

Part II: THTR 486 Course Revision Description of Curriculum Change

Section 1: Syllabus of Record

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

THTR 486: Practicum in Production (0-3 credits)

0 lecture hours

3-9 lab hours

(var-.5-3sh))

Prerequisite: theater major standing or permission of instructor

An opportunity with academic credit for students to make significant contributions to campus productions augmenting theater coursework in the areas of directing, acting, stage management, technical direction, design (sound, set, lights, costume, makeup), properties, scenic construction and scenic art painting, costume technology, dance, and running crews. Repeatable course required of all theater majors for a minimum of six semesters, one of which must be a final project for senior majors.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES: The overall objective of Practicum experiences in the Department of Theater and Dance is for students to participate in the performance and production practices described and studied in the formal classroom. It is expected that students will learn the practical applications of classroom instruction, as well as the traditions and work ethic of the theatre and dance professions. In addition, by the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Competently perform the tasks associated with their assignments
2. Assist others in the company with their tasks
3. Read and understand the callboard and other communication sources
4. Explain their roles, onstage or backstage, in the context of the whole production
5. Evaluate their performances, onstage or backstage
6. Plan what students would like to do for their next production/practicum assignments

Theater majors in their senior year would be assigned a senior production project that would additionally provide an opportunity for the execution, documentation and evaluation of their growth in their particular area of concentration.

III. COURSE OUTLINE:

Expectations for a student's practical activity are formed in a written agreement between the student, his/her practicum faculty supervisor and the department's faculty practicum coordinator at the beginning of the semester. This assignment defines the credits to be earned by the student as well as specific job performance expectations. Performance expectations are based upon the department's written job description and the student's ability level as assessed by their faculty supervisor. These assignments range in responsibility and duration from a roughly two weeklong running crew commitment for .5 credit to a semester long design or directing commitment for 3 credits.

Generally accepted credit assignments for specific production jobs are noted below:

2-3 credits:

Director, Scene Designer, Costume Designer, Choreographer, Technical Director, Playwright, Dance Company Production Assistant, Stage Manager

1-2 credits:

Actor, Assistant Costume Designer, Asst. Costume Studio Supervisor, Assistant Director, Assistant Scene Designer, Assistant to the Director, Asst. Stage Manager, Dramaturg, Music Director, Theater Librarian, Dance Company Choreographer, Dancer, Lighting Designer, Charge/Lead Painter, Asst. Technical Director, Properties Master, Asst. Scenery Studio Supervisor, Asst. Lighting Designer, Master Electrician, Sound Designer, Master Carpenter, Asst. Choreographer, Asst. Master Carpenter, Dance Company member

.5-1 credit:

Wardrobe Supervisor, Milliner, Scene Painter, Set Dresser, Board Operator, Sound Technician, Makeup Supervisor, House Manager, Wardrobe crew, Wig/Hair Stylist, Cutter/Draper, Asst. Master Electrician, Understudy, Stage Crew, Costume Crew, Makeup Designer

Senior Production Project: Senior majors are required to take on a major production responsibility in their area of concentration in the theater major. Examples of possible projects in each area of concentration:

1. Performance:

- a. Researching and performing a major role in a Mainstage or Studio production
- b. Writing and directing or performing a one person show
- c. Researching, compiling, and performing an evening of monologues.
- d. Directing a full-length production either in the Mainstage or Studio
- e. Stage managing a Mainstage production and submission of a prompt book complete with any documentation, handouts

2. Design/Tech:

- a. Researching and designing set, costumes, lights, sound, and/or props (or any combination) for a Mainstage or studio production
- b. Researching and executing a design project for a play chosen by the design staff. (This project would not have to receive a production.)
- c. Execution of a major crew head responsibility including such research and/or documentation deemed necessary by the TD or costumer
- d. Researching and executing a solution to a technical production problem
- e. Stage managing a Mainstage production and submission of a prompt book complete with any documentation, handouts

3. Musical Theater:

- a. Researching and performing a major role in a Mainstage musical production
- b. Writing and directing or performing a one person musical

- c. Researching, compiling, and performing an evening of songs, dances and monologues.
 - d. Directing a musical either in the Mainstage or Studio
4. Theater History and Theory:
- a. Serve as Dramaturg on a Mainstage production
 - b. Research paper/project on a particular genre, playwright, or play connected with production done in Mainstage or Studio season
 - c. Writing a play for at least a staged reading in the Studio

IV. EVALUATION METHODS

The FINAL GRADE will be determined by each student's faculty supervisor using a combination of meeting the minimum expectations of the job (as defined by the department job description along with the specifics of the job as defined by the faculty supervisor with the student at the beginning of the semester) and a commitment to an ethical professionalism in carrying out the day to day responsibilities of the job. Generally, these will be determined by the following guidelines:

A=excellent work, an outstanding contribution to the company through diligent and consistent application of talent at whatever level is appropriate to your experience, as well as clear evidence of collaborative effort

B=good work, positive contribution to the company through applying your talents at whatever level is appropriate to your experience

C=fair work, contributed to the production with some minor shortcomings which indicate performance below a level appropriate to your experience

D=poor work, contribution was seriously flawed by absences, carelessness, or other detractions which are under your control

F=unacceptable work and/or a considerable lack of commitment to the expectations of the job

V. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS: There are no required textbooks for this course.

VI. SPECIAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:

Theater spaces and shops in support of production in those spaces.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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- Hagen, Uta. Respect for Acting. New York: Macmillan, 1973.
- Jones, David Richard. Great Directors at Work: Stanislavsky, Brecht, Kazan, Brook. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986.
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Section 2: Summary of Proposed Revisions:

The primary proposed revision is the inclusion of the senior year project in the six-semester requirement for theater majors.

Section 3: Justification/Rationale for Revision:

Given the assumption that theater majors should be growing in their practical application in their discipline over a four year immersion in a program that combines coursework with production work most semesters, it should be essential that they be capable of taking on a major production assignment in their area of concentration by the time they are seniors. While nearly all of our majors are pursuing this growth move towards more and more major production responsibilities by the time they are juniors/seniors in the theater major, there has been no way to fully recognize the capstone nature of their work within the curriculum. This shift to a senior year project as part of their Practicum in Production requirements further serves to support the concentration focus of the proposed curriculum.

Section 4: Old Syllabus of Record:

THTR 486 Practicum in Production was created as a course in 1977 when the department was first formed by the university. There is no "syllabus of record" available for any course created in that first curriculum as such a record was not required for new courses in the curriculum at that time.

TH486, PRACTICUM IN PRODUCTION, Department of Theater and Dance

Course Description and Syllabus, Fall 2002

Overview

Practicum is an opportunity for students to apprentice themselves to the activity of IUP's theatre company, Theater-By-The-Grove or to the dance company. Students augment their more formal course work by joining a performance company in one of the areas of performance, direction, management, design, technical production or promotion/publicity. Tasks are "contracted" with the department faculty member responsible in the chosen area of a production. Auditions are required for performance roles, and interviews are required for production roles.

Practical Information

(for more information refer to the department's student handbook)

INSTRUCTOR: Your instructor for this course is the "supervisor" who signed your practicum assignment sheet.

CONTACT INFORMATION: Contact your supervisor via the department office, or see the contact sheet posted on the callboard.

PRACTICUM COORDINATION: Brian Jones is the practicum coordinator for Spring 2002. If you are finding difficulty in or have questions about your practicum assignment, and have already spoken with your practicum supervisor, then you should speak with the practicum coordinator.

MEETING PLACE AND TIME: Specifically assigned work (painting, acting, building, etc) is scheduled by your supervisor as required to meet the production schedule. Your supervisor will tell you what your schedule will be, but if you don't hear from him (or her) contact him to find out where and when you are expected. Because schedules change, check the call board daily for notices posting calls and changes.

Company Meetings for the purpose of sharing information are held on occasional Mondays at 4:45 in Waller Hall. The first meeting of each semester (usually—but not always—the first Monday of classes) is an orientation meeting at which agreement forms are written and signed for various activities in Theater-By-The-Grove productions. Other company meetings for information sharing may be called on Mondays throughout the semester. The Dance Company conducts its own, separate, organizational meetings.

Post Mortems for the purpose of discussing the "lessons learned" after each theater production are typically held the first Monday after a production closes, again at 4:45.

TEXT AND MATERIALS: There is no text. Materials are provided by Theater-By-The-Grove.

Course Objective and Goals

The overall objective of Practicum experiences in the Department of Theater and Dance is for students to become acquainted with the performance and production practices described and studied in the formal classroom. We expect students to learn the practical applications of classroom instruction, as well as the traditions and work ethic of the theatre and dance professions.

By the end of the course you should be able to...

- competently perform the tasks associated with your assignment
- assist others in the company with their tasks
- read and understand the call board and other communication sources
- explain your role, onstage or backstage, in the context of the whole production
- evaluate your performance, onstage or backstage
- plan what you would like to do for your next assignment

Evaluation and Grading

At the bottom of your Practicum Assignment Sheet (or contract) there is space for your supervisor to write evaluative comments and your letter grade. This is done at the end of the semester, and the comments are returned to you. Your grade is the responsibility of your practicum supervisor and can only be given by him/her. It is likely that your supervisor may request a meeting with you to reflect on your experience before determining your final grade. If you are wondering how your supervisor grades, ask them. As a very general rule of thumb, however, you can expect the following:

A=excellent work, an outstanding contribution to the company through diligent and consistent application of talent at whatever level is appropriate to your experience, and evidence of collaborative effort

B=good work, positive contribution to the company through applying your talents at whatever level is appropriate to your experience

C=fair work, contributed to the production with some minor shortcomings which indicate performance below a level appropriate to your experience

D=poor work, contribution was seriously flawed by absences, carelessness, or other detractions which are under your control

F=unacceptable work

Attendance Policy

Since the schedule of your assigned work is determined by your supervisor, each faculty member may have a different policy. Theatre is a communal art which requires everyone to work together, so you should assume that absences, particularly unplanned and unexcused absences, will lower your final grade. Your supervisor may take your attendance at COMPANY MEETINGS into account in figuring your final grade.

Check the callboard often—daily during your phase of the production.

Schedule

It is your responsibility to abide by the schedule required for your area of performance or production. Each work period is termed a *call*. Performance and production calls will be posted on the call board outside the greenroom in the basement of Waller Hall. The dates and times listed below the basic outline of the semester. Your supervisor may take your attendance at COMPANY MEETINGS into account in figuring your final grade. See the call board for tech/dress rehearsal dates, and **REFER TO THE CALL BOARD DAILY FOR ADDITIONS AND CHANGES.**

FINALS WEEK MAY BE USED BY YOUR SUPERVISOR TO SCHEDULE AN EVALUATION INTERVIEW

Company Rules and Responsibilities

One of the most important tasks [a theatre or dance artist] faces is working smoothly with the people around him. Each project a[artist] chooses to work on (and he does choose) surrounds him with new personalities, each with opinions about how a scene should work or which ... technique is superior or whether the next day will bring rain. Though conflict is the essence of drama, it is the bane of productivity; therefore, keep the following virtues ever before you:

- 1) humility, so that when someone corrects you, you will not be offended
- 2) generosity, so that when someone errs, you do not condemn, but forgive
- 3) consideration, so that when someone believes something, you do not denounce his belief,
- 4) tact, so that when you believe something, you know the proper place, manner, and time to present that belief.

--From A Practical Handbook for the Actor

By taking this practicum course you are participating in Theater-By-The-Grove (TBTG) or the IUP Dance Company. They are the producing arms of the Department of Theater and Dance. TBTG is run as much like a professional resident theatre as is possible given its primary mission of teaching and training undergraduate students. The IUP Dance Company is an ensemble organized on a professional model. Therefore, the privilege you have earned by audition or interview carries a responsibility--to behave with a professional attitude toward the craft of making theatre.

A professional attitude is founded upon a work ethic that requires self-discipline, respect for one's associates and dedication toward your audience. The following company rules are founded on this work ethic:

- The show must go on. Missing a call, let alone a performance, is inexcusable for any but the most dire reason. Unexcused absences are cause for dismissal from the company.
- The company is expected to sign in for the stage manager at all tech and dress rehearsals, at performances, and at strike.
- You are expected to work to the best of your ability. Regardless of how small a task might seem to be, others are counting on you to do it well.
- You are expected to come to calls focused and sober. Mind altering substances interfere with your work, show disrespect for your fellow actors and technicians, and aren't cool. Coming to a call under the influence is a cause for dismissal from the company.
- You are expected to consult with the director and/or stage manager before changing any entrance, cue, business, line or design element during the run of a show.
- You are expected to remain in the theatre for all calls and performances.
- You are expected to remove make-up and costume before meeting with the public.
- You are expected to join the whole company in striking the scenery, props, costumes and lighting after the final performance.
- You are expected to only use stage properties and costumes as they were intended. Playing with the props and costumes of others is not tolerated, and willfully damaging props or costumes is grounds for dismissal from the company.