

THTR 258 Stagecraft 1
Friday 1:00pm–4:00pm
Kupfrian Hall, Rm 110

Instructor: Jonathan Zencheck
Email:
Office Hours: Friday 9am-1pm or by appointment
Office: Kupfrian Hall, 210B (Box Office)

Course Description

Stagecraft 1 will provide you with the skills necessary to become a better theater artist. Over the length of the semester, through a mixture of lecture, group work, and hands on experience, you will walk away with the knowledge needed to further your skills in the theater technology world.

Course Objective

We aim to become well rounded in all aspects of technical theater. Imagine going to a restaurant that serves foods from across the world that you have never tried. Here is where we have the rare opportunity to taste all of them. Some may not be for you, others may leave you wanting more, and that's what we aim to walk away with. Whether you are interested in diving deep into all aspects of Theater Technology, or certain skill sets that you would like to take away, our objective is to set you up with the next steps toward expanding those desires.

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have four (4) major takeaways

- Understanding Theatrical Construction from tools to materials, estimating to methodology, and large scale to small
- Working in a group setting to better understand how a Scenic design goes from paper to reality
- What some of the potential roles and responsibilities are throughout the design, build, and run of a show
- How these skill sets apply to things outside the theater world

Class Policies

Attendance: Attendance is a vital aspect of this course. Theatre is experiential and communal; our work in this course will be no different. Lack of participation will be reflected in your grade—and there is a direct correlation between your presence in class and your ability to engage in in-class discussion. Participation makes up **60%(!)**

of your grade, so please consider this a direct correlation to whether you are physically and mentally present in class. If you believe you have a reason that qualifies an absence as excused, a note is needed from the Dean of Students. Please note that any work that is due on those days is still due and any in-class quiz or presentation still requires attendance in class in order to fulfill that assignment.

Please make every effort to contact me before any class you have to miss. If you are feeling sick, please do not attend class in-person. Email me at least 2 hours before class and I will give you a zoom link to attend remotely. You cannot attend remotely for any reason other than being sick.

Note: You are required to attend *Peter and the Starcatcher* November 7th-9th. More information will be provided later in this document.

Participation: Participation is not only requested, it is required. It is essential that you not only show up physically, but mentally as well. You will be expected to get your hands dirty a bit, so please come prepared with your eyes and ears open.

Safety and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE): You will be required to purchase your own eye and hearing protection. Please see the “Additional Costs” section for more info. Please make sure to attend each class with closed toed shoes. Be sure that you are not wearing baggy clothing, or bring a change of clothes if you’d prefer. If you have longer hair, you will need to be able to tie it back or contain it for your safety.

Communication: Reaching out to me as soon as you know of any concerns or problems is very important. I know that extenuating circumstances happen and I am committed to finding a way to best help all of us through this course whenever possible. This means I must get communication from you as soon as you think there may be an issue. Please reach out to me—email is typically best, but I am available to chat briefly after class (typically) and during my office hours and by appointment.

Consent and Respect: I work to create a room welcome to everyone and rooted in tolerance. Disrespect toward anyone in the classroom will not be tolerated. If an event occurs that makes you feel unsafe or disrespected, please let me know so it can be addressed.

Anti-Racism: Racism is systemically a part of our society and I will be working hard to dismantle these practices where I find them. We may be addressing issues of race within this course. I welcome any feedback about ways I can be more effective in this process.

Questions/Concerns: Always feel free to visit me during office hours or email me with any questions/concerns. If there is something you aren't comfortable communicating with me directly, please use the 'Anonymous Question Form' in Canvas and I will respond in a subsequent class for everyone.

Missing or Late Assignments: Missing or late work will not be accepted. If you feel you have legitimate circumstances that prevented you from finishing your work on time, please reach out to both me and the Dean of Students to discuss if there might be appropriate options.

Academic Integrity: *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: [NJIT Academic Integrity Code](#).*

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 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

Land Acknowledgement: We acknowledge that NJIT is located on stolen land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Lenni-Lenape people. Lenni-Lenape literally translates to "Men of Men" but is taken as "Original People." (<https://nanticoke-lenape.info/history.htm>) To learn more about the Lenni-Lenape people, visit <https://nanticoke-lenape.info/>.

Texts: All readings or further information will be provided to you in printout form. If I can make one recommendation, it would be to purchase a copy of **The Backstage Handbook** which will provide you with a one stop shop for all things technical theater. This is not a required purchase, but is essential if you look to expand your technical experience beyond this course.

Additional Costs: \$15 for a ticket to see Peter and the Starcatcher Nov 7th-Nov 9th. You can purchase tickets at the door or online [HERE](#) (buying in advance online is the preferred way to make sure you secure a ticket).

Additionally, you will need to purchase the following items for this class. I have provided an Amazon link for all the items below, but you may also purchase at any location:

- [Scale Ruler](#)
- [Paper](#)
- [Pencils](#)
- [Safety Glasses](#)
- [Ear Protection](#)

Grading Breakdown:

Build Participation: 30%

Quizzes: 15%

Final Presentation: 20%

“Choose Your Path” Participation: 30%

Peter and The Starcatcher Tech Participation and Response Paper: 5%

Final Grades:

A = 90 – 100 B+ = 87 – 90 B = 80 – 87 C+ = 77 – 80 C = 70 – 77 D = 60 – 70 F = 0 – 60

Schedule *(syllabus subject to change):*

WEEK ONE: September 6th

Introductions, Going over syllabus, intro to materials, tools, methods, and structure

Quiz

WEEK TWO: September 13th

Open hours, sign up will be available for groups of 5 for shop safety participation followed by **Shop Safety Quiz**

WEEK THREE: September 20th

We will dive into the types of positions and better understand the roles and responsibilities throughout the production process. At the end of this class, you will pick your “track”. This will be the position you are most interested in, and what your final presentation and additional work hours will be graded on.

WEEK FOUR: September 27th

Build Week 1: Understanding ground plans and construction techniques

WEEK FIVE: October 4th

Build Week 2: Flat and Platform Construction and understanding material selections

WEEK SIX: October 11th

Build Week 3: Painting techniques, finishing techniques, and assuring performer safety.

WEEK SEVEN: October 18th

Install week 1: How planning can prevent wasted time in space

WEEK EIGHT: October 25th

Install week 2: What are designer notes?

WEEK NINE: November 1st

Technical Rehearsals: What do we do when performers take the stage?

WEEK TEN: November 8th

Group Presentations: Making it happen

WEEK ELEVEN: November 15th

Strike: Restoring back to zero

3 Hours of participation in strike is required and will be based upon your technical "track"

WEEK TWELVE: November 22nd

Changeover: How to quickly and safely install another show

WEEK THIRTEEN: (Wednesday Schedule): November 27th

Final Presentations Week 1

WEEK FOURTEEN: December 6th

Final Presentations Week 2

WEEK FIFTEEN: December 13th

3 Hours of participation in strike is required and will be based upon your technical "track"