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THTR 570.01: Graduate Stage Management

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Graduate Stage Management (73453): G THTR 570 Section 01
2 Credits, Fall Semester 2013, Mon., Wed. 9:10 – 10:00am, Fri. 2:10 – 3:00pm
PAR/TV 130 & various locations (dependent on schedule)
School of Theatre & Dance

Instructor: Jason McDaniel Email: jason.mcdaniel@umontana.edu Phone: 243-2874
Office: PARTV 204 (thru the MT Theatre lobby stairs)
Office Hours: M & W 10:10am – 11:10am

Course Description

Study of the duties stage manager; as well as a detailed look at their role in the collaboration process.

Course Objectives

- To introduce the student to the fundamental skills required of a stage manager from pre-planning through the end of the final performance; with an emphasis on current standards, practices, and technologies.
- How to (including but not limited to): analyze scripts, create paperwork, make decisions, run meetings and rehearsals, and successfully communicate with people.
- At the end of this course, students should feel confident in their skills of disseminating information, time management, communication, supervising, and using critical thinking to adapt to various production scenarios.
- Focus on the role of the Stage Manager in the collaboration process.

Attendance and Promptness

The role of the Stage Manager is steeped in time management and adhering to deadlines; the expectation is that the student will demonstrate those skills to the fullest. Class meets twice a week for 50 minutes, so your active attendance is required for the duration of every class. Active attendance is defined by being present and engaged, participating in discussions, and asking questions. One private warning will be given regarding a lack of active attendance.

Class Format

This class will be a combination of lectures, discussions, interaction with guest practitioners, hands-on exercises, demonstrations, and projects. Every class session will require outside prep work.

Required Text & Materials

The Stage Manager's Tool Kit by Laurie Kinckman, 2013. (ISBN 978-0415663199)

Working Together in Theatre by Robert Cohen, 2010. (ISBN: 978-0-230-23982-1)

Suggested Reading

The Back Stage Guide to Stage Management by Thomas A. Kelly

Stage Management by Lawrence Stern

The Art and Craft of Stage Management by Doris Schneider

Grading Policy

Discussions & Participation – 20%

Cohort Discussion/Collaboration – 10%

Quizzes & Homework – 20%

In-Class Projects – 20%

Outside-Class Projects – 15%

Final – 15%

Special Notes

The homework and projects will require you to complete some assignments in word-processing and spreadsheet software. If you are not yet comfortable with the basics of this software, including page setup and formatting, please take the time to familiarize yourself immediately.

Show Attendance

You are required to see all three of the School of Theatre & Dance's mainstage theatrical productions this semester, as well as *Dance Up Close*. **Please attend these productions during their first weeks of performance** so we can all have a discussion of the productions the following week in class. (*DUC* will be discussed at the final.) Other shows you might want to see are available MRT productions as well as others in the community.

Schedule/Texts

In the schedule, any reading assignments listed as homework pertain to *The Stage Manager's Tool Kit*. Friday meetings will focus on *Working Together in Theatre* on a schedule determined by the group.

Practical Assignment—Meeting & Rehearsal Attendance

We are using *Angels in America* as the focus of this class; you are required to attend the following: one Production Meeting (Fridays 9-10am), one 1hr. segment of a Blocking Rehearsal, and one 1hr. segment of a Technical Rehearsal. There will be a practical exercise to correspond with each of the events. The sign-up schedules and guidelines for these will be issued **Sep 11th**.

D/T Talkbacks and A/D Responses (Reminder)

As per School of Theatre & Dance policy, BFA/MFA theatre majors are required to attend the sessions in their area of emphasis following each of the mainstage shows. The D/T-T is the Monday before the second week of performances. The A/D-R is the Monday after the show's closing. Attendance will be taken. (Both of these feedback sessions are open; your attendance is always encouraged.)

Project 1:

Compile a Stage Manager's Production Book for *Angels in America*, utilizing the skills and document templates from this class. A full set of guidelines will be issued **Sep 11th**. The project will be due **Dec 4th**. (There will be group and individual reviews of each of these elements throughout the semester; it is expected that you will revise your documents along the way.)

Final:

The final will be a test of the skills taught in this class. It will be a combination of practical exercises and short answer questions.

Note:

-MFA Directing Candidates (others as determined) are required to serve as SM or ASM for a production/practicum to be assigned by the Design/Technology Program. With this assignment, the student should sign up for THTR 572: Stage Management Practicum. The credit hours are as follows: SM theatre season production (3 cr.), ASM theatre season production or SM MRT/M production (2 cr.) - [if it is as part of this class (1 cr.)]. The course syllabus will outline the responsibilities and expectations of the Practicum.

-Any other students interested in gaining more practical experience should contact the instructor to request an assignment; production assignments are based on available slots and a student's aptitude.

Class/School Policies

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php

Due to safety considerations, at **no** point during a student's time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student **without my consent**. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area Will negatively affect a student's grade.

There is an inherent risk involved in many Theatre and Dance classes as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class, shop time, or rehearsal with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in class/shop/rehearsal/performance do so at their own risk. Students with disabilities or special needs should see the instructor.

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://life.umt.edu/dss/>.

All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance *Handbook*. The *Handbook* is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/theatredance/about/handbook>.

Tentative Schedule

DATE/SPACE	ASSIGNMENT
Aug 26 th / MT	Introductions, review syllabus, and discuss: types of “theatrical” performing arts, the phases, hierarchy, and SM traits/duties HW: (Read pp 1-10)
Aug 28 th / MT	Individual departments and communication HW: (Read pp 11-26 and collect at least two examples of theatrical documents/forms; one that you like as-is and one that could use some help. Be prepared to discuss them.)
Aug 30 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Schedule-Planning for Discussions of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Sep 2 nd	LABOR DAY; NO CLASS
Sep 4 th / MT	Principles of document design, review document/form examples HW: (Read <i>Angels in America</i> (AA) and establish your preliminary document style for the show by creating an Excel workbook—Make the following pages (as individual sheets): Information Feed, Cover/Spine, and Title Page. Also create your Stage Manager’s Header/Border Guide.)
Sep 6 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Sep 9 th / MQT	Special Guest: KT Graham, Production Director—Smuin Ballet HW: (Read pp 26-35 thru “...Calendar Programs” and collect one theatrical calendar; it can be one that you like or one you think could use some help. Be prepared to discuss them. <i>THIS SHOULD NOT BE THE T&D PRODUCTION CALENDAR.</i>)
Sep 11 th / MT	Checklists, schedules, an intro to VirtualCallboard, review scheduling examples HW: (Read pp 35-49 thru “Distribution.” In your (AA) workbook, create two new sheets: a blank Production Analysis page and the Character/Scene Breakdown- <i>Fill in the characters’ names</i> . Make sure you use your Stage Manager’s Header/Border Guide and Information Feeds.) <i>Receive Meeting, Rehearsal, and Project 1 Guidelines</i>
Sep 13 th	Reading Day; NO CLASS
Sep 16 th / MT	Analyzing the production, review and work with your Production Analysis and the Character/Scene Breakdowns HW: (Read pp 49-55 and be prepared to discuss with our guest the Director’s relationship with the SM as well as the importance of props and their tracking throughout the process.)
Sep 18 th / MT	Special Guest: Jere Hodgins, T&D A/D Faculty and Director—Avenue Q HW: (Read pp 56-64. In your (AA) workbook, create one new sheet: an Audition Checklist- <i>Use the book’s example as a reference, but make it specific to this show and School</i> . As always, use Headers/Borders and Information Feeds.)
Sep 20 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>

Sep 23 rd / MQT	Auditions, callbacks, conflicts, Contact Sheets, review your Checklists HW: (Read Facilities Information and In your (AA) workbook, create your own General Space Checklist. Be prepared to tour the facility on Wednesday.)
Sep 25 th / MT	Space Tour MT Theatre/<i>Avenue Q</i>: Looking through the eyes of the Stage Manager HW: (Read pp 82-95 thru "...the Rehearsal Room." Be prepared to tape out the floor next class.)
Sep 27 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Sep 30 th / MQT	Preparing the Rehearsal Room and taping the floor HW: (Read pp 65-81, 95-100. In your (AA) workbook, create two new sheets: Table of Content for your Production "Prompt" Book and a Script Backing page. <i>Use the Groundplan provided; make sure you credit the Scenic Designer in your book.</i>)
Oct 2 nd / MT	The Prompt Book and blocking notation HW: (In your (AA) workbook, create two new sheets: a First Rehearsal Checklist, and a Blocking Key. Be prepared to discuss with our guest the Director's relationship with the SM as well as his blocking and rehearsal styles.)
Oct 4 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Oct 7 th / MT	Special Guest: John DeBoer, T&D A/D Faculty and Director—<i>Angels in America</i> HW: (Read pp 101-113 thru "Meeting Minutes" and collect at least one example of any theatrical report. Be prepared to discuss it.)
Oct 9 th / MT	Rehearsal: Schedule and Reporting HW: (In your (AA) workbook, create three new sheets: a Weekly Rehearsal Schedule -Use the "director's" notes provided; Weekly Conflict Sheet; and a Rehearsal Report Template. Be prepared to discuss with our guest the Costume Designer's and Shop's relationship with the SM as well as how she likes to run fittings and interact with the actor.) <i>Students can start attending Production Meetings Oct 11th-Nov 15th (make sure you have signed up.)</i>
Oct 11 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Oct 14 th / MT	Special Guest: Laura Alvarez, T&D D/T Faculty and Costume Designer—<i>The Miracle Worker</i> HW: (In your (AA) workbook, create a Fitting Sign-Up Sheet-Use the fitting times and actor conflicts provided.)
Oct 16 th / MQT	Space Tour MQT Theatre/<i>Distracted</i>: Looking through the eyes of the Stage Manager HW: (Read pp 113-118. In your (AA) workbook, create a template page of Line Note handouts-Use the example in the book or feel free to use another style you may have seen or used.)
Oct 18 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>

Oct 21 st / MT	Rehearsal: Line notes, and adding & tracking the elements HW: (Read pp 119-140 thru “Format Considerations.” In your (AA) workbook, create two pages: a Preset List and a Shift Plot- <i>Use your production paperwork as well as the information provided.</i>) <i>Students can start attending rehearsals Oct 21st-Nov 8th (make sure you have signed up.)</i>
Oct 23 rd / MT	Preparing for Tech: Props and presets, paper verses reality HW: (Work on revising your previous paperwork. Be prepared to discuss with our guest the Lighting Designer’s relationship with the SM as well as how he approaches the design and recording information in rehearsals, as well as Paper Tech.)
Oct 25 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Oct 28 th / MT	Special Guest: Mark Dean T&D D/T Faculty and Lighting Designer—<i>Angels in America</i> HW: (Read pp 140-149.)
Oct 30 th / MT	Preparing for Tech, cue notation, Paper Tech and calling HW: (Read pp 151-164. In your (AA) workbook, create two pages: a Backer Page for your Calling Script, and Calling Key- <i>Use the information from class.</i>)
Nov 1 st / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Nov 4 th / MQT	Review of the Calling Script and a look at performance HW: (Read pp 165-170 thru “Changing Crew.” In your (AA) workbook, Revise your calling script and create a Performance Report Template)
Nov 6 th / MQT	Paper Tech Practical HW: (Work on revising your previous paperwork and clean up your Calling Script- <i>Use the guidelines provided.</i>) <i>Students can start attending Technical Rehearsal Nov 12th-16th (make sure you have signed up.)</i>
Nov 8 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Nov 11 th	VETERANS’ DAY; NO CLASS
Nov 13 th / MT	Space Tour MT Theatre/<i>Angels in America</i>: Looking through the eyes of the Stage Manager HW: (Work on revising your previous paperwork. Be prepared to discuss with our guest the Producer/Choreographer’s relationship with the SM.)
Nov 15 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Nov 18 th / MQT	Special Guest: Karen Kaufmann T&D DAN Faculty and Producer—<i>Dance Up Close</i> HW: (Read pp 173-178.)
Nov 20 th / MT	Moving or Ending the Show and a Q&A review of the paperwork covered so far HW: (In your (AA) workbook, create a Strike Checklist- <i>Make it specific to this show and School.</i>)

Nov 22 nd / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Nov 25 th / MT	Space Tour Open Space & MQT Theatre/<i>Dance Up Close: Looking through the eyes of the Stage Manager</i> HW: (Read pp 179-180. Work on revising your previous paperwork and prepare Project 1 to be turned in- <i>Use the guidelines provided.</i>)
Nov 27 th	THANKSGIVING TRAVEL DAY; NO CLASS
Nov 29 th	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY; NO CLASS
Dec 2 nd / MT	Discuss the performance and process of <i>Angels in America</i>, more about other theatrical events HW: (Read pp 170-172 and Handouts. Be prepared to participate in Fire Extinguisher Training and discuss fire safety.) <i>Finalize Project 1 to be turned in on Dec 4th, 9:10am.</i>
Dec 4 th / MT	Special Guest: Missoula County Fire Marshal & Extinguisher Training <i>Project 1 DUE</i>
Dec 6 th / PARTV 204	Cohort Discussion of <i>Working Together in Theatre</i>
Dec 12 th / MQT	FINAL: THURSDAY/8-10AM— IT DOES NOT START AT 8:10AM or 9:10AM. IT <u>STARTS</u> AT 8AM!

Order of events subject to change.