



AUSTIN
COLLEGE

THEA 471 Directing

Austin College
Department of Communication, Media Studies and Theatre
Fall 2015

Meeting Days: M/W/F
Meeting Time: 3:30 a.m. – 4:20 p. m.
Location: Ida Green, Theatre*

*Please note that the meeting location may change more than once over the semester, due to production conflicts.

“When I am lost in rehearsal, when I am stymied and have no idea what to do next or how to solve a problem, I know that this is the moment to make a leap. Because directing is intuitive, it involves walking with trembling and terror into the unknown.”

— Anne Bogart

“The director’s indispensable quality: patience. His passion is a long patience. The contrary is also true: his patience is the proof of a long passion.”

— Eugenio Barba

Instructor: Elizabeth Parks

E-mail: eparks@austincollege.edu

Office: Ida Green, A114

Phone: 903-813-2567

Office Hours: M/W 1:00 p.m.-2:00p.m, T/R 1:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Rehearsal Hours: Friday 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Personal Writing/Research Hours: T/R 2:30 p.m.-4:00p.m.

Contacting the Instructor: You are always welcome to come by during office hours, call my office, or email me. Please allow up to 48 hours for a response to any emails. To centralize emails and enhance my response time please only email me through your Austin College. During weekends, I do not respond to emails.

REQUIRED READING:

Play Directing: Analysis, Communication, and Style, 7th ed. by Francis Hodge and Michael McLain

A Director Prepares by Anne Bogart

On Directing and Dramaturgy, Burning Down the House by Eugenio Barba

RECOMMENDED READING:

Notes on Directing: 130 Lessons in Leadership from the Director’s Chair by Frank Hauser and Russell Reich

The Empty Space: A Book About the Theatre: Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate by Peter Brook

The Director’s Voice, Twenty Interviews, Volume 2 by Jason Loewith

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A study of the principles of play direction including technical aspect of production and the acting conventions involved in mounting a play for presentation. This course will cover the role of the director and the major duties of the director including text analysis, directorial concept, working with actors, technicians and designers, auditioning, scheduling, rehearsing, and most importantly, dreaming the play. This course will explore multiple ways of approaching a production to empower students with a variety of directorial methods.

Questions explored in this course include:

1. What is the scope of the director's responsibility?
2. How is the director's work with actors, a stage manager, designers, marketers and producers different? How is it the same?
3. What are the essential qualities of an effective director?
4. How does the director's job evolve or change over the course of a production?

Expected Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Define the parameters of the director's job.
2. Analyze a script's dramatic action and characters.
3. Analyze a play's underlying concepts and write a Director's Concept Statement.
4. Practice effective communication with actors and production staff.
5. Identify different leadership and directorial strategies.

POLICIES:

Withdrawal: Austin College has instituted a new policy this year, which requires that students withdraw from a class before the 10th week of the semester.

Professionalism and Courtesy: Courtesy is crucial to a positive learning experience, but the greatest tool any theatre artist has is their professionalism! That is what keeps them employed, so let us begin practicing it today!

How do we practice professionalism?

Be on time- This means being early, setting down your things, readying yourself to work, and circling-up to begin class.

Be prepared- This means that you have read the material assigned, done the work assigned, and are dressed appropriately. (See below for attire requirements)

Be present- This means being an *active* participant in the room; being mindful and respectful of everyone in the room. This does not mean that you always have to be talking, sometimes it means allowing time for your colleagues to speak.

Respect the space- Water is acceptable but you may not eat or chew gum in any room we work in. Pick up after yourselves. Leave the room in better condition than you found it.

Academic Integrity:

In keeping with its educational mission, Austin College places a high value on academic integrity and does not tolerate cheating and other forms of abuse of the academic process. The faculty and officers of the college assume that entering students, in accepting admission to Austin College, are aware that they will submit themselves to a high standard of academic honesty, and agree to follow the norms and procedures by which the college observes and enforces this standard.

Cheating and plagiarism, which is a form of cheating, are primary violations of academic integrity. Cheating is defined as, but not limited to, purposely using/receiving assistance from another student or source on an assignment where such help is not permitted. Examples include copying (though not necessarily verbatim) another's work and turning it in as your own, use of "crib sheets" on an exam, or providing the material/mechanism for another student to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as, but not limited to, using someone else's work and attempting to pass it off as your own. This may be the work of another person, or information obtained from a book, journal, or internet source. Actions that create an unfair advantage by impeding the access of other course members to important information or sharing improperly received information also violate academic integrity. Recognizing that specifics of such violations may be differently defined in some course settings, the college gives instructors the authority to

determine expectations and provide instructions according to particular circumstances. For more information on plagiarism, please see the website <http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml>

If you are caught violating the academic integrity policy, penalties may include anything from a zero on the assignment to expulsion from the course.

Special note regarding academic honesty as it pertains to this class: Students are expected to do their own work. Despite the fact that there will be group projects in this course, I consider copying your partner's work to be an act of academic dishonesty. When collaborative projects are assigned, I expect *each* student to turn in their *own* portion of the work. It is not permissible for partners to turn in one single document for any given assignment.

- All assignments are due at the beginning of class.
- If you are absent for a class, I will only accept homework via Moodle until 5 minutes after the start time of this class.

Attendance: Timelines and participation are crucial to excellence in the performing arts and in life in general. Regular attendance is **mandatory**.

- 1) Each student is allowed **three** absences in total for the semester. Please use these absences judiciously and save them for emergencies.
- 2) For each absence beyond the allotted three absences, the student's overall course grade will be reduced by 1/2 letter grade with each subsequent absence. After five absences, I reserve the right to dismiss you from the class.
- 3) Two tardies or early exits will equal one absence.
- 4) All sports and college sanctioned absences **MUST** be turned in by the Friday of the first full week of class.

Coming and going during class: Coming and going during class is **not permitted**. Once class begins, we are training together and we are responsible for each other's development and safety in the class. Constant coming and going disrupts the dynamic of the entire class and renders the work we are doing ineffective. The training room is a sacred and safe space and should be respected as such. Leaving class once we have begun counts as an absence. You must use the restroom, eat, text, etc. **before** class starts or **after** class ends. Leaving class once we have begun counts as an absence.

Rehearsals: Once we begin working on projects, students are expected to rehearse outside of class for a minimum of 4 hours per week. I have designated Friday afternoons for rehearsal time with students. Time spent with me during Friday rehearsal time counts toward your rehearsal time for the week. You may sign up for rehearsal time on the sheet outside of my office.

In addition to any time you spend rehearsing with me, you are also expected to rehearse independently or with your partner depending on the project. Theatre is a collaborative art; we are all counting on each other. Your partner is counting on you, *you* are counting on you, and I am counting on you. Your presence and participation or lack thereof at rehearsals **DEEPLY** impacts the entire class. Even if you are rehearsing a monologue, you are still responsible to your colleagues in the class. Thus, even when you are working on an individual project, you are expected to be working no less than three hours a week outside of class on the given project. Rehearsal logs and reports will be collected regularly to facilitate instructor/student communication and development of rehearsal practices.

Late work: No late work will be accepted.

Attire: Much of the work we do in this class is physical work. You are, therefore, expected to dress appropriately in comfortable loose-fitting clothing that allows you to move easily. The following restrictions are for your safety: no

jeans, no short-shorts, no skirts, no hats, and no jewelry. You may consider wearing leggings, tights, or bicycle shorts under your shorts.

Touching: Because of the nature of the work we do there may be times I adjust your posture, form, stance etc. I want you to feel comfortable in this class. If this type of physical contact makes you uncomfortable please let me know.

Institutional Disability Statement: Austin College seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all individuals with disabilities and will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines. It is the responsibility of the student to register with and provide verification of academic accommodation needs to the Director of the Academic Skills Center as soon as possible. The student also must contact the faculty member in a timely manner (typically by the end of the first week of class) to arrange for academic accommodations. For further information regarding disability services or to register for assistance, please contact the office at 903-813-2454 or visit the Academic Skills Center.

Electronic Devices: Cell phones are not allowed, under any circumstance. While laptops and tablets are allowed, if they become a distraction or disruption, I reserve the right to prohibit them from class. If I suspect that you are using your computer for anything other than course-relevant material your device will be taken away and returned to you at the end of class. Again, I reserve the right to prohibit the use of personal electronic devices if I feel that they deterring you achieving the goals and outcomes of the course.

Moodle – Please see Austin College’s Moodle site for course information, assignment information, reading due dates, digital articles/readings, and email correspondence.

Grading:

A = An “A” student does much more than is required; turns in flawless work, always on time; contributes actively and insightfully to class discussion; amazes and delights the instructor with a thoughtful and imaginative grasp of the subject as evidenced in both oral and written work.

B = A “B” student does more than is required; turns in nearly flawless work, always on time; contributes actively to class discussion; impresses the instructor with an above average engagement with the subject evidenced in both oral and written work.

C = A “C” student does all that is required; turns in work when due and free of significant error; contributes regularly to class discussion, and satisfies the instructor by turning in work of average quality.

D = A “D” student does all, or nearly all, that is required (though errors and sloppiness are sometimes evident), contributes sporadically to class discussion, but falls short of the average in oral and written work.

F = An “F” student fails to turn in all required work and/or turns in late work; seldom or never contributes to class discussion, or is often absent from class; and/or falls a good deal short of the average student in both oral and written work.

GRADING SCALE:

A + 100-97	A 96-93	A- 92-90	F 59 and below
B+ 89-87	B 86-83	B- 82-80	
C+ 79-77	C 76-73	C- 72-70	
D+ 69-67	D 66-63	D- 62-60	

Grading Determination:

Late work will not be accepted

1. Attendance: 40 points

- a. Each student is allowed three absences in total for the semester
- b. For each absence beyond the allotted three absences, the student's overall course grade will be reduced by ½ letter grade with each subsequent absence. Five absences, I reserve the right to dismiss a student from the class.
- c. Two tardies or early exits will equal one absence.
- d. Coming and going during class is **not permitted**. Any time you leave the class counts as an absence. Leaving class once we have begun counts as an absence.

2. Attitude/Participation: 120 points (3 points per class)

Students will earn between 0-3 points per day for their participation. To earn the full three points, students must:

- a) Practice professionalism and courtesy as outlined above
- b) Actively engage with course content, with each other, and with the instructor. This, again, does not mean that you have to always be talking or moving but you ALWAYS have to be WORKING. Working can take many forms: reflecting, writing, talking, struggling, trying, failing, feeling overwhelmed etc. Working does not involve stopping.
- c) Complete all in-class assignments and explorations

3. Director-in-training Assignments- 50 points

- a. Students must attend theatre department events including auditions, at least one rehearsal of each of this semester's productions, and a performance of those productions.

4. Scene #1 – 60^[EP1] points

- a. Directing book
- b. Performance
- c. Rehearsal log

5. Scene #2-60^[EP2] points

- a. Directing book
- b. Performance
- c. Rehearsal log

6. Ten-minute play- 100 points

- a. Directing book
- b. Performance
- c. Rehearsal log
- d. Integration of production elements

7. Rehearsal log and reports- 50 points

- a. This assignment is meant to verify that you are meeting the minimum rehearsal requirement of 4 hours a week and to ensure that you are taking full advantage of the rehearsal process. It is also a place to explore the question: What is the role of the director?

8. Leading discussions and exercises- 100 points

9. Final Reflection paper- 80 points

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given throughout the semester over content from the required reading. Quiz dates are noted on the calendar below. These dates may, however, be subject to change.

Grading:

Attendance:	40 points
Attitude/Participation:	120 points
Director-in-training assignments:	50 points
Scene #1	80 points
Scene #2	80 points
Ten-minute Play	100 points
Rehearsal log and reports:	50 points
Leading discussions and exercises	100 points
Final Reflection Paper:	<u>80 points</u>
	700 points

Directing

GRADE SHEET

Name: _____

Attendance: 40 points

Total _____ /40

Late arrivals: _____

Leaving and returning in class _____

Attitude/Participation: 120 pts

Total _____ /120

Director-in-training assignments: 50 points

Total _____ /50

Scene #1: 80 points

Total _____ /80

Scene #2: 80 points

Total _____ /80

Ten-minute Play: 100 points

Total _____ /100

Rehearsal log and reports: 50 pts

Total _____ /50

Leading discussions and exercises 100 pts

Total _____ /100

Final Reflection Paper: 80 pts

Total _____ /80

Total _____ /700

FINAL GRADE _____

Working Timeline (subject to change)

All readings will be assigned and posted on Moodle.

Week	Date	Lesson	Homework	
1	8/28	Introduction Syllabus		
2	8/31	Embarrassment Warming up “the snake”	Embarrassment Reading	
	9/2	<i>Sats/qui, ki</i> Emotion instinct circuit		
	9/4	Viewpoints		
3	9/7	Viewpoints	Attend audition workshop	
	9/9	Leadership <i>‘Nigh Mother</i> Scene #1 assignment	Read <i>‘Nigh Mother</i>	
	9/11	Text Analysis Scene	Student led discussion	
4	9/14	Text Analysis	Student led discussion Attend 1hour of Auditions	
	9/16	Text Analysis And Audition Discussion	Student led discussion	
	9/18	Embodied text analysis through composition and picturization		
5	9/21	Embodied text analysis through composition and picturization		
	9/23	Casting		
	9/25	Scheduling		
6	9/28			
	9/30			
	10/2			Perform scene 1 Analysis due
7	10/5	Scene 1 post-mortem Lesson discussion	Read <i>The Lesson</i>	
	10/7	Terror	Student led discussion	
	10/9	No class fall break		
8	10/12	Violence	Student led discussion	
	10/14	Eroticism		

	10/16	Stereo type		
9	10/19	Resistance		
	10/21	Developing a concept		
	10/23	Employing the concept Working with designers		
10	10/26	Working with designers and production team	Student led production meeting	
	10/28	Working with designers and production team	Student led production meeting	
	10/30		Attend <i>Hedda Gabler</i>	Perform scene #2
11	11/2	Dreaming the play		
	11/4	Dramaturgies		
	11/6	Dramaturgies		
12	11/9	Dramaturgies		
	11/11	The Ritual of Disorder		
	11/13	The Ritual of Disorder		
13	11/16	The Ritual of Disorder		
	11/18	TBD	Attend <i>Surprises</i>	
	11/20	TBD		
14	11/23, 11/25, 11/27 No classes- Thanksgiving Break			
15	11/30	TBD Tech rehearsals for this week TBD		
	12/3	Performance of 10-minute plays		
	12/4	Performance of 10-minute plays		
Final				Final Reflection Papers



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I _____ have read and understand the contents of the syllabus for this course. I therefore understand all that is expected of me and I accept the contents therein including all assignments, classroom procedures, grading policies and procedures.

Student's Signature _____

Date _____