

Technical Direction

THEA 4516/6516-001 Fall 2015

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About the Class:

Technical Direction is a round table course that introduces students to the conceptual research and execution that is the major function of the technical director.

Teaching Philosophy:

Theatre is a collaborative art form. Part of what I will try to impart in this course is how the technical director fits into the collaboration. What roles can a technical director play as well as the most common functions of a TD.

Student Expectations:

Attendance is required. Three unexcused absences will result in the loss of one full letter grade for the class. Be on time! Four late entries will qualify as 1 absence. If you are sick, call me and leave a message before you skip class! Otherwise I will consider you without excuse!! If anyone needs help or has questions, at any time, please find me and ask. I am usually in my office or the shop if I am not in class. My schedule is posted on my office door.

Please understand that plagiarism in any form, including un-cited internet sources, constitutes *academic misconduct* (as defined and discussed in the Student Handbook) and is grounds for *Summary Discipline*. Any attempt to appropriate or submit the work of another person as though it were your own constitutes plagiarism.

Disabilities

In an effort to comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), I strongly encourage any student with a disability condition which requires accommodation, or which may affect performance in this course, to bring this to my attention as soon as possible, either in class or in the privacy of my office. I will make a sincere effort to provide reasonable accommodation to your needs.

Texts:

<i>Backstage Handbook</i>	<i>Highly Recommended</i>
TD Toolkit	<i>Highly Recommended</i>
<i>Health & Safety for TV, Film & Theatre</i>	<i>Highly Recommended</i>

Grade Break Down:

Papers	15%
Paper Project	40%
Equipment Specification	10%
Scene Shop Layout	20%
Structural Design Problems	10%
Attendance/participation	5%

Grade Scale:

95-100	A+	90-95	A		
85-89	A-	83-85	B+	80-83	B
75-79	B-	73-75	C+	70-73	C
65-69	C-	63-65	D+	60-63	D
55-59	D-	0-55	F		

Date Topic

Week 1

General Discussion: What does a TD do?
The TD's Process & Collaboration, Estimation

Week 2

Documentation: Drafting, Schedules, Checklists
Materials & Construction discussion

Week 3

Estimating Labor
Non Traditional Sculptural Scenery

Week 4

Crew training & management (morale, stress reduction...)
Equipment set up and maintenance

Week 5

Assessing a new space
Outfitting & Organizing a scene shop

Week 6

Shop & Tool Maintenance
Problem Solving Lab

Week 7

Lighting & Sound for the TD
Compare & Critique shops

Week 8

Bidding New equipment for a Theatre
TD Process: *Phantom* & *PKD*

Week 9

Scene Shop Safety
Online Training Portal (slips, Trips, Etc & powertools)

Week 10

TD Portfolios & Resumes
Demonstrate your Process (Take us Through a Show)

Week 11

Structural Design for Beams

Week 12

Structural Design for Beams

Week 13

Problem Solving Lab

Assignments & Projects

1st Paper
Paper Due

Grads Bring Sample Docs!

Develop your Lab Syllabus
"Syllabus"/plan due

Layout & Equipment Proj. Begin

Layout & Equipment Specs. Due

Shop Layout Due
Specification Assignment

Specifications Due

Assigned Problems

Assigned Problems

2nd Paper Assigned

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14

Structural Design for Beams

Assigned Problems/**2nd Paper Due**

Final Day

More Recommended Books:

Structural Design for the Stage

Alys E. Holden

ISBN:0-240-80354-x

Drafting for the Theatre

Dennis Dorn, Mark Shanda

ISBN:0-8093-1508-4

Designer Drafting for the Ent. World

Patricia Woodbridge

ISBN:0-240-80424-4

Stage Rigging Hand Book

Grainger Catalog.

It seems silly but it is amazing what you can learn from it.

Grad Projects

1st Paper:

1) Discuss your understanding of what the Technical Director's job(s) entails, including how the job may vary given the broad and varying types of theatres a TD may encounter. 2) Explore the possibilities of new title for the job since "technical" covers so many possible areas. 3) Discuss examples of TD jobs that you have observed or held and how they have influenced your opinions as previously stated. What would you change or keep?

Lab (or other crew) Planning

You will develop a syllabus for a student practicum. The idea here is to try to solve the conundrum of getting students to show up, but not having so many at once that you can't work. Ideally base this on our department, or another program with which you are familiar (or might apply to). This could also be an overhire season plan if you can cite a specific example of a theatre season, its budget and demonstrate the need for and distribution of overhire labor.

Shop Equipment Specifications:

Grads will be creating their equipment specs based on an advanced wood shop as outlined in the hand-out and also has intermediate to advanced metal capability. The specified equipment will be used in the shop layout project. You are equipping your shop for a crew of approximately carpentry crew of 8, props crew of 3 and paint crew of 3. Create a list (or spreadsheet) specifying the tool, its size as applicable and the quantity. Provide a CD with a .pdf spec sheet for each chosen tool; the files should be clearly named and organized. (Make sure the .pdf is letter size)

Scene Shop Layout:

The goal of this project is to discover efficient ways of organizing work flow; to discover and document a process by which materials may enter a shop, be cut, assembled, painted and sent to the theatre. It is not realistic to think that areas will never overlap or that nothing will ever be in the way. The goal is to reduce conflicting overlaps as much as possible.

Your shop will be based on an advanced size as specified in the hand out and the previous project. The size of your shop is 50' wide and 100' long with a 22' ceiling. It is off site, and will therefore have a dock door(s) through which all materials and scenery will enter and exit. Consider how to most efficiently use the vertical as well as the horizontal space. You must provide a drafted ground plan of your shop that includes:

- Appropriately sized dock & personnel doors.
- Defined work areas

Wood cutting
Wood Assembly
Finished Unit Storage (you are allowed one 53' Storage trailer in your dock)
Steel Cutting & Welding
Paint mixing, storage and clean up area (include flammables)
Scenic painting area, including a 50' paint frame

- Defined Dock access (site plan)
- tool room (including how this room is layed out to organize all your tools)
- TD office
- ATD/props office
- Lockers or break room for carps stuff.
- restrooms (may be a bump out)
- supply storage (glue, sandpaper, hoses...)
- hardware storage (screws, nails, bolts...)
- Stationary power tools with appropriate work stations.
- Dust collection
- Material storage (Stick lumber, sheet goods, scrap lumber, foam & steel)
- A plan table or plan storage
- Work tables
- Air, power, and lighting distribution
- Props assembly, refinishing & painting area (Assume props are stored off site)

You must also provide elevations of any vertical storage, stacked offices, or other fixtures.

Final Paper:

Will be defined at time of assignment.

Undergrad Projects

1st Paper:

1) Discuss your understanding of what the Technical Director's job(s) entails, including how the job may vary given the broad and varying types of theatres a TD may encounter. 2) Explore the possibilities of new title for the job since "technical" covers so many possible areas. 3) Discuss examples of TD jobs that you have observed or held and how they have influenced your opinions as previously stated. What would you change or keep?

Paper Project:

Over the course of the semester you will develop a complete technical package for a given design. This includes budget & technical plates. Pieces will be due incrementally, but this is also an exercise in time management. A semester long project allows time to incorporate ideas developed in class.

Shop Equipment Specifications:

Undergrads will be creating their equipment specs based on an intermediate sized wood shop as outlined in the handout with basic to intermediate steel capability. The specified equipment will be used in the shop layout project. You are equipping your shop for a crew of approximately 15 people at any given time. Create a list (or spreadsheet) specifying the tool, its size if applicable and the quantity. You are only required to outfit the scene shop, but may include props & paint items, especially if they are to be shared. There is no need to be brand specific.

Scene Shop Layout

The Goal of this project is to discover efficient ways of organizing work flow. The goal is to discover and document a process by which materials will enter a shop, be cut, assembled, painted and sent to the theatre. It is not realistic to think that areas will never overlap or that nothing will ever be in the way. The goal is to reduce conflicting overlaps as much as possible.

Your shop will be based on an intermediate size as specified in the hand out and the previous project. The size of your shop is 35' wide and 60' long with a 22' ceiling. It is on site, and will therefore have a dock door separate from the loading door (it is assumed they will be on different walls) You must provide a drafted ground plan of your shop that includes:

- Appropriately sized dock, theatre & personnel doors
- Defined work areas
- tool room
- supply storage (glue, sandpaper, hoses...)
- hardware storage (screws, nails, bolts...)
- Stationary power tools with appropriate work stations.
- Material storage (Stick lumber, sheet goods & steel)
- A plan table
- Work tables
- Air and power distribution
- Paint mixing, storage and clean up area

Also provide elevation of any walls that have vertical storage, stacked offices or other fixtures.

Final Paper:

Will be defined at assignment date.