

Syllabus for THTRE 255

Fundamentals of Modern Theatre Practice

Fall 2022

Monday/Wednesday/Friday

8:50 am - 9:40 am

Instructor: Brian Seckfort

Room Numbers: Carver 0338, Fisher 0213, Fisher 0006

Office: Fisher 0014A

Office Hours: T/R 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

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Course Goals

An introduction to the basic concepts, techniques, and tools utilized in basic theatrical stagecrafts such as scenic, costumes, lighting, and more. This course is designed to equip students with the baseline knowledge and skills expected of all theatrical technicians.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance of all ISU Department of Music and Theatre Main Stage productions.
2. Successful completion of all class exercises and projects.
3. Attendance to all class sessions.
 - a. Attendance counts as 10% of your total grade with each absence subtracting from that amount, approximately 0.2% per absence.
 - b. Daily Discussion points will also be deducted per absence, approximately 0.1% per absence.
 - c. If you are absent on a day you have a presentation due you will receive a 0% on that presentation unless you can provide proof of illness.
4. Late work will not be accepted. Exceptions to this requirement are not likely, but are solely at the discretion of the Instructor. Life happens, so talk to me if you think your situation may require an exception.
5. An active ISU email account.

Texts

Scene Design and Stage Lighting, 10th Edition

by W. Oren Parker, R. Craig Wolf, and Dick Block

Publisher: Wadsworth Cengage Learning

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1285687506

ISBN-13: 978-1285687506

Equipment

Scale Rule

Grading and Major Assignments

Attendance	10%
Engagement	4%
Production Critique	5%
Lab	20%
Strikes	6%
Projects	30%
Quizzes/Arch Paper	5%
Fairy Tale Final	20%

Grading Scale

A	93% - 100%	C	73% - 76%
A-	90% - 92%	C-	70% - 72%
B+	87% - 89%	D+	67% - 69%
B	83% - 86%	D	63% - 66%
B-	80% - 82%	D-	60% - 62%
C+	77% - 79%	F	0% - 59%

Attendance (10%)

As mentioned in the Course Requirements, Attendance is 10% of your overall grade. However, multiple absences will not result in an automatic academic penalty, though you will lose your daily points. Attendance will be counted until roughly 50% of the class time (9:15 am) has expired, at which point you will be counted absent unless you have given me prior notification that you are running late, but are on your way. I must receive that notification before class begins.

Engagement (5%)

Engagement is worth 5% of your overall grade. To receive full daily points for Engagement you do not necessarily need to contribute to the discussion, but you must be obviously fully-engaged in the conversation/lecture. Contributing to the conversation will practically guarantee you full Engagement points for the day. While you can arrive slightly late and still receive full Attendance points, you will begin to lose Engagement points from the moment class starts if you are absent, so try to arrive on time. However, late arrival can be counteracted by an engaged contribution to the discussion.

Production Critiques (5%)

Students will be expected to attend and critique all main season shows that are produced during the term. These critiques should be a minimum of three pages long and follow proper MLA format. Critiques should focus on the various design/technical elements of the production, and how they worked (or did not work) together.

Practical Projects (30%)

Students will complete three projects using the skills obtained during this course. These projects will focus on three of the areas covered in the course: Costume Design, Scenic Painting, and Scenic Design Model Building. These projects are designed to reinforce and build upon the skills taught during this course.

Practical Project 1 - Superhero Collage Project (10%)

Students will work on this project together in groups of 2. Each group will be assigned a different piece of the same superhero image, in scale, that they will have to paint on a 4'x4' flat. Each group is expected to use techniques learned in class to create a grid, cartoon the image, and then paint the image onto the flat. At the end of the project all flats will be put together in order to create the full image.

Practical Project 2 - Costume Design Project (10%)

Students will work on this project individually. The goal of this project is for students to exercise their creative skills. Students will be asked to design and collage 4 different costume designs for 1-2 of their musical theatre characters. This can be 4 different looks for 1 character (2 in Act 1, 2 in Act 2), 2 looks for 2 characters, or any combination in between. Students are encouraged (but not required) to choose characters that require more than just "modern clothing." Students will present these designs to the class as some sort of collage (specifically not a Pinterest board) that can purposefully convey the design and story of each characters' costume. Examples of possible presentations include collages created in PowerPoint, Photoshop, Miro or hard copy with magazine cutouts and white board.

Practical Project 3 - Model Box Project (10%)

Students will work on this project individually. Students will create a basic ground plan and model box for the layout of a room of their choosing (a bedroom or living room of their apartment, dorm, or house). Students will take basic measurements of the room to get a sense of scale, and then create a set that could be constructed based on this room. Students have the choice to create a proscenium, thrust, or in-the-round orientation for this project. After completing the measurements, students will draw out a ground plan and create a physical 3D model in 1/4" scale.

Quizzes/Arch Paper (5%)

Students will be expected to complete several in-class (and occasionally on Canvas) quizzes throughout the semester, as well as a short 2 page paper covering Theatre Architecture. The paper should be MLA format and approximately 2 pages in length discussing the various features of an existing theatre of the students' choice. Theatres can be researched online, and pictures may be included, but the paper should be 2 pages in length without the pictures. This means if you insert a picture in the middle of your paper you must have enough written on a third page to cover the lost space. Students will present their papers and research to the class.

Lab (20%)

Students are expected to work at least 3 hours a week in the Scene Shop as part of the THTRE 255 Lab. The Scene Shop operates 2:15 pm - 5:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. If, for any reason, you cannot attend your full hours one week you must make up those hours either a different day that week or on a future day later. Please coordinate that time with Brian Seckfort prior to showing up to make up the hours.

Strikes (5%)

Students will be required to attend and participate in the strikes of all Main Stage productions for a minimum of two hours. Strikes normally occur following the final performance of a production, typically Sunday afternoon/early evening. While at strike, students will be expected to follow all safety procedures as instructed by the Technical Director or Production Manager. Students are expected to actively participate in strike whenever possible, though there may be times where some students must wait before a task is available.

Fairy Tale Final Project (20%)

Students will work on this project together in groups of 3-4. Students will be assigned a classic fairy tale at random. Each student will be assigned a different design area. These assignments can be decided within the group or assigned at random. The goal of this project is to create a fully designed production pitch for the fairy tale. Points will be awarded for creativity, attention to detail, and ambition, among other factors. While each individual student can complete this project on their own, additional points will be awarded for obvious collaboration and cohesion within the group's production. This is a fun project if you approach it with an open mind and a creative spirit. Presentations can be in any format the group desires, however every area must be displayed in some fashion. For example, a student simply talking about their idea for their design is not enough to pass this project. Students must present research materials and some kind of "final" product whether that be an image collage, a rendering, a model, or some other form of demonstrated product. Final projects will be presented on December 13th at 7:30 am in Carver. A rubric will be made available on Canvas prior to the project beginning.

Class Schedule

<u>Week 1</u>		Location	Lab
M 8/22	Introduction/ Syllabus/ Why Theatre?	Carver	No Lab
W 8/24	Understanding Safety	Carver	No Lab
F 8/26	Shop Safety Walkthrough/ Safety Scavenger Hunt	Fisher	No Lab
	Assignment: Safety Quiz on Canvas		
	Assignment: Read Ch. 7 - Scene Design & Stage Lighting		
<u>Week 2</u>			
M 8/29	Intro to Tools	Fisher	Tool Training
	Assignments: Read Ch. 8 - Scene Design & Stage Lighting		
W 8/31	Materials, Adhesives, and Fasteners	Carver	Tool Training
F 9/2	Intro to Scenic Construction	Carver	Tool Training
	Assignments: Read Ch. 2 - Scene Design & Stage Lighting		
	Assignments: Tool and Construction Quiz on Canvas		
<u>Week 3</u>			
M 9/5	No Class- Labor Day		NO LAB
W 9/7	Theatre Architecture	Carver	Build a Flat
	Assignments: Read Ch. 10 - Scene Design & Stage Lighting		
	Assignments: Theatre Architecture Paper Assigned		
F 9/9	Conventional Scenery Practices and Systems	Carver	Build a Flat
<u>Week 4</u>			
M 9/12	Soft Goods	Fisher	Build a Flat
W 9/14	Rigging and Flying	Fisher	Build a Platform
	Assignments: Read Ch. 4 - Scene Design & Stage Lighting		
F 9/16	The Theatrical Design Process	Carver	Build a Platform
<u>Week 5</u>			
M 9/19	Design Emotion Exercise	Carver	Build a Platform
W 9/21	Theatre Architecture Presentation Group A	Carver	Show 1 Build
	Due: Theatre Architecture Paper		
F 9/23	Theatre Architecture Presentation Group B	Carver	Show 1 Build
	Assignment: Read Ch. 9 - Scene Design & Stage Lighting		
<u>Week 6</u>			
M 9/26	Intro to Scenic Painting	Fisher	Show 1 Build
W 9/28	Scenic Texture Sampler	Fisher	Show 1 Build
F 9/30	Scenic Texture Sampler	Fisher	Show 1 Build
	Assignment: Paint and Techniques Quiz on Canvas		
	Assignment: Superhero Collage Project		

<u>Week 7</u>			
M 10/3	Work on Superhero Collage	Fisher	Show 2 Build
W 10/5	Work on Superhero Collage	Fisher	Show 2 Build
F 10/7	Superhero Collage Presentation/ Critique	Fisher	Show 2 Build
	Due: Superhero Collage Project		
SU 10/9	Strike - Polaroid Stories	Fisher	
<u>Week 8</u>			
M 10/10	Intro to Costumes	Carver	Show 2 Build
	Assignment: Costume Design Project		
W 10/12	Work on Costume Design Project	Carver	Show 2 Build
F 10/14	Present Costume Design Project Group B	Carver	Show 2 Build
	Due: Costume Design Project		
<u>Week 9</u>			
M 10/17	Present Costume Design Project Group A	Carver	Show 2 Build
	Due: Polaroid Stories Response Paper		
W 10/19	Intro to Properties Design and Management	Carver	Show 2 Build
F 10/21	Stage Management: Guest Speaker	Carver	Show 2 Build
<u>Week 10</u>			
M 10/24	Intro to Lighting Design	Carver	Show 2 Build
W 10/26	Intro to Electrics	Carver	Show 2 Build
F 10/28	Intro to Programming	Carver	Show 2 Build
<u>Week 11</u>			
M 10/31	Scenic Design Process	Carver	Show 2 Build
	Assignment: Model Box Project		
W 11/2	Work on Model Box Project	Carver	Show 2 Build
F 11/4	Work on Model Box Project	Carver	Show 2 Build
<u>Week 12</u>			
M 11/7	Present Model Box Project Group A	Carver	Show 2 Build
	Due: Model Box Project		
W 11/9	Present Model Box Project Group B	Carver	Show 2 Build
F 11/11	Intro to Photoshop	Carver	Show 2 Build
SU 11/13	Strike - Night of the Living Dead	Fisher	

Week 13

M 11/14	Photoshop Personal Logo Exercise	Carver	TBD
W 11/16	Intro to Video Design/ Premier Pro	Carver	TBD
F 11/18	Projection Mapping	Carver	TBD
	Due: Night of the Living Dead Response Paper		

Week 14

M 11/21	No Class- Fall Break	N/A	N/A
W 11/23	No Class- Fall Break	N/A	N/A
F 11/25	No Class- Fall Break	N/A	N/A

Week 15

M 11/28	Intro to Sound Design	Carver	Shop Clean
W 11/30	Intro to Final Project	Carver	Shop Clean
	Assignments: Fairy Tale Project		
F 12/2	Work on Fairy Tale Final Project	Carver	Shop Clean

Week 16

M 12/5	Work on Fairy Tale Final Project	Carver	Shop Clean
W 12/7	Work on Fairy Tale Final Project	Carver	Shop Clean
F 12/9	Work on Fairy Tale Final Project	Carver	Shop Clean

Finals: Present Final Projects Tuesday, December, 13th at 7:30 am in Carver.

Iowa State University Policies

The following policies are universal of all Iowa State University courses and must be abided by at all times.

Academic Dishonesty

The class will follow Iowa State University's policy on academic dishonesty. Anyone suspected of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students Office.

Accessibility Statement

Iowa State University is committed to assuring that all educational activities are free from discrimination and harassment based on disability status. Students requesting accommodations for a documented disability are required to work directly with staff in Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to establish eligibility and learn about related processes before accommodations will be identified. After eligibility is established, SAS staff will create and issue a Notification Letter for each course listing approved reasonable accommodations. This document will be made available to the student and instructor either electronically or in hard-copy every semester. Students and instructors are encouraged to review contents of the Notification Letters as early in the semester as possible to identify a specific, timely plan to deliver/receive the indicated accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are not retroactive in nature and are not intended to be an unfair advantage. Additional information or assistance is available online at www.sas.dso.iastate.edu, by contacting SAS staff by email at accessibility@iastate.edu, or by calling 515-294-7220. Student Accessibility Services is a unit in the Dean of Students Office located at 1076 Student Services Building.

Prep Week

This class follows the Iowa State University Prep Week policy as noted in section 10.6.4 of the Faculty Handbook.

Discrimination and Harassment

Iowa State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. Veteran. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to Office of Equal Opportunity, 3410 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, Tel. 515-294-7612, Hotline 515-294-1222, email eooffice@iastate.edu.

Religious Accommodation

Iowa State University welcomes diversity of religious beliefs and practices, recognizing the contributions differing experiences and viewpoints can bring to the community. There may be times when an academic requirement conflicts with religious observances and practices. If that happens, students may request the reasonable accommodation for religious practices. In all cases, you must put your request in writing. The instructor will review the situation in an effort to provide a reasonable accommodation when possible to do so without fundamentally altering a course. For students, you should first discuss the conflict and your requested accommodation with your professor at the earliest possible time. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the Dean of Students Office at 515-294-1020 or the Office of Equal Opportunity at 515-294-7612.

Free Expression

Iowa State University supports and upholds the First Amendment protection of freedom of speech and the principle of academic freedom in order to foster a learning environment where open inquiry and the vigorous debate of a diversity of ideas are encouraged. Students will not be penalized for the content or viewpoints of their speech as long as student expression in a class context is germane to the subject matter of the class and conveyed in an appropriate manner.