

TH213 - Directing 1
Mon/Wed 10:00am - 11:20am
Room 110, Kupfrian Hall

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Course Description

Students will learn major directorial techniques in the production of short plays and other workshop scenarios. There is an emphasis on the process of synthesizing theatrical elements of direction in order to oversee and orchestrate the mounting of a theater production. The goal of the course is for students to learn what directors do to ensure the quality and completeness of theater production by collaborating with a team of individuals involved in stagecraft, costume design, props, lighting design, acting, set design, stage combat, intimacy director, and sound design for the production.

Objectives

Learn the collaboration, leadership skills, and how to implement a vision.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- take material and synthesize it into a concept and then to execute their vision.
- Successfully collaborate with actors, designers, and stage management.
- Provide solid leadership that inspires
- Learn more about the elements of a theatrical production
- Learn how to run an audition room

Prerequisites

HUM 101, 102, and Cultural History (select from HUM 211, 212, or Hist 213).

Class Policies

Attendance: Attendance is important for this course as most of the coursework will be happening in class. Lateness, early departures, and unexcused absences will be reflected in your grade. To get absences excused, a note is needed from the Dean of Students. If there are mitigating circumstances, contact me before the class you will miss. If you are running late, please text me to let me know. If you are feeling sick, please do not attend class in-person. Email me 2 hours before class for a zoom link, and you can attend remotely. You cannot attend remotely for any reason other than being sick.

Participation: For this class you will be asked to step into acting roles within class, in addition to directing roles. Note that the emphasis will be focused on the elements of directing in this class, not the acting, however you should put some effort into the role.

Consent and Respect: I actively cultivate a room that is welcome for everyone and is grounded in consent. Consent may be given and revoked at any time. Disrespect towards your peers will not be tolerated. If a misstep or action has occurred that makes you feel unsafe or disrespected, please let me know and I will address it.

Anti-Racism: I acknowledge that racism is systemically a part of our culture and am doing my best to dismantle these practices where I find them. I welcome any and all feedback about ways I can be more effective in this process. If you have concerns about these particular days of class when we address these topics, please reach out to me and I will do my best to accommodate your needs.

Land Acknowledgment: We acknowledge that NJIT is located on stolen land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, specifically the Leni-Lenape. While many Leni-Lenape people were forcibly removed from their homelands, they are still an active part of New Jersey culture and society. To learn more about the Leni-Lenape people, visit nanticoke-lenape.info

Questions/Concerns: If you have a question or concern you are not comfortable communicating to me directly, please use the “Anonymous Question Form” in Canvas and I will respond to question or concern at the next class for everyone.

The Room: Please respect any space we are working in, both in class, rehearsals, and performances. Restore any items, props, chairs, etc. you may use to where they started.

Missing or Late Assignments: Missing or late assignments will be accepted with penalties unless otherwise noted. If you have mitigating circumstances that prevented you from completing an assignment, please reach out to me so we can discuss options.

Honor Code: Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>. Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. *This includes using AI to write papers.* AI includes the use of ChatGPT. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu.

Costs and Texts

Directing Plays Directing People, A Collaborative Art by Mary B. Robinson

Chicken & Biscuits by Douglas Lyons (provided on Canvas)

A Director Prepares by Anne Bogart (provided on Canvas)

Daring to Lead By Brené Brown (provided on Canvas)

Additional Ticket Costs

Peter and the Starcatcher by Rick Elice - \$15

Additional Live Play - \$20-50

Assignments

Directing Project: You have the option to direct a 5-10 minute play as part of The Directors Project, fully produced for 3 performances December 6-8th. OR direct a self-produced 1 minute play in class. If you are a Theatre major/minor, you will be required to take part in The Directors Project. You will be assisting with the project you are not directing in supplementary roles such as acting, assistant directing, or in a tech position.

Journal: Your journal will consist of reflections on the assigned reading, as well as your directing process discoveries throughout the semester. Each entry should be at least 1 page and will be due every Sunday.

Director Pitch: You will give a 2 minute presentation about a stage director you admire. Explain why you are drawn to them. What makes their work unique? What techniques do they use? Make us want to see a show of theirs.

Play Analyses: You are required to see 2 performances and write a 2-3 page reflection paper for each one. This paper should not be a summary of the show, but rather a critical analysis about what you think the director did well, as well as how you think it could be improved. What was the director saying with the performance? Try and use terms that you have learned in class. If you have a barrier with this, please talk to me so I can accommodate you.

Grading Breakdown

Attendance/Participation - 25%

Play Analyses - 10%

Journal - 15%

Director Pitch - 10%

Directing Project (Primary) - 25%

Directing Project (Secondary) – 15%

Grade Breakdown

A : 90%<

B+ : 88% - 89%

B: 80% - 87%

C+: 78% - 79%

C: 70% - 77%

D: 60% - 69%

F: > 60%

Schedule

Syllabus subject to change.

9/4: Syllabus, What Is Directing

9/9: Storytelling Elements, **Reading Due:** Robinson pg. 11-21

9/11: Play Analysis, **Reading Due:** *Chicken & Biscuits* (Canvas)

9/16: Character Analysis

9/18: Working Within Actor Boundaries, Setting the Tone, **Reading Due:** Brown, pg. 18-43

9/23: Tablework

9/25: Effective Staging

9/30: Effective Staging

10/2: Communication and Feedback, **Due:** Play Choices for Directing Project

10/7: Auditioning, **Reading Due:** Robinson pg. 57-67

10/9: Working with Stage Managers, **Reading Due:** Robinson pg 69-78

10/9: 3:30-4:30p – The Directors Project Production Meeting

10/14: Planning Out Rehearsals **Due:** Character Breakdowns, Sides for Auditions

10/16: One Minute Play Auditions

10/21: Working with Designers, **Reading Due:** Robinson pg. 43-53, **Due:** 1st Play Analysis

10/21-10/23 – 6-9pm - Auditions for The Directors Project

10/23: Transitions **Reading Due:** Robinson pg. 79-101

10/28: Post-Audition Discussion **Due:** Rehearsal Schedules

10/30: In-Class Rehearsal (One Minute Plays) **Reading Due:** Bogart pg 79-90, **Due:** Scenic/Prop Designs

10/30 – Rehearsals for The Directors Project Start

11/4: Working with Movement Professionals **Due:** One Minute Play Costume, Sound, Lighting

Design

11/6: In-Class Rehearsal (One Minute Plays)

11/7-11/9 – Peter and the Starcatcher, \$15, Jim Wise Theatre

11/11: Talking Through Tech and Dress Rehearsals, In-Class Rehearsal (Directors Project), **Reading Due:** Robinson pg. 129-144,. **Due:** Directors Project Costume, Sound, Lighting Designs

11/13: In-Class Rehearsal (One Minute Plays)

11/13 – 2:30-4:00pm - Directors Project Production Meeting

11/18: One Minute Play Tech/Dress Rehearsal

11/20: One Minute Play Performance **Reading Due:** Robinson pg 147-168

11/25: One Minute Play Post-Mortem, In-Class Rehearsal (Directors Project) **Reading Due:** Bogart pg 113-135

11/27: NO CLASS

12/2: Tech Prep

12/2 –12/3 6-10pm - Tech Rehearsals for The Directors Project

12/4: Working With Digital Elements

12/4-12/5 6-10pm - Dress Rehearsals for The Directors Project

12/6-12/7 – 7pm - The Directors Project Performances

12/9: Strike for The Directors Project **Due:** Secondary Project Summary

12/11: Post-Mortem for The Directors Project, Final Wrap Up

12/16: 2nd Play Analysis Due (NO CLASS)

12/18: FINAL SUBMISSION DAY FOR ALL LATE WORK