

Theater: Directing IV THEA 4720

Instructor - Doug Finlayson
Spring 2019
Class: Wed. 1:00-2:30
Tue. 4:30 (ET)

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Course Syllabus

OUTCOMES:

The student will:

- Demonstrate creative conceptualization by presenting a concept for a Shakespeare play of their choosing;
- Demonstrate knowledge of Shakespeare text analysis by creating an annotated scene and working with actors;
- Demonstrate their understanding of the process by:
 - Preparing a written analysis and research packet for a 15 to 25-minute play;
 - Creating an organized and artful promptbook;
 - Conducting an open audition, casting their projects, and rehearsing the play;
 - Presenting the work to the performance faculty and students.
- Engage in critical thinking by assessing the work other productions.

ATTENDANCE

Students will be allowed one absence. Absences after that will affect the student's grade.

ASSESSMENT:

1. GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES, AND JOURNAL	<u>DUE THE DAY OF YOUR ET</u>	Grade 15%
2. PROMPTBOOK CONTAINING UNIT BREAKDOWN, STAGING, RESEARCH, AND VISUALS	<u>DUE THE DAY OF YOUR ET</u>	Grade 15%
3. PRESENTATION OF A SCENE - <u>ET PROJECT</u> One run-through for Instructor; 15-25 minutes; 25 Hours of Rehearsal maximum		Grade 15%
4. SHAKESPEARE SCENE/Text analysis, footnotes, and cuts (if warranted) Using Lexicons and an annotated Shakespeare sources (Arden Shakespeare is a great one), create your own annotated script of the scene. Make text edits if needed.		Grade 10%
5. DIRECTING SHAKESPEARE: TABLE WORK WITH CLASSMATES		Grade 10%
6. ACTING SHAKESPEARE: PARTICIPATION IN AT LEAST ONE TABLE WORK SESSION		Grade 5%
7. SHAKESPEARE CONCEPT PROJECT WRITTEN – A three (3) page typed description of your concept, including play's themes, central visual metaphor (ex: Richard III: Theme-Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely; Visual Metaphor-The Crown), An explanation of sets, costumes, lights and music/sound. VISUAL SUPPORT – Images from art, photographs, drawings that articulate the essence of your concept ORAL PRESENTATION – 5-7 minutes. Imagine this as a persuasive presentation for a directing slot in front of an Artistic Board of Directors.		Grade 10%
8. <u>ATTEND</u> ONE REHEARSAL OF THE SHOW YOU ARE CRITIQUING		Grade 5%
9. DESIGN IMAGES Find 5 Scenic, 5 Costume, and 5 Lighting images that capture the spirit of your imagination. Apply this exercise to your Shakespeare project. You will turn these in and share them with the class.		Grade 5%
10. ET RESPONSE, READING, AND PARTICIPATION IN CLASS		Grade 10%

REHEARSALS

Rehearsal Time - limitations placed on rehearsal time for ETS is important to follow. Each ET may rehearse 25 hours maximum. Just as in a professional situation, as a director you will be limited by unions, the repertory and actor's schedules. Embrace the time constraints as a skill to learn.

ET STRIKE AND CLEANUP

After each ET, there will be a strike to return the space to its original condition. ALL directing students are expected to participate. ALL individual directors are expected to put away any thing they have brought out during their ETS

DUE DATES

ALL WORK IS DUE ON TIME. Any work handed in after the due date will be reduced a letter grade each day it is late.

ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMODATIONS POLICY:

If you have a diagnosed learning or other disability that may have some impact on your work in this class or require accommodations, please see me so that these can be arranged. Please visit www.webster.edu and under Quick Links choose Academic Support Programs and then Academic Resource Center. Contact me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodation needs.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students at Webster University are expected to practice academic honesty. Plagiarism is intentionally claiming that another person's work is his/her own or implying that another person's work is his/her own (through inadequate or inaccurate citations of reference material.)

Students:

- Should not copy whole portions of text from another source as a major component of papers or projects.
- Should identify the title, author, page number/webpage address, and publication date of works when directly quoting small portions of texts, articles, interviews, or websites.
- Should appropriately identify the source of information when paraphrasing (restating) ideas from texts, interviews, articles, or websites.
- Should follow the guidelines of (faculty choice)

In its broadest sense, plagiarism is using someone else's work, presented or claimed as your own. Any time you borrow another person's work, whether as a direct quotation or paraphrased, you must use a citation. All citations must be properly documented and references must be provided. All papers and projects may be submitted to the *turnitin database* (if applicable) to determine if any part of the paper has been copied and not properly cited. Students who plagiarize will earn "no credit" for the assignment. At the discretion of the instructor, the student may fail the class / unit or be referred to the department chair and/or dean for disciplinary action.

CLASSROOM DECORUM

Since every student is entitled to full participation in class without interruption, all students are expected to be in class and prepared to begin on time. All pagers, wireless phones, or other electronic devices must be turned off, or switched to vibrate, when you enter the classroom. Disruption of class, whether by latecomers, noisy devices, or inconsiderate behavior is not acceptable. Students are expected to treat the instructor and other students with dignity and respect, especially in cases where a diversity of opinion arises. Students who engage in disruptive behavior are subject to disciplinary action, including removal from the course.

CALENDAR - DIRECTING IV
(Calendar subject to change)

JANUARY

WEEK ONE

Wed. 16 Hand out Syllabi, Present ET Project Ideas, Pre-production work.
ASSIGNMENT - Begin work on ET Pre-production and Ground plan

WEEK TWO

Sun. 20 Casting Callback Email ET#1 & 2 - Due to Doug and Gary

Wed. 23 Discuss Acting Style/Dramatic Structure for Devised/Adapted Work/Finalize ET Schedule
ASSIGNMENT - Read "Shakespeare" Handout
Pick your Shakespeare Play and a 2-5 person scene from that play and be prepared to discuss the play's important themes in next class.

WEEK THREE

Sun. 27 Casting Callback Email ET# 3 Due to Doug and Gary

Wed. 30 Discuss Shakespeare Handout and Project
ASSIGNMENT – Read Director/Designer handout

DUE: SHAKESPEARE PLAY CHOSEN, THEMES ARTICULATED

FEBRUARY

WEEK FOUR

Sun. 3 Casting Callback Email ET #4 Due to Doug and Gary

Wed. 6 Working with Designers/Guest Dottie Marshall Englis
ASSIGNMENT – Find 5 Scenic, 5 Costume, and 5 Lighting images that excite your imagination. They can be related to your Shakespeare project, your ET, or just design you love.

WEEK FIVE

Tue. 12 First ET

Wed. 13 Discuss ET 1/Share Inspirational Designs. Be prepared to talk about what excites you about the design.

DUE: 5 Scenic, 5 Costume, and 5 Lighting images

WEEK SIX

Tue. 19 Second ET

Wed. 20 Discuss ET 2/Share Annotated Shakespeare scene/Cast in-class Shakespeare scenes

DUE: A COPY OF YOUR ANNOTATED SHAKESPERE SCENE

February 13 VERA STARK

WEEK SEVEN

Sun. 24 Casting Callback Email ET#5 Due to Doug and Gary

Tue. 26 Third ET

Wed. 27 Discuss of ET 3
ASSIGNMENT – Using classmates use 40 minutes of a class period to conduct tablework for your Shakespeare scene.

MARCH

WEEK EIGHT

Tue. 5 Fourth ET

Wed. 6 Discuss ET 4/ Direct Shakespeare Scene – 1 scene

MID SEMESTER BREAK MARCH 11-15

WEEK NINE

Sun. 17 Casting Callback Email ET#6 Due to Doug and Gary
Wed. 20 Direct Shakespeare Scene – 2 scenes

WEEK TEN

Wed. 27 Direct Shakespeare Scene- 2 Scenes

MARCH 29 THE LITTLE PRINCE

APRIL

WEEK ELEVEN

Wed. 3 Direct Shakespeare Scene – 2 Scenes

APRIL 5 PHOTOGRAPH 51

WEEK TWELVE

Wed. 10 Direct Shakespeare Scene – 2 Scenes

WEEK THIRTEEN

Tue. 16 Fifth ET

Wed. 17 Discuss ET 5/Direct Shakespeare Scene – 1 scene

APRIL 17 LOVE'S LABOURS LOST

WEEK FOURTEEN

Tue. 23 Sixth ET

Wed. 24 Discuss ET 6

**DUE: WRITTEN CONCEPT AND IMAGES FOR SHAKESPEARE
PROJECT – This can be submitted digitally**

MAY

WEEK FIFTEEN

Wed. 1 Present Shakespeare Concept Projects/Oral Presentation

WEEK SIXTEEN

Wed. 8 NO CLASS/SHOWINGS

DIRECTING IV: PREPARATION, JOURNAL, AND PROMPTBOOK

PLAY: _____ **DIRECTOR:** _____

PREPARATION AND PROMPTBOOK

MAINTAIN A DAILY AUDITION/REHEARSAL JOURNAL 40% _____
Daily entries
Goals
Discoveries
Sketches or photos
Ideas for movement
Exercises

Think of the journal as a roadmap for continuing this project after graduation!

GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES 20% _____
Once a script is developed (even if there are not words) Identify the Given Circumstances

UNIT BREAKDOWN 20% _____
Once you have a structure, identify the unit structure and title your units. Everything has a structure.
Use this step to identify what that means for your project.

SUPPORT MATERIALS IN PROMPTBOOK 20% _____
Research, Blocking, Sketches, Photographs, Drawings, Artwork

Total 100% _____

Shakespeare Project Directing IV

When you are hired to direct Shakespeare, the first questions you are asked after accepting the job is: “What will your approach be, your concept? Where will it be set?” Your play needs a context. The design team needs guidance. Even if you place a Shakespeare play in a “traditional” setting as the Globe Theatre strives to do, it is a concept. You need to decide. Sometimes you have gotten the job because of your proposed concept.

Our goal with this project is to discover a concept that is organic to the story as written and expresses your vision. We are trying to avoid a conceptual appliqué that sits on top (*Taming of the Shrew* set in Old Texas; Post-Apocalyptic *Macbeth*). These may be good ideas if arrived at through careful reading of the text. But when an idea is lazily stuck on top, the play suffers. You’ve seen these productions, I’m sure.

We will talk more about finding your way to a concept in class. When you create a Shakespeare concept (say *Taming of the Shrew* in Old Texas), what you want to do is create your own version of Old Texas. Let place and time influence your play, but make it unique to the world of your play. Borrow from the spirit of a place (Texas), but let the play live within its own idea of Texas. Let place and time inspire your concept rather than stuffing the play into a pre-cut mold. Don’t be afraid of anachronism, Shakespeare wasn’t.

Assignment

There are two parts to this project.

Part One:

Pick a Shakespeare play, research and read carefully, and develop an approach to your production. You will share this approach with the class at the end of the semester.

Part Two:

From the play you’ve chosen for Part One, choose a scene (2 pages is plenty) and prepare to do table work with actors.

- 2-5 characters. Your classmates will serve as your actors. Everyone must participate in at least one table read.
- Analyze the scene and create an annotated script for the scene (see the attachment – we’ll talk more about this).
- Make cuts to the scene if you feel it is necessary, but it is not required.
- Rehearsal is focused on making sense of the language, by helping your actors understand exactly what they are saying.

Creating a Script

A great way to get inside your play is to create your own annotated script. Illinois Shakespeare Festival has a 2 ½ hour rule for all of their productions. That means as the director you will be asked to cut the play you are working on so it fits this time frame. In other settings, you may simply wish to make cuts based on casting or clarity.

Using at least two separate sources (Lexicons, Riverside, Penguin, Arden, etc.) create your own set of footnotes for all of the text that needs clarification. If you aren’t sure what a line means from all your sources, make a decision based on context. Annotating the script will provide you with an in

depth reading of the material and clarify any necessary cuts. You will print this script out for your actors.

Cut if you need to. Make sure that if you cut you understand how you have changed the meter. The most sophisticated productions cut text. The secret is to make those cuts blend in a way that does not interrupt the poetry. If you do not need to cut, leave well enough alone.

The following page is an example of my annotated script from *Romeo and Juliet* at Illinois Shakespeare Festival, including what I cut out. This was the script the actors were given. They were welcome to transfer the cuts and notes to their own scripts or use the copy I gave them. They were welcome to question my cutting and argue for why they would put a line back in. Most good actors know their text inside and out, but your annotated script becomes a kind of “bible” for how you think about the play. As with everything we do, once a better idea comes along, you leave your notes behind. Use my example as a template

Romeo and Juliet, Illinois Shakespeare Festival

First Citizen

Clubs, bills⁵³, and partisans! Strike! Beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!
Enter CAPULET in his gown⁵⁴, and LADY CAPULET

CAPULET

What noise is this? Give me my long sword⁵⁵, ho!

LADY CAPULET

A crutch, a crutch⁵⁶! Why call you for a sword?

CAPULET

My sword, I say! Old Montague is come,
And flourishes his blade in spite⁵⁷ of me.
Enter MONTAGUE and LADY MONTAGUE

MONTAGUE

Thou villain Capulet! Hold me not! Let me go.

LADY MONTAGUE

Thou shalt not stir a foot to seek a foe.
Enter Prince Escalus⁵⁸ with his train.

PRINCE

Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners⁵⁹ of this neighbour-stained⁶⁰ steel-
Will they not hear? What, ho! You men, you beasts!
~~That quench the fire of your pernicious⁶¹ rage~~
~~With purple fountains issuing from your veins,~~
~~On pain of torture, from those bloody hands~~
Throw your mistemper'd⁶² weapons to the ground
And hear the sentence of your moved⁶³ Prince.
Three civil⁶⁴ brawls bred of an airy word⁶⁵
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,

⁵³ A long-handled weapon with a concave blade, or a kind of concave axe with a spike at the back and spear-tipped shaft
⁵⁴ Capulet's entrance presents a vivid and simple image of violated domestic peace and dignity, and suggests the implications of the feud. Disturbed by the riot, he has thrown on a dressing-gown and dashed out with characteristic rashness.

⁵⁵ An old fashioned weapon, useless against the rapier because so much heavier, even were Capulet still strong enough to wield it.

⁵⁶ Not a sword, a crutch! His wife mockingly reminds him of his advanced age.

⁵⁷ To scorn

⁵⁸ from della Scala, the ruling family of Verona.

⁵⁹ offenders

⁶⁰ bloody

⁶¹ deadly

⁶² steel is tempered, this wrong use of the sword is intemperate (violent). Tempered also meant properly proportioned or constituted (of a state or city).

⁶³ Offended and angry

⁶⁴ public

⁶⁵ started by few words