

*“It is important to remember that a director’s work, as with any artist, is intuitive...Directing is about feeling, about being in the room with other people; with actors, with designers, with an audience. It is about having a feel for time and space, about breathing, and responding fully to the situation at hand, being able to plunge and encourage into the unknown at the right moment.”*

*-Anne Bogart, A Director Prepares*

# **Directing I**

*Theatre 455*

*Course Syllabus, Fall 2019*

*Credits: 3*

**Professor:** Brad Dell

**Pronouns:** He/Him/His

**Course Time:** Monday and Wednesday – 3:10 – 4:30 pm

**Office:** Carver 310      **E-mail:** [dellbrad@iastate.edu](mailto:dellbrad@iastate.edu)

**Student Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9:00 – 11:00 am

Additional office hours may be scheduled by appointment.

**Classroom:** Carver 308

**Phone:** 515.294.0184, 724.787.7639

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

**Students enrolled in this course will learn and develop skills in:**

- Cultivating their artistic and creative vision.
- The director’s role in the theatrical team.
- Analyzing scripts from the director’s point of view.
- Preparation of a directing prompt book.
- Beat work.
- Staging, blocking, ground plans, and rehearsal procedures.
- Working with actors.
- Exploring the role theatre has to play in reflecting, challenging, and changing the world.
- Celebrating the human right to be creative.
- Leading a Team
- Practicing Empathy
- Engaging in Critical Thinking
- Collaborating as an artistic community to break down and solve the problems of directing.

**At the completion of Theatre 455: Directing I, students will be able to:**

- Analyze a play from the point of view of the director and formulate and articulate a director’s concept statement
- Break down a play into beats and create a director’s prompt book
- Discuss the best practices for director/actor/designer collaboration
- Plan, organize, and lead a production from auditions through rehearsals to a fully mounted public performance
- Begin to articulate how to view theatre’s role in the broader context of contemporary society

## **ISU’s Principles of Community**

Students are responsible for living the tenets established in ISU’s Principles of Community: Respect, Purpose, Cooperation, Richness of Diversity, Freedom from discrimination, and the Honest and respectful expression of ideas. Visit ISU’s Principles of Community webpage <http://bit.ly/isuprinciples>.

## **Community Agreements:**

As agreed upon by the class, the following community agreements will be relied upon throughout this course:

**Name, Gender Identity and/or Gender Expression:** Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

#### **REQUIREMENTS:**

**Text:** *The Director's Eye* by John Ahart  
*After Eternity* by Eugenie Carobotsos  
*Crimes of the Heart* by Beth Henley

**Collaboration:** It has been said that theatre is the most collaborative of art forms. In order to exercise this concept, this class will be set up as an artistic community, dependent on the participation and enthusiasm of each member for the success of the whole. In-class exercises, discussion and projects make up a major portion of this course. Subsequently, if a student fails to contribute by not speaking up or not attending, the student's participation grade will be penalized.

**Attendance:** Attendance will benefit you in several ways. You will stay up to speed on all course content. You won't fall behind in any way. And since this class is mostly group projects you will maintain a positive presence for your collaborators. You will be allotted one absence. After that your grade will drop by one letter grade with each absence. (i.e. an A becomes a B). Tardiness will be counted as 1/2 an absence. **YOUR CLASSMATES DEPEND ON YOU TO BE THERE EVERY DAY.**

**Writing:** Since this is a college level course, students are expected to write at a college level. Students are expected to hand in assignments that are neatly typed, double spaced with proper margins, correctly spelled, grammatically correct, and stapled. Major points will be deducted for incorrect spelling and grammatical errors (including comma splices, run on sentences, sentence fragments, etc.).

**Public Speaking:** The ability of students to be efficient verbal communicators is of paramount importance to their success. Therefore, the many presentations included in this class will partly focus on cultivating the skill of verbal communication. Students will be expected to speak and present in an enthusiastic, professional, passionate, and educated manner.

**Late Work:** Work must be turned in via Canvas on the day that it is due. Late work is eligible for up to 70% of the original points.

**Cheating and Plagiarizing:** Plagiarism is defined as copying or paraphrasing the ideas of others and passing them off as your own. Cheating and plagiarism are very serious issues and could be grounds for failure in this class and expulsion from this university. Please see the University Policy for more information.

**Rehearsal:** Please note that this course will require an extensive amount of rehearsal during AND OUTSIDE of class time.

#### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

There will be small day to day assignments and readings which will be assigned throughout the semester. These will be announced both in class and available via Canvas.

Reading Assignments from *The Director's Eye*, in class working scripts, and supplemental sources will be assigned throughout the semester.

***The Following are major projects, which will be assigned in full at a later date. After each of these projects, students will turn in a self-evaluation response paper via Canvas which will be factored into the grade for each project.***

*One Day Plays* – Each student will each be assigned a scenario in which they will direct two or three other students in a short scene that will be rehearsed and performed within one class period.

Students will serve as director for one of the following three projects. Students will serve as actors for two of the projects. You are graded for all three scenes. Commitment, dedication, work ethic, positive attitude, memorization, and scene analyses are all components of your grade.

*5 Minute Sketches* – Students will direct or act in 5 minute scenes. This assignment focuses on text, imagination, and basic movement.

*After Eternity Scene*– This assignment allows you to work with a brief section (around 5 minutes) *After Eternity* by Eugenie Carabotsos This assignment focuses on practical problems of mounting an existing script: analysis, beat work, rhythm, picturization, movement, etc.

*Crimes of the Heart Scenes* - This assignment allows you to work with a brief section (no longer than 5 minutes) of *Crimes of the Heart* by Beth Henley. This assignment focuses on practical problems of mounting an existing script: analysis, rhythm, picturization, movement, etc.

Each student will direct a 10 minute play for the final project, which will be performed in the M-Shop during FINALS WEEK. This must be a published play with dialogue in a realistic style. Students are highly recommended to explore plays on the [National New Play Exchange \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) In keeping with ISU Theatre’s HEROic season, it is strongly suggested that plays be written by women or non-binary playwrights. It is also suggested that your play has 2-3 actors. Play selection requires the instructor’s approval. Please note that for a variety of reasons, students will be providing their own technical support. In addition to the presentation of the scene, the student will prepare a prompt book, script analysis, rehearsal blog and summary response. More details about those assignments are included in this module.

#### **Tentative Point Breakdown:**

One Day Play	75
5 Minute Sketch	100
After Eternity Scene	100
Crimes of the Heart Scene	100
After Eternity Beat Work	50
After Eternity Image Collage	25
Ten Minute Play	200
10 Minute Play Beat Work Book	50
10 Minute Presentation	50
10 Minute Play Analysis	100
10 MP Prompt Book & Summary Response	50
Participation	100

#### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is defined as copying or paraphrasing the ideas of others and passing them off as your own. Cheating and plagiarism are very serious issues. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing in this class will automatically receive a “0” on the assignment and be turned into the Academic Dishonesty Committee. Please see the student handbook for more information. If you have any question about whether you are plagiarizing an assignment, please ask me about it before you turn it in. 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.

<http://www.dso.iastate.edu/ja/academic/misconduct.html>

#### **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](http://www.sas.dso.iastate.edu), by contacting SAS staff by email at [accessibility@iastate.edu](mailto: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

#### **Dead Week**

This class follows the Iowa State University Dead Week guidelines as outlined in

<http://catalog.iastate.edu/academiclife/#deadweek>

#### **Harassment and Discrimination**

Iowa State University strives to maintain our campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff, and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment based upon race, ethnicity, sex (including sexual assault), pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or status as a U.S. veteran. Any student who has concerns about such behavior should contact his/her instructor, [Student Assistance](#) at 515-294-1020 or email [dso-sas@iastate.edu](mailto:dso-sas@iastate.edu), or the [Office of](#)

[Equal Opportunity and Compliance](#) at 515-294-7612.

### Religious Accommodation

If an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances, you may request reasonable accommodations. Your request must be in writing, and your instructor or supervisor will review the request. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the [Dean of Students Office](#) or the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance](#).

### Usability, Disability, and Course Design

I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made or if an accommodation might be needed to overcome the limitations of the design. I am always happy to consider creative solutions as long as they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity. You are also welcome to contact the Student Accessibility Services via phone 515-294-7220 to begin this conversation or to establish accommodations for this or other courses. I welcome feedback that will assist me in improving the usability and experience for all students.

### Student health and wellness

Iowa State University is committed to proactively facilitating the well-being of all students. We welcome and encourage students to contact the following on-campus services for assistance regarding their physical, intellectual, occupational, spiritual, environmental, financial, social, and/or emotional needs:

- Student Wellness call 515-294-1099 or via website <http://studentwellness.iastate.edu>
- Thielen Student Health Center call 515-294-5801 (24/7 Medical Advice) or via website <http://www.cyclonehealth.org>
- Student Counseling Services call 515-294-5056 or via website <https://counseling.iastate.edu>
- Recreation Services call 515-294-4980 or via website <http://recservices.iastate.edu>
- Students dealing with heightened feelings of sadness or hopelessness, thoughts of harm or suicide, or increased anxiety may contact the ISU Crisis Text Line (Text ISU to 741-741) or contact the ISU Police Department 515-294-4428.”

Students in this course are responsible for being familiar with the University’s student rules and policies. Visit the ISU Policy Library website <http://www.policy.iastate.edu>.

### Contact Information

If you are experiencing, or have experienced, a problem with any of the above issues, email [academicissues@iastate.edu](mailto:academicissues@iastate.edu).

<i>Directing I</i>	<i>Tentative Class Schedule</i>	
Date	Topic	Assignments
Mon. Aug. 26	Introduction & What is a director?	Begin Looking for 10 Minute Plays <a href="https://newplayexchange.org/dashboard">https://newplayexchange.org/dashboard</a>
Wed. Aug. 28	The two wells from which the director draws...	Read Ahart Ch. 1-4 Answer Questions Assign One Day Plays
Mon. Sept. 2	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS	
Wed. Sept. 4	One Day Play Round 1	Work on One Day Plays
Mon. Sept. 9	One Day Play Round 2	Work on One Day Plays
Wed. Sept. 11	One Day Play Round 3	Work on One Day Plays
Mon. Sept. 16	One Day Plays Wrap Up and Rehearsal Discussion	Read Ahart Ch. 5-10

	How to Structure a Rehearsal and a Rehearsal Schedule	One Day Play Responses Due
Wed. Sept. 18	Working with Actors	Read Ahart Ch. 22-24
		Practice Side Coaching
Mon. Sept. 23	Discuss Ground Plans/Blocking/Composition	Read Ahart Ch. 26-31/Assign Composition Project and 5 Minute Scenes
Wed. Sept. 25	Composition Project Presentations	5 Minute Director's Worksheet Due
Mon. Sept. 30	Composition Project Presentations	5 Minute Actor Worksheets Due
Wed. Oct. 2	In Class Work on 5 Minute Scenes	
	Staging	
Mon. Oct. 7	In Class Work on 5 Minute Scenes	10 Minute Plays Chosen
	Actors off Book - Work Scenes	10 Minute Play Analysis Assigned
Wed. Oct. 9	In Class Work on 5 Minute Scenes	
	Run Scenes/Give Notes	
Mon. Oct. 14	5 Minute Scenes Performed	
Wed. Oct. 16	Analysis, Discovery & Images	Read Ahart Ch. 11 and 14
	Discuss <i>After Eternity</i>	Read <i>After Eternity</i>
	The Concept Statement	Assign Image Collage and Concept Statement
Mon. Oct. 21	Discuss Beat Work	Read Ahart Ch. 12 and 13 Assign <i>After Eternity</i> Beat Project,
	Rhythm, Tempo, Primal Objective Exercises	5 Minute Response Papers Due
Wed. Oct. 23	Image Collage Presentations	Image Collage and Concept Statement Due
		Assign <i>After Eternity</i> Scenes
Mon. Oct. 28	In Class Work on <i>After Eternity</i> Scenes	One on One Meetings with Brad to Discuss
	Staging	<i>After Eternity</i> Beat Work and 10 Minute Play
Wed., Oct. 30	In Class Work on <i>After Eternity</i> Scenes	
	Actors Off Book - Work scenes	
<b>Friday, Nov. 1</b>	<b>10 Minute Play Auditions - 3:00 - 6:00 pm</b>	
Mon., Nov. 4	10 Minute Play Presentations	10 Minute Play Analyses and Prompt Book Due
Wed., Nov. 6	In Class Work on <i>After Eternity</i> Scenes	
	Run Scenes/Give Notes	
Mon. Nov. 11	In Class Work on <i>After Eternity</i> Scenes	10 Minute Play Google Calendar Rehearsals Schedules Due
Wed. Nov. 13	<i>After Eternity</i> Scenes Performed	

Mon. Nov. 18	Discuss <i>Crimes of the Heart</i>	Read Play 3
Wed. Nov. 20	In Class Work on Crimes - Staging	Actors Off Book
THANKSGIVING BREAK		After Eternity Response Papers Due
Mon. Dec. 2	In Class Work on <i>Crimes</i>	
	Actors Off Book Work Scenes	
Wed. Dec. 4	In Class Work on <i>Crimes</i>	
	Run/Work Scenes	
Mon. Dec. 9	Perform Play Crimes	
Wed. Dec. 11	Semester Wrap Up and 10 Minute Play Update	Crimes of the Heart Response Paper Due 12/13
<b>Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday of Finals Week</b>	<b>TENTATIVE PERFORM 10 MINUTE PLAYS M-Shop</b>	Responses Due
<b>TBA</b>	<b>10 Minute Play response breakfast at Brad's house</b>	