MUS 525.01: Musical Direction for the Theater

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MUS 525 MUSICAL DIRECTION FOR THE THEATER  Dr. David Cody, Instructor  
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SPRING SEMESTER 2006  
COURSE SYLLABUS  

Description:  An examination of the role of musical director for the theater, focused on musicals, but also including operetta and opera.  

Objectives:  This course will examine the history and philosophy of musical direction, its various aspects, and the musical director’s role in the creative process. We will also examine the evolution of this role, and how it is adapted for different performance situations. The ultimate objective of this course is to prepare students for musical directing positions as part of their degree internships and for careers in musical theater.  

Activities:  This is a lecture course intended to facilitate a great deal of discussion. Materials such as books, articles, scores and recordings are on reserve in the Mansfield Library. Assignments will be given so that students may prepare for class discussions.  

Project/Paper:  
Select a musical or operetta to prepare for a theoretical amateur production. Along with the score, you will submit a paper for this project, following the guidelines on pp. 4-6 of this syllabus.  

Project/Presentation:  
We will examine the various forms of musical theater with examples from specific shows. Each student will select one of the forms of musical theater listed on pp. 2-3 of Novak’s Staging Musical Theater and prepare a 50 minute presentation. (This is not to be submitted as a written paper, but given as a live presentation in class)  

Academic Policy:  
University policy states: “All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321.”  

Grading:  50% Project/Paper  
30% Project/Presentation  
20% Final Examination  

General Course Schedule:  

Week 1: the musical director’s role - historical perspectives - the creative process and the artistic staff - musicals, operettas, and operas  

Week 2: selecting a show - research - the musical director’s checklist - availability and rentals  

Week 3: auditions - production meetings - rehearsals - schedules - time-tables - hiring the orchestra
Week 4: The score - musicals vs. operas: styles and traditions - score marking - recitative - underscoring - vamps

Week 5: Sound (We will meet in the Montana Theater with the Sound Design class) and work with microphones.

Week 6: The score (continued) - score analysis for musicals - the orchestra

Week 7: TBA

Week 8: Student Presentations: Forms of Musical Theater

Week 9: Student Presentations: Forms of Musical Theater

Week 10: Presentations/Forms - continued

Remainder of the semester: Student Project Presentations

Final Examination: Friday, May 12 8:00 – 10:00am

Reserve List:
DVD 00734
Broadway: The American Musical

792.82 B513m
Berkson, Musical theater choreography: a practical method for preparing and staging dance in a musical show

782.14097471 B651e
Block, Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from Showboat to Sondheim

782.8 C886o
Craig, On singing onstage

782.8 E94c
Ewen, Complete book of the American musical theater

782.140973 F622m
Flynn, Musical! A grand tour

782.1409 G211m
Gänzl, The Musical

782.140973 K617m
Kislan, The musical: a look at the American musical theater

782.140973 K676a
Knapp, The American Musical: And the formation of national identity

782.14145 L349s
Laster, So You’re the New Musical Director: An Introduction to Conducting a Broadway Musical

782.81 L936m
Lucha-Burns, Musical Notes

792.64 N935s
Novak, Staging Musical Theatre
782.14097471 N882
Norton, A chronology of American musical theater

792.6028 R666a
Robison, The actor sings: discovering a musical voice for the stage

782.81 T777o
Traubner, Operetta: A Theatrical History