

THEATER 3221-001  
DIRECTING I  
Syllabus

Fall 2007  
MW 11:00-12:45  
Robinson Lab Theatre (135)

Instructor: James Vesce  
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Office Hours (Robinson 378): MW 2-3 and by appointment

Course Description

Directing I is an introductory course in directing. It explores the fundamentals of theater staging with an emphasis on text analysis, work with actors, and creation of space. We will study in method and practice a variety of approaches to the craft of directing through class activities and performance. The goal of the class is to begin to understand the many roles and responsibilities of the theater director as an artist and collaborator.

Grading and Requirements

25% Classroom participation in exercises, discussions and activities

25% All written work and assignments, including written critiques of departmental and outside productions

25% Mid-Term Exam

25% Direction of a scene and submission of a production book at the end of the semester

Textbooks

There are no required textbooks for this class. Instead, readings will be placed on reserve and e-reserve either in the library or through my website. It is expected that you will make photocopies of these readings and any other materials necessary for class presentations and assignments.

Required Productions

You must see and submit a written critique for the following Department of Dance and Theatre productions:

*Stop Kiss*

By Diana Son

Directed by James Vesce

Lab Theater

October 4-7 at 8 pm; October 8 at 2 pm

## *Hotel Paradiso*

by Georges Feydeau and Maurice Desvallieres; Translated into English by Peter Glenville

Directed by Dennis Black

Anne R. Belk Theater

October 25-28 at 8 pm; October 29 at 2 pm

Tickets for departmental productions are \$5 for students.

### Guidelines for Critiques

These essays are your personal evaluations of each show: what worked for you, what didn't work. We will be using a specific format for critiquing these productions and our own work. You may be asked to read your critique in class, or present your ideas for discussion. For now, you may want to consider the following:

Keep in mind you are writing a production critique. Areas of interest may include the performance of the actors, the design elements (scenery, lighting, costumes, sound), the interpretation of the text or script, or any additional aspect of the production you found interesting or problematic.

1. Write the critique while the show is still fresh in your mind.
2. Avoid plot and/or theme summaries. Take a position – be opinionated and honest, but fair.
3. The review cannot be comprehensive or thorough – it should only reflect a few aspects of the production. As much as possible use specific examples to critically assess your general impressions of the work.
4. Credit specific artists, directors, and designers by name.
5. Writing is an important aspect of the assignment. Proofread carefully. The formal rules of grammar and style apply.
6. Suggested length: 2-3 pages, typed/double-spaced, 10 or 12 font. Papers must have a ticket stub and a program attached or they will not be accepted.

### Department of Dance and Theatre Studio Class and Performance Protocol

*The following are uniform guidelines for participation in studio and seminar performance classes. In a studio class or seminar most of the work is "in-class" and "hands-on." Attendance and full participation are therefore essential. Preparation and focus should guide your work as well; your demeanor in class should reflect this at all times. It is important for everyone to work cooperatively and collaboratively, and to create an environment of openness and trust.*

### Attendance

Two absences are permitted. After two absences, the instructor reserves the right to lower your grade one full letter for each additional absence. Only under special circumstances will a student be allowed to miss additional classes, and then only with advanced notice and appropriate documentation, subject to the rules and regulations of the University and the discretion of the instructor. Exceptions may include but are not limited to the following: religious holidays, medical emergencies, university athletic events, family emergencies, professional opportunities. Please do not call or email the instructor explaining absences. Failure to honor rehearsal schedules and time commitments is unprofessional and unacceptable, and will result in a lower grade. Absence at out-of-class rehearsals and group meetings will be considered as class absences.

## Tardiness

Tardiness is defined as arriving late once class has begun. 3 tardy arrivals constitute 1 absence. After the first 15 minutes of class, however, the instructor reserves the right to close or lock the door and/or deny you admission to the class. This will result in 1 absence. If you are tardy by more than 15 minutes and choose to come to class (provided the door is unlocked), it will still result in 1 absence. Students who are more than 5 minutes late for exams will not be admitted.

## Coursework

You may not use one of your 2 absences as an excuse for missing a class presentation. If you are absent from class on a day of a presentation or written assignment, the assignment, when presented or turned in, will be graded without prejudice and then lowered by one full letter grade. In the case of performance presentations - you are not guaranteed the chance to present your assignment late (if going back causes a schedule problem). If an assignment is one week late it will not be accepted.

All scheduled monologues, scenes, and class presentations must fulfill the requirements set forth by the instructor in class (e.g., one must read required material, be prepared for discussion, be off-book, etc.). Failure to perform the scene as required will result in a lower grade for that portion of the assignment.

You are expected to spend a considerable amount of time outside of class in rehearsal. Failure to honor rehearsal schedules and time commitments is unprofessional and is likewise unacceptable, and will result in a lower grade for the assignment.

Other specific requirements in the syllabus may apply to each course as necessary.

## Course Materials

It is expected that you will use the textbooks and materials recommended for this course. Otherwise, you run the risk of inconsistency among translations and adaptations, dissimilar pagination, and all of the other inconveniences to classmates that follow from different versions of the same play or text. You might also jeopardize your preparation for exams. Printer and software failure are unacceptable excuses

## Use of Facilities

Food and drink are expressly forbidden in the studio classroom and theater. Only bottled water is acceptable. All furniture, set pieces, and props should be returned to their proper places at the end of class.

## Dress and Behavior

Appropriate dress should be worn at all times. Do not wear short skirts, platform shoes, flip-flops, or any cumbersome clothing. Be prepared for floorwork at all times.

## Guests

Visitors to class are allowed with permission of the instructor only.

## Department of Dance and Theatre Mission and Purpose Statement

Majors and minors in the Department are encouraged to explore the theoretical foundations and aesthetics of both dance and theatre through a required series of cross-disciplinary courses as well as discipline-specific courses. While receiving a foundation in dance and theatre, all students in both our lecture and studio courses gain knowledge and skills that allow them to achieve career goals, commit to life-long learning, and enrich their quality of life. In addition, all students may gain practical experience through performance and technical assignments in the Department's production season.

Faculty members are committed to the teaching and practice of dance and theatre, as they foster academic progress and artistic expression in an environment that respects cultural and artistic diversity (note that "cultural diversity" refers to issues of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability). In addition, they contribute to the University, the community, and their professions through scholarly and creative endeavors and through service activities. To conclude: in all its endeavors the Department strives to emphasize 1. Interdisciplinary interaction between dance and theatre, and 2. Interactions that promote cultural diversity.

### Code of Academic Integrity

Students have the responsibility to know and observe the requirements of the UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity (see 1999-2001 University Catalog, p. 375). This code forbids cheating, fabrication, falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Any special requirements or permissions regarding academic integrity in this course will be stated by the instructor and are binding on the students. Academic evaluations in this course include a judgment that the student's work is free of academic dishonesty of any type, so grades in this course therefore should be and will be adversely affected by academic dishonesty. Students who violate the code can be expelled from UNC Charlotte. The normal penalty for a first offense is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases the course grade is reduced to "F." Copies of the code are available in the Dean of Students' Office or in the Catalog as cited above. Standards of academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty to the course instructor.

### Disability Services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Services, Fretwell 230, 704/687-4355, as early as possible in the term. It is your responsibility to make your special needs known so that we may be of assistance.

THEA 2216-001 Directing  
Schedule of Assignments

Monday	Aug. 21	<b>Labor Day – No Class</b>
Wednesday	23	Introduction to the Course/Directing Exercise #1
Monday	28	Directing Exercise #2
Wednesday	30	Directing Exercise #3
Monday	4	Labor Day – No Class
Wednesday	6	Lecture: Conceptions of Directing
Monday	11	Lecture: Text Analysis for Production Part I Read: <i>The Red Coat</i> (Handout) Anne Bogart, <i>Viewpoints and Sourcework</i> Mel Shapiro, <i>Reading The Text</i> Prepare Sourcework Presentations
Wednesday	13	Sourcework Presentations
Monday	18	Sourcework Presentations Directing Exercise #4: Auditions
Wednesday	20	Read: Michael Shurtleff, <i>Audition</i> Audition Assignments
Monday	25	<b>No Class TBA</b> Read Michael Shurtleff, <i>Audition</i> Audition Assignments
Wednesday	27	<b>TBA</b>
Monday	Oct 2	The Audition Process: Monologues & Scenes
Wednesday	4	The Audition Process: Callbacks
Monday	9	<b>Fall Break – No Class</b>
Wednesday	11	Ground Plans and Spaces
Monday	17	Directing Terminology

Wednesday	19	Rehearsal Techniques and Strategies Reading: William Ball et al.
Monday	24	Rehearsal Techniques & Strategies Reading: William Ball et al.
Wednesday	26	Blocking and Staging Reading: R.H. O'Neill et al.
Monday	31	Blocking and Staging Reading: R.H. O'Neill et al.
Wednesday	Nov 2	<b>Mid Term</b>  <b>Production Book/Score</b>  <b>Scene/Short Play Assignments</b>
Monday	7	Scene/Short Play Rehearsals (No Class)
Wednesday	9	Scene/Short Play Rehearsals (No Class)
Monday	14	Scenes 1-3
Wednesday	16	Scenes 4-6
Monday	21	Scenes 1-3
Wednesday	23	<b>Thanksgiving Break – No Class</b>
Monday	28	Scenes 4-6
Wednesday	30	Scenes 1-6
Monday	5	<b>All Scenes Final Presentation</b>
Wednesday	7	Postmortem