

**SCENE DESIGN CAPSTONE THEA 4352**  
**The University of Texas at El Paso**  
**Department of Theatre and Dance**

**College of Liberal Arts Land Acknowledgements**

As members of the University of Texas at El Paso community, we acknowledge that we are meeting on unceded Indigenous land. We would like to recognize and pay our respects to the Indigenous people with long ties to the immediate region: Lipan Apache, Mescalero Apache, Piro, Manso, Suma, Jumano, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo Piro/Manso/Tiwa Indian Tribe of the Pueblo of San Juan de Guadalupe, and Tortugas Pueblo. We also acknowledge the nations whose territories include present day Texas: the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, and the peoples of Chihuahua and northern Mexico from whom most/many of our students descend, such as the Rarámuri, Tepehuan, Wixarrika and Nahuatlaca peoples. Finally, we recognize all of the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories here in Paso del Norte, on Turtle Island. The University of Texas at El Paso honors your history and cultures, and we seek greater awareness of the myriad ways in which your legacy can guide us in fruitful partnerships and mutually fulfilling relationships.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**THEA 4352: SCENE DESIGN CAPSTONE**

**Term: Spring 2026**

**Instructor: Cynthia Esparza**

**E-mail: [cesparza12@utep.edu](mailto:cesparza12@utep.edu)**

**Meeting Day and Time: W 12:00 - 13:30, Fox Fine Arts D174**

**Delivery Method: In-person weekly or biweekly**

**Written Communication: [cesparza12@utep.edu](mailto:cesparza12@utep.edu)**

**Office hours: 13:00- 16:00 M - F (office, on stage or by appointment)**

**Phone Number: (915) 747 78 52**

**Office Location: Fox Fine Arts D174**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on advanced, upper-division practices in scenic design for theatrical production. Students are expected to demonstrate a high level of creativity, professionalism, and critical inquiry as they develop a comprehensive scenic design capstone project. Emphasis is placed on expanding visual storytelling skills, deepening understanding of scenic design processes, and applying industry-standard methods of research, communication, and production. Students will explore conceptual development, drafting, model making, and collaboration within a production environment. The course encourages the development of an individual design voice while producing professional, portfolio-ready work grounded in research and hands-on realization. Students must effectively communicate their design ideas and

research through verbal presentation, written documentation, and visual materials consistent with professional theatrical standards.

### **Course Objectives**

- To provide students with the opportunity to conceptualize, develop, and execute a complete scenic design capstone project.
- To strengthen students' ability to apply advanced scenic design techniques, including research, drafting, model making, and visual communication.
- To encourage critical thinking and artistic decision-making rooted in script analysis, concept development, and design research.
- To develop professional-level communication skills through verbal presentations, written documentation, and visual design materials.
- To foster effective collaboration with directors, faculty mentors, and production teams within a theatrical production environment.  
To prepare students to produce portfolio-ready scenic design work that reflects their individual artistic voice and professional standards of the theatre industry.
- To guide students in managing the scenic design process from pre-production through realization while meeting deadlines and production requirements.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop and articulate a comprehensive scenic design concept grounded in script analysis, research, and artistic intent.
2. Produce professional-quality scenic design materials, including research documentation, sketches, renderings, drafting, and models appropriate to industry standards.
3. Demonstrate advanced problem-solving and critical thinking skills in response to artistic, technical, and production constraints.
4. Communicate scenic design ideas clearly and professionally through verbal presentations, written documentation, and visual media.
5. Collaborate effectively with directors, faculty mentors, and members of the production team throughout the design and production process.
6. Manage the scenic design workflow from pre-production through realization, meeting deadlines and adapting to feedback.
7. Synthesize research, conceptual development, and technical execution into a cohesive, portfolio-ready scenic design capstone project.
8. Reflect on personal artistic growth and professional development within the field of scenic design.

## **Assessment Methods**

Student performance in this course will be evaluated through a combination of process-based and final project assessments designed to measure artistic growth, professional practice, and technical execution:

- **Scenic Design Capstone Project**  
Evaluation of the complete scenic design project, including concept development, research, drafting, renderings, models, and/or realized design work, demonstrating professional standards and artistic intent.
- **Research and Concept Development**  
Assessment of script analysis, historical and visual research, conceptual clarity, and the integration of research into scenic design decisions.
- **Design Documentation and Presentation**  
Evaluation of design materials such as sketches, renderings, drafting, models, paperwork, and formal presentations to faculty, directors, and peers.
- **Collaboration and Professional Practice**  
Assessment of the student's ability to collaborate effectively with directors, faculty mentors, and production teams, including communication, adaptability, and professionalism.
- **Process Reflection and Portfolio Preparation**  
Evaluation of written reflections, self-assessment, and the organization of portfolio-ready materials demonstrating growth and readiness for professional practice or graduate study.

### **Capstone evaluation areas:**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Orlando</b>
<b>Preproduction</b>	<b>Package: Research, Sketch, Final Design (Physical), Floor Plans, Elevation Plans, Section View, Rendering.</b>
<b>Production</b>	<b>White Model, 3 elements of Technical Director, list of materials, Calendar/work plan.</b>
<b>Final product</b>	<b>3D Model and the scenery.</b>

CATEGORY	5	4	3	2-0	SCORE	NOTATIONS*
<b>1. Ability to meet deadlines</b>	Meet all deadlines comfortably/ displayed excellent planning and time management	Meet most deadlines but displayed poor planning and time management	Missed some deadlines/ meet deadlines with partially complete work	Did not meet the majority of deadlines		
<b>2. Attends /Schedules meetings with the director &amp; design team</b>	Attended all production meetings and scheduled individual meetings with the director and/or other members of the design team when needed	Attended all production meetings but only meet with the director and/or other members of the production team when prompted	Missed some production meetings/ rarely meet with the director	Missed the majority of meetings/ did not meet with the professor/director scheduled meetings that they did not attend		
<b>3. Self-motivation</b>	Was able to problem solve to see what needed to be done/ fulfilled all responsibilities without needing to be prompted	Fulfilled responsibilities with little prompting	Needed constant prompting and guidance to fulfill responsibilities	Did not fulfill responsibilities even with constant prompting		
<b>4. Creativity</b>	Work executed with a fresh personal vision without relying on cliché	Work executed with some fresh, personal vision	Work executed with little fresh, personal vision	Work executed with no fresh, personal vision		
<b>5. Research/Well thought out design</b>	Gathered a sizable amount of research from both visual and literary sources/ each choice was either based in research or deviated from it for solid reason/ all decisions were appropriate for the production	Gathered a sizable amount of research from visual sources/ some decisions were made arbitrarily and/or did not fit the production	Needed to do more research/ many decisions were made arbitrarily and/or did not fit the production	Did very little research/ consistently made decisions that were inappropriate for the productions		
<b>6. Renderings/ Plot/Drafting and accompanying paperwork</b>	All renderings/ drafting was excellently done and all accompanying paperwork was complete and accurate	Renderings/ drafting was done well but could use improvement/ accompanying paperwork was incomplete and/or needs improvement	Renderings/ drafting was needs improvement and/ or was incomplete/ missing accompanying paperwork	Renderings/ drafting and accompanying paperwork was not done		
<b>7. Ability to collaborate with the director/ professor</b>	Developed a good working relationship with the director/ made compromises when necessary/ design concept fit with the director's concept	Was hesitant to make compromises but design concept fit with the director's concept	Design concept did not fit with the director's concept/ had to be instructed to make necessary compromises	Refused to compromise/ developed a hostile relationship with the director/professor		

<b>8. Works well with the rest of the design team, stage management, crew, and actors</b>	Developed a good working relationship with the rest of the design team, stage management, crew, and actors	Was successfully able to work through conflicts that arose with the rest of the design team, stage management, crew, and/or actors	Worked through conflicts with mediation	Developed a hostile relationship with the rest of the design team, stage management, crew, and/or actors		
<b>9. Takes responsibility for the physical aspects of the show being completed on time</b>	Stepped into complete notes and/or construction projects when needed/ all physical aspects of the show were complete on time	Stepped i to complete notes and/or construction projects only when deadlines were imminent/ minor notes were incomplete by tech/dress	Stepped into complete notes and/or construction projects only after deadlines were past/ major notes were incomplete by tech/dress	Physical aspects of the show or project were left incomplete		
<b>10. Stays with-in budget and timeline constraints</b>	Fully utilized budget without going over and managed tiem propeerly	Did not go over budget but had a sizable amount of unused money that could have been used to improve the quality of the design	Went somewhat over budget and mis managed time	Went drastically over budget and caused other shows to lose significant build time		

**Total Points:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Letter Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A= 45 points or more**

**B= 40**

**C= 35**

**D= 30**

**F= 29 points or less**