

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

- A. Department Information:
Division: Humanities and Social Science
Department: Speech and Performing Arts
Course ID: THART 135
Course Title: Directing Fundamentals
Units: 3
Lecture: 2 Hours
Laboratory: 3 Hours
Prerequisite: THART 120

- B. Catalog and Schedule Description:
This course is an introductory study of techniques of directing for the theatre. Topics to be covered include such areas as script analysis and blocking, rehearsal, staging, and the processes to be followed in working with other creative artists in theater, including producers, designers, and crews. Beginning directors will work with beginning and intermediate actors on class projects which may culminate in workshop production.

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One.

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

Upon completion of the course the student should be able to:

- A. Describe the responsibilities of the director;
- B. Choose scenes from plays based on interest, available talent, and demographics;
- C. Analyze a script;
- D. Block scenes;
- E. Set up auditions and cast scenes;
- F. Create a promptbook;
- G. Establish a working relationship with actors;
- H. Schedule and conduct rehearsals effectively;
- I. Adapt scripted materials to a variety of theatrical environments;
- J. Explain and demonstrate different directorial techniques appropriate to a variety of genres;
- K. Demonstrate the ability to work with support staff to produce scenes for public performance.

IV. COURSE CONTENT:

- A. Taking a play apart
 - 1. Foundation and façade of the playscript
 - a) Given circumstances
 - b) Dialogue
 - 2. Dramatic action
 - 3. Characters
 - 4. Idea and rhythmic beats
 - 5. Director's preparation
- B. Communication
 - 1. Director-actor relationship and stage blocking
 - a) Working with actors
 - b) Visual perception
 - c) Helping actors communicate through ground plans
 - d) Composition: helping actors discover and project basic relationships
 - e) Helping actors intensify (gestures and improvisation)
 - f) Picturization: Helping a group intensify
 - g) Movement
 - h) Coordinating blocking tools
 - 2. Helping actors speak a play

- a) Scene practice
- b) Diagnostic criticism
- 3. Director's design function and communicating through staging
 - a) Directing is designing
 - b) Director and the stage machine: symbolization and synthesis
 - c) Director's options
 - i) Choice of stage
 - ii) Scenery, properties, and lighting
 - iii) Costume, makeup, and sound effects
- 4. Helping audiences receive a play
 - a) Responsibility to audiences
 - b) Designing and directing productions
- C. Interpretation: A matter of style
 - 1. Style as individual expression
 - 2. Style in playwriting and playwrights
 - 3. Director's analysis of style in a playscript
 - 4. Style in production
 - a) Making decisions
 - b) Modern plays
 - c) New Plays
 - d) Plays of past ages
 - 5. Directing with designers
- D. Directing musical theater and opera

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Lecture
- B. Demonstration
- C. Audio visual presentations
- D. Hands-on supervised practice
- E. Participation on workshop presentations

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Directing Project: Select a scene from a contemporary, classical, or avant garde play. After randomly drawing 2-3 actors for the scene, prepare and execute your directorial plan. Be sure to address lighting, costumes, set design, props, and the performance of the actors.
- B. Analysis Paper: After you have directed your scene, prepare a 4-6 page written analysis. Explain the decisions you made, your efforts to motivate the actors, and critique the scene as a whole. Conclude your paper with a discussion of what improvements you would now make and your plan for making those improvements.

VII. EVALUATION(S):

- A. Methods of evaluation:
 - 1. Objective and subjective examinations designed to test students' comprehension of course material. Sample test questions: Explain the stylistic choices a director must make.
 - 2. Subjective evaluation of student performance. Students are evaluated on their ability to apply course concepts to theatrical productions presented both within class and in workshop productions presented by the college.
- B. Frequency of evaluation:
 - 1. At least two examinations
 - 2. At least three scenes directed by the student
 - 3. At least three analysis papers

San Bernardino Valley College
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VIII. TYPICAL TEXT(S):

Hodge, Francis. Play directing: Analysis, communication, and style (5th edition). Allyn and Bacon, 2000.

Shapiro, Mel. The director's companion. Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 1998.

Vaughan, Stuart. Directing plays: A working professional's method. Allyn and Bacon, 1993.

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None