technical Rehearsals” pp. 123 - 140

**Week 9**  
**Oct 15**

**Review Midterm:**

Discuss your Production Analysis

**Review reading/Lecture:**

Rehearsals continue...

Preparing for Load-in & Technical rehearsals – part 1

- The Load-In – prep
- Daily schedule

- Scheduling Load-In
- Creating the callboard
- Assign dressing rooms
- Prep Cue sheets

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

Continue Chapter 7, “Load-In & Technical Rehearsals” pp. 141 – 174

**Week 10**  
**Oct 22**

**Review Contact Sheets & Calendar**

**Review reading/Discussion:**

Tech rehearsals:

- Develop your calling script (prompt book)
- Light cues
- Sound cues
- SFX
- Consumables
- Tech Schedule
- Calling position
- Cue lights location
- Comms assignments
- Distribute Cue sheets:
  - Deck
  - Fly
  - Wardrobe w/entrance & exits, quick-changes, etc.
  - Running order for cast

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

- Chapter 8, “Previews and Opening Night” pp, 150-156

**Homework:**

- Bring in Prop Plot for review

**Week 11**  
**Oct 29**

**Review Prop Plot**

**Review reading/Lecture:**

Dress rehearsal

Photo calls

FOH

SDA Box Office Protocols

Opening the house



**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

- Chapter 9, "Maintaining and Running a Show" pp.157-170

**Week 12**  
**Nov 5**

**Review reading/Lecture:**

Previews and Opening night

Maintaining & running a show

- Managing ASMs
- Show reports
- Eye on maintenance
- Timings
- Giving notes
- Calling rehearsals
- Note sessions

**Assignments for next week:**

Reading:

- Chapter 10, "Closing a Show and Touring" pp.171-178

**Find** a joke or humorous story to present to class next week.

**Continue work** on prompt book:

Bring blocking notation next week

**Week 13**  
**Nov 12**

**Review blocking notation**

Share humorous story or joke

**Review reading/Lecture:**

Closing a show and Touring

- Touring
- Load-out
- Focusing lights
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**Calling the show – prep**

**Week 14**  
**Nov 19**

**Lecture:**

Calling the show

**Final chance to review Prompt Book materials.**

Week 15

Nov 26          PROMPT BOOKS DUE!

Discussion: Review of all materials for final

Dec 10          8:00AM          FINAL EXAM

### Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems:

#### 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 *Campus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/student/scampus/part-b>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *Campus* and University policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, and harassment are prohibited by the university. You are encouraged to report all incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX Office* <http://equity.usc.edu> and/or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://dps.usc.edu>. This is important for the health and safety of the whole USC community. Faculty and staff must report any information regarding an incident to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide outreach and information to the affected party. The sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> fully describes reporting options. Relationship and Sexual Violence Services <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp> provides 24/7 confidential support.

#### 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://ali.usc.edu>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://dsp.usc.edu> 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.