

THTRE 504A: ADVANCED MUSICAL THEATRE SEMINAR

Course Syllabus—Spring 2022

Instructor: Cason Murphy, M.F.A.

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Course Time: Mondays from 6:00pm-8:00pm

Thursdays (starting Feb. 10) from 6:00pm-8:00pm

Classroom: Carver 308

Office: Carver 320

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Phone: 515-294-8936

Office Hours: Mondays from 12:00pm–2:00pm

Wednesdays from 1:00pm–12:00pm or always by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

This course is designed as a workshop process of a professional musical stage presentation with the addition of written assignments and hands-on theatre training. Students, acting as creative rather than interpretive artists, will study and breakdown music and text, work to originate and develop and originate characters, and explore the acting aspects of musical theatre including vocals, choreography and dialogue through workshopping, rehearsing, and presenting the new musical BABA in a public performance.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:	This will be measured by:
Demonstrate the ability to artistically contribute to the workshop process through your own discipline (performance, directing, design, etc.).	<i>Attendance and participation in rehearsals, design meetings, and public performances</i>
Work collaboratively within a cooperative learning and creative environment.	<i>Participation in generative rehearsals, design meetings, choreography, music, and blocking rehearsals</i>
Enhance your individual ability to analyze character creation and development through design, music, and libretto analysis.	<i>Primary reflection paper, character work, design process, choreography, music, and blocking rehearsals</i>
Improve your confidence by developing and showcasing your discipline-specific skills.	<i>Participation in rehearsals, design meetings, and public performance of BABA</i>
Assess your own creative and performance process.	<i>Final reflection paper</i>

TEXT AND MATERIALS

Required Texts

BABA—Jessica Kahkoska and Elliah Heifetz

Required Materials

Pencil at every rehearsal and recording devices at all musical and blocking rehearsals

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Course Requirements	Percentage
Attendance, Participation, and Collaboration	50%
Final Performance	10%
Primary and Final Reflection Paper (2 x 20% each)	40%
TOTAL	100%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Dates	Topic of Class Meeting	
WEEK 2		
Jan. 24	Read-through	
WEEK 3		
Jan. 31	Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm)	
WEEK 4		
Feb. 7 Feb. 10	Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm)	
WEEK 5		
Feb. 14 Feb. 17	Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm)	
WEEK 6		
Feb. 21 Feb. 24	Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm)	
WEEK 7		
Feb. 28 Mar. 3	Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-8:00pm)	
WEEK 8		
Mar. 7 Mar. 8 Mar. 9 Mar. 10 Mar. 11	Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Primary Reflection Paper due by Mar. 11	
SPRING BREAK (MAR. 12-20)		
WEEK 9		
Mar. 21 Mar. 22 Mar. 23 Mar. 24 Mar. 25	Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm)	
WEEK 10		
Mar. 28 Mar. 29 Mar. 30 Mar. 31 Apr. 1	Monday Monologues–ISU Library (1:00PM) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm)	
WEEK 11		
Apr. 2 Apr. 3 Apr. 4 Apr. 5	Dry Tech (12:00pm-6:00pm) Tech Rehearsal (12:00pm-10:00pm) Tech Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm) Tech Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm)	

Apr. 6	Tech Rehearsal (6:00pm-10:00pm)	
Apr. 7	PERFORMANCE—7:30PM	
Apr. 8	PERFORMANCE—7:30PM	
Apr. 9	PERFORMANCE—7:30PM	
Apr. 10	PERFORMANCE—2:00PM	
WEEK 12		
TBD	Postmortem Discussion	
FINAL		
Friday, May 6	Final Reflection Paper DUE	

ITEMS TO BE GRADED

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Attendance at all scheduled rehearsals and performances is mandatory. Participation refers to your active contribution and due diligence in the completion of tasks as directed by the production team, faculty design mentors, or shop supervisors.

Students may be excused for absences for any of the following—with proper documentation:

- Class field trips or other curricular related activities
- Extra-curricular activities as a representative of the university, such as:
 - academic or professional conferences and workshops
 - intercollegiate athletic, academic, and judging competitions
 - musical, theatrical, dance and other artistic performances
 - presentations or programs given to external audiences
- Military Service
- Court Appearances
- Funeral
- Positive COVID-19 Test or necessary isolation from exposure
 - The period of excusal from class will extend to the full length of the isolation period under current CDC guidance.

Any student who has an excused absence must provide the proper documentation to me prior to the date of the absence to excuse your absence. You must also make arrangements with the production team to catch up on any production work that will be missed.

PRIMARY AND FINAL REFLECTION PAPERS: Upon receipt of a full libretto, all students will submit a character, design, or production analysis and a reflection on the early work in the process (**due by March 11**). Students will later evaluate their progress and growth through a process analysis after the workshop performance (**due by May 6**). Further instructions will be provided in class.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY: This class honors ISU's Principles of Community and expects the classroom discourse and attitude to reflect them: respect, purpose, cooperation, richness of diversity,

freedom from discrimination, and the honest and respectful expression of ideas:

<http://www.diversity.iastate.edu/principles-of-community>

REGARDING NAME, GENDER IDENTITY AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION: Class rosters and any other university-controlled apparatuses (email, Canvas, etc.) are created, and provided to me, using the student's legal name. However, I will gladly honor any request to address you by an alternate name or pronouns. Please advise me of your preferences so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

FLEXIBILITY: First and foremost, this is a workshop process of a completely new musical. Please expect things to change—and engage in trust, good faith, collaboration, patience, and flexibility when they do.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: As a land-grant institution, we are committed to the caretaking of this land and would like to begin this event by acknowledging those who have previously taken care of the land on which we gather. Before this site became Iowa State University, it was the ancestral lands and territory of the Baxoje or loway Nation. The United States obtained the land from the Meskwaki and Sauk nations in the Treaty of 1842. We wish to recognize our obligations to this land and to the people who took care of it, as well as to the 17,000 Native people who live in Iowa today.

ACCESSIBILITY: 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 meet with staff in Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to establish eligibility and learn about related processes. Eligible students will be provided with a Notification Letter for each course and reasonable accommodations will be arranged after timely delivery of the Notification Letter to the instructor. Students are encouraged to deliver Notification Letters as early in the semester as possible. SAS, a unit in the Dean of Students Office, is located in room 1076, Student Services Building or online at www.sas.dso.iastate.edu. Contact SAS by email at accessibility@iastate.edu or by phone at 515-294-7220 for additional information.

COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION: Because of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, all students are encouraged to:

- **Wear face masks.** Current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and further information on the proper use of face masks can be found on the [CDC website](#).
- **Get vaccinated.** Iowa State's Thielen Student Health Center on campus is scheduling free, convenient vaccinations and boosters. Further information is available on [ISU's COVID-19 Vaccinations](#). Vaccinations may also be obtained from health care providers and pharmacies.
- **Avoid high-exposure areas and monitor your health**—please stay home if you're ill.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Please know that the following on-campus services are available for assistance regarding your 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.

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. 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>

WRITING AND MEDIA CENTER ASSISTANCE: The Writing and Media Center (WMC) helps students become effective, confident communicators by supporting students during all stages of the writing process, from brainstorming to revising, as well as with oral, visual, and electronic communication. The WMC offers one-on-one and group consultations online—to register and schedule an appointment, see <https://iastate.mywconline.com/>. For more information, visit our website at <https://www.wmc.dso.iastate.edu> or emailwritectr@iastate.edu.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND 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.

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.

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, or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance at 515-294-7612.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you are experiencing, or have experienced, a problem with any of the above issues, email academicissues@iastate.edu