

Directing III THEA 4710

Instructor - Doug Finlayson
Fall 2018
Class: Fri. 2:30-3:50

Office: Room 39
Office Phone: 968-6935
E-Mail: finlaydo@webster.edu

Course Syllabus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The student will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the origins of directing by discussing the antecedents to and the evolution of the role of director;
 - Apply light and sound to the directorial process by researching the play, identifying images of light that represent the quality of light in the play, and communicate those ideas to a lighting designer in tech rehearsals;
 - Participate in the process of creating an original theatrical event based on principals of devised theatre culminating in a proposed project.
- Demonstrate skills of directing by:
- Preparing a written analysis and research packet for a 15-25-minute play; Creating an organized and artful promptbook;
 - Conducting an open audition and casting their projects; Coaching actors and staging their scenes in rehearsal; Conducting a technical rehearsal with stage management and designers; Presenting the work to the performance faculty and students.
- Use a directing vocabulary to discuss and critique other theatrical productions.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. READING AND DISCUSSIONS Grade 10%
2. PLAY ANALYSIS of *ET PROJECT*. (Typed) Grade 15%
Follow the handout for specific content.
3. PROMPT BOOK/RESEARCH for *ET PROJECT*. Grade 15%
Including:
 - Dramatic Action (Units, Titles, Worksheet) Pre-blocking
 - Rehearsal schedule Properties
4. PRESENTATION OF A SCENE -*ET PROJECT* Grade 15%
25-minutes maximum. 25 hours of rehearsal. These do not have to be 25 minutes long: less play, more rehearsal.
5. FOLLOW UP PAPER TO ET Grade 5%
Each director will write out their own thoughts on what was successful in their ET and what could use more attention. Lay out what you would do with an additional 12 hours of rehearsal. Due 24 hours after ET.
6. DEvised/ADAPTATION Project Grade 5%
3-5 Page Typed Description of Project with images
7. ET RESPONSE/CRITIQUE (See discussion sheet) Grade 5%
Each respondent is required to read the full play they are critiquing before the ET.
8. LEADERSHIP Grade 10%
This includes meeting requirements of time and deadlines - information for casting pool, Rehearsals, and deadlines for written work.
9. REPERTORY CRITIQUE - Watch one Rep production and write about the director's work Grade 10%
2 pages typed
10. DIRECTING STYLE (Choose a partner) Grade 10%
With a partner, research the work of a director or company's style and present that work in class. Create a Typed Outline of your presentation and a Bibliography of Sources (to be handed in).
***PICK A DIRECTOR OR COMPANY FOR WHICH WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION EXISTS BEYOND REVIEWS (a book about their process, significant Articles chronicling their work).**

TEXTS:

A DIRECTOR PREPARES by Anne Bogart
“Emergence of the Director” By Helen Krich Chinoy (Handout)
Lighting and Devised Theatre (Handout)

EXPECTATIONS FOR ETS:

Location of ETS

Some ETS will be performed on existing sets for Conservatory productions. The emphasis in this class is creativity and adaptability – think of the space you are given as a unique challenge.

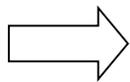
Written work

1. Analysis - Follow the syllabus for due dates on individual analysis.
2. Promptbook/Research - Due the date of your ET

Casting Emails/Auditions

Casting Email Request – By Sunday of the assigned dates, you will submit your callback names to Doug and Gary by email.

This email includes:



1. Character descriptions (10-30 words is plenty)
2. Brief synopsis of the play
3. **Callback list** - this should include 2-3 names for each character from the Sophomore acting class

Casting Decisions – All casting is approved by the Gary. As in all professional settings, you don’t always get your first choice.

Auditions - Generally these take place the Thursday or Friday following the Casting decisions.

Schedule this with Doug so that he can arrive at the end of the auditions to confirm casting.

1. Submit your callback list to Stage Management – all SM forms outside Production office
2. Once your ET is cast submit your cast list to Stage Management
3. Schedule all rehearsals through stage management office.

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.

Mentoring - Doug will attend at least one run through. Schedule this with him as soon as the calendar is set.

Tech Rehearsal – You have 3-hours maximum of tech. It is useful to organize your technical needs before bringing your actors in. If possible, look at light levels before you work with the cast. Decide how you will run sound.

Stage Management/Lighting Designers

You will be assigned an SM and a lighting designer. Supply them with scripts and any useful information you can offer. Be prepared to discuss lights with your designer in advance.

ATTENDANCE:

Review the Conservatory Handbook for attendance policy.

STRIKES

After every ET, all Directing III directors will remain to strike props and furniture and to restore seats for the next class.

STAGE III

This is the director's primary space! It is also an extraordinarily busy space. After rehearsals, return the stage to empty (clear the stage of blocks and furniture – they can live in the wings or off the edge of the stage). If you find the space in a mess take the time to straighten it up. The condition of this room always reflects upon the directors. Let's let it reflect well.

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 III (Calendar subject to change)

August

WEEK ONE

Fri. 31 Crafting an Audition/Revisit Unit Breakdown Worksheet/Review Ground plan dynamics
Assign ETs

ASSIGNMENT – 1) Create a ground plan for your ET to be discussed next class.
2) Begin work on Promptbook, Analysis, and Research
3) Find 5 images that capture the spirit of the light in your play.

September

WEEK TWO

Fri. 7 Share Ground Plans/Assign ET Respondents.

ASSIGNMENT - Read *Emergence of the Director* (Handout)

DUE: Bring a draft of your ground plan to class – USE A RULER OR COMPUTER!

WEEK THREE

Sun. 9 Casting Callback Email ET #1 - Due to Doug and Gary

Fri. 14 Discuss *Emergence of the Director*, Discuss Directing Style

ASSIGNMENT – Read *Lighting* (Handout)

PARTNERS AND DIRECTOR FOR STYLE WORKSHOPS

WEEK FOUR

Sun. 16 Casting Callback Email ET #2 - Due to Doug and Gary

Fri. 21 Light and Sound – Share Lighting Images with the Class (Set Dates for Style Presentations)

ASSIGNMENT – Read Intro, Preface, Ch. 1-7 of *A Director Prepares*

DUE: ANALYSIS & GROUND PLAN - ET#1 and ET#2
5 LIGHTING IMAGES TO SHARE WITH THE CLASS

WEEK FIVE

Sun. 23 Casting Callback Email #3 - Due to Doug and Gary

Fri. 28 Discuss Intro, Preface and Ch. 1-7 of *A Director Prepares*

ASSIGNMENT – Read *Devised/Adaptation* Handout

DUE: ANALYSIS & GROUND PLAN - ET#3 and ET#4

WEEK SIX

Sun. 31 Casting Callback Email #4 - Due to Doug and Gary

THE FANTASTICKS - Wednesday Oct. 3 – Stage Three

Webster Works Worldwide – Oct. 3

October

Fri. 5 Discuss *Devised/Adaptation* Handout

ASSIGNMENT - – With a partner, research the work of a director or company's style and present that work in class. Create a Typed Outline of your presentation and a Bibliography of Sources (to be handed in).

*YOU MUST PICK A DIRECTOR OR COMPANY FOR WHICH WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION HAS BEEN MADE (a book about them, significant articles).

WEEK SEVEN

Sun. 7 Casting Callback Email #5 - Due to Doug and Gary

Fri. 12 NO CLASS/FACULTY INSTITUTE

WEEK EIGHT

Tue. 16 **ET #1**

Fri. 19 Discuss ET #1/ Discuss Devised Theatre Projects

ASSIGNMENT

DUE: ANALYSIS & GROUNDPLAN - ET#5 and ET#6

MID SEMESTER BREAK - OCTOBER 22-26

WEEK NINE

Sun. 28 Casting Callback Email #6 - Due to Doug and Gary

Tue. 30 **ET #2**

November

Fri. 2 Discuss ET #2/Discuss Devised Theatre Projects

WEEK TEN

BFA DANCE – Thursday November 8

Fri. 9 Directing Style Presentations (2 groups)

DUE: Presentation of Directing/Company Style

WEEK ELEVEN

Tue. 13 **ET #3**

FAHRENHEIT 451 - Wednesday November 14

Fri. 16 Discuss ET #3/Directing Style Presentation (1 group)

DUE: Presentation of Directing/Company Style

WEEK TWELVE

Tue. 20 **ET #4**

Thur. 23 NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING VACATION

WEEK THIRTEEN

Tue. 27 **ET #5**

THE THREE SISTERS - Wednesday November 28 – Studio Theatre

Fri. 30 Discuss ET#4 and #5

December

WEEK FOURTEEN

BFA Choreographic Concert #2 – Thursday December 6

Fri. 7 Directing Style Presentation (2 groups)

DUE: Written description of your Devised/Adaptation Projects.

WEEK FIFTEEN

Tue. 11 **ET #6**

Fri. 14 Review of ET #6 - Present Devised/Adapted Project to the Class

DUE: Critique of a Repertory production

WEEK SIXTEEN

NO CLASS/Showings

DIRECTING III

Pre-Production

Given Circumstances

Support this section with direct quotes from the dialogue

A. Environmental facts

- Geographical & Date
- Economic environment
- Political environment
- Social environment
- Religious environment
- Relationships

TIPS: Think of this as writing out a “script” for how you will talk about the text with actors in rehearsal.

When you have a disagreement with an actor, you keep the conversation focused on the play and not personal opinion when you can back it up with a quote.

75% of your analysis will be done in Environmental Facts.

In your analysis, always tie your Environmental facts back to what the characters are trying to do to one another. The text is action. If a character is saying something they are acting upon another character.

B. Previous action - List Main Points of Action that have occurred before the play begins.

C. Polar attitudes of the principal characters (The character’s world view/attitude at the beginning of the play and then their attitude at the end of the play - think “journey”).

Character

Address each character (Use these as a starting point)

- Objective (characters in your scene)
 - Scene Objective
 - Super Objective (overall objective for the play)
- Obstacles standing in the characters’ way
- Five (5) quotes that say something about the character’s in your scene (Five for each character in the scene)
- Physical Description – Describe in your own words what this character is like. (as you see them).
- Create a Dream Cast – Cast your play from professional stage and film actors (them must be living). Provide photos of your dream cast for each role.

Idea

- Meaning of the title
- Philosophical statements in the play
- In a sentence, what does the play mean to you – in your own words. Not plot. Be brief.

RESEARCH

I. Review(s) – Find reviews of the original production and notable revivals of the play. If there are no reviews on the play, look for writing about the author’s other work.

II. Critical writing on the work and author

Essays, articles, books, dissertations on the play (older more established works will have more, but always dig deep).

III. The historical era in which the play is set

(Ex: *COUNTRY WIFE* – Restoration England; *NORMAL HEART* – AIDS in the 80’s)

IV. Political, social and economic issues

(Ex: *ALL MY SONS* - War and economics; *THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN* – Ireland in the Depression)

V. Fashion, traditions and manners

Era/Historical Context	Traditions
Manners	Economics
Fashion (Images)	Social issues

PROMPTBOOK/DRAMATIC ACTION

I. Promptbook

A. Pre-blocking:

- Indicate your pre-blocking with arrows on a series of ground plans.
- Below the ground plan, describe in simple sentences what the arrows indicate and number each movement in your script.

B. Properties List - Keep in mind the power objects have to articulate character through action!

C. Rehearsal schedule - Describe how will use 25 hours of rehearsal

D. Organization, Visuals and Creativity – Spend time making this book a place you enjoy visiting. Use visuals and drawings and quotes to create a safety net for yourself when you get off track in rehearsals.

II. Dramatic Action

A. Identify and Title the Units in your Promptbook. Be provocative - think of titles that are visual and/or active.

B. Dramatic Action Worksheet

UNIT BREAKDOWN WORKSHEET

Act/Scene	Unit #	Unit Title	Who's Doing What to Whom	Revelation of Character Through Behavior
Act I: Sc.2	Unit One	EX: Taking the Bull By The Horns	EX: Mark is trying to get his girlfriend to go on the elevator; Mary does not want to go to the party and won't get on the elevator	EX: Mark picks her purse up off the lobby bench and holds it hostage as he gets on the elevator; Mary shows Mark the car keys she still has in her hands – he can go up on the elevator but he'll walk home

DIRECTING III: SCENE EVALUATION

DIRECTOR: _____ SCENE _____

GROUNDPLAN

Creative playground and obstacle course 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

VISUAL TOOLS

Use of Depth/Levels for actors 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Use of Pictures to clarify relationships (allegiance, power, comfort, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Did the Pictures create a photo album of meaningful compositions – would a friend who hadn't seen the show understand basic ideas from picture?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Movement

Did movement tell a story 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Was movement used in balance with picture – active shifts between picture and movement

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Clear sense of “who’s doing what to whom”, cause and effect, chess game

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Was there revelation of character through object/costume use

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

ART OF DIRECTING

Actor coaching

Motivation, examination of daily rituals, listening, intention in action and dialogue

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Directing as a Process

Did the director demonstrate leadership and continue to challenge assumptions throughout rehearsals to presentation?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

TOTAL POINTS _____

ET Discussion (Suggested Ideas)

Staging

Ground Plan

Diagonals in the ground plan

Strong choices for DSR and DSL, as well as USR and USL

Movement

Diagonals

Chess Game

Cause and Effect/Who's Doing What To Whom

Pictures

Acting

Ownership

Motivation

Revelation of Character Through Behavior

Exploration of Daily Ritual

Design