

DIRECTING II
THEA 4300 | 28567

SPRING 2020 SYLLABUS

Monday & Wednesday
10:30AM – 11:50AM FOX STUDIO THEATRE

Instructor: Georgina Hernandez Escobar, MFA

E-mail: ghernandez9@utep.edu

Office & Hours: Monday and Wednesday 2:00-4:00 PM [Prospect Hall #126] or BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.
Please send me an e-mail, make sure that you identify yourself and CLEARLY state your concern.

Required Texts

- "Collaborative Stage Directing" by Jean Burgess; ISBN 978-0-367-08618-3
- *Waiting For Lefty* by Clifford Odets (available via PDF per instructor).

Supplies

- 3- ring binder (your prompt book)
- colored pencils
- Composition Notebook (lined or blank as per your preference)

It will be necessary for students to provide and maintain a journal for this class. The journal will be needed for every class session.

Course Descriptions

A continuation of principles addressed in Directing I but applied specifically to ensemble and devised-theatre genres. Students will practically apply theories learned in Directing I to an ensemble-created (via vignettes) final showcase of a modern adaptation of "Waiting for Lefty" by Clifford Odets, and original works (TBD). Special emphasis will be placed on the collaborative relationship between Directors and Designer as well as between Directors and Actors. Student directors will conduct concept presentations, participate in production meetings, and lead rehearsals for one vignette scene or scene from original new work— out of the sourced material. Both works will culminate in a workshop presentation of each script.

GOALS

1. To develop and enhance approaches to staging and analysis.
2. To apply the fundamental directorial approaches of textual analysis to devised script.
3. To demonstrate skilled use of rehearsal techniques and vocabularies for working with actors
4. To demonstrate effective rehearsal management.
5. To collaborate effectively with various student designers in the production process.

Course Requirements

1. Participate in open and productive collaborations with various student designers.
2. Meet scheduled deadlines and turn in assigned work on time. Late assignments will not be accepted.
3. Direct a scene excerpt/vignette from *Waiting for Lefty* to culminate in a production of the adapted/recreated piece.

4. A comprehensive journal of all outside rehearsals for the assigned script and class notes from in-class rehearsals, lectures, and exercises.
5. Complete and turn in analyses/prompt book for directorial project.
6. Demonstrate effective rehearsal strategies during in-class rehearsals w/ actors.
7. Attend A MINIMUM of two (2) of the following UTEP Spring 2020 productions/events (CHOOSE 2): *Monsters We Create*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *ACDA Festival*, *ReUnión rEvolución: A Latinx New Works Fest*, *Into The Beautiful North*, *Staging the Daffy Dame [Siglo de Oro]*, *Titanic*, and other events TBD by instructor. **YOU MUST ATTEND AT LEAST TWO OF THESE EVENTS, WORKING OR PARTICIPATING ON THEM ONLY COUNTS TOWARDS ONE OF THE TWO.**

SUBJECT MATTER:

The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable seeing on stage. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. As I will respect your individual's rights to choose what shows you want to see, I expect all our discussions—including any that may occur outside of class—to be conducted in a respectful and professional matter.

8. Be prepared to participate in all class discussions and exercises.
9. Communicate in class (Peer Feedback), write (Journal) and create a FINAL PROMPTBOOK.

Evaluation Criteria

- Char. Breakdown & Rehearsal calendar. (DUE 2/19)—10%
- Beat-by-Beat Breakdown (DUE 2/26)—10%
- Blocking Breakdown (DUE 3/4)—20%
- Research and concept presentation (DUE 4/8)—10%
- Final Promptbook & Presentation—(DUE 5/6 & 5/7)—30%
- Show Attendance (2 at 5% each)—10%
- Attendance & Participation—10%

GRADING POLICY:

A = 90%-100% B = 80% - 89% C = 70% - 79% D = 60% - 69% F = 0% - 59%

Attendance

Due to the nature of this course, attendance at **EVERY SESSION IS MANDATORY**. You will be allowed **TWO** “unexcused” absences during the semester. (This excludes absences affecting a classmate’s performance, i.e. scene partners. In these, instances an unexcused absence will be accrued.) After your second absence, your final letter grade will drop 5% with each additional absence. *If you accrue five or more absences, you will not receive a passing grade.*

If absences are incurred due to an emergency situation or illness, the instructor will review options for making up the work, but the student must document the reason for the absences prior to the review. **SAVE YOUR ABSENCE FOR WHEN YOU REALLY NEED IT.**

In the event of an emergency or illness, please notify me as soon as possible.

If you must leave class early, see me first, or it will count as an unexcused absence. BE ON TIME. Two late arrivals count as an absence. If you arrive late, see me at the end of class to make sure you were not counted absent.

If there is a need for me to cancel class, I will let you know during the class period prior to the one being cancelled. Otherwise, in the case of a last-minute cancellation, I will let you know via email and/or a posted note on the door of the classroom. If you don't hear it from me, don't believe it.

Students with disabilities: I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class in the first two weeks or make an appointment, to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services in the East Union Bldg., Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. The Center for Accommodations and Support Services can also be reached in the following ways:

Web: <http://www.utep.edu/cass>
Phone: (915) 747-5148 voice or TTY
Fax: (915) 747-8712
E-Mail: cass@utep.edu

COMMITMENTS & CONSIDERATIONS

- **RECIPROCITY:** Treat this course as you would any intensive in a conservatory setting. Everyone is here because they absolutely want to be. Admit that you know nothing, and also know everything necessary to create something *new*. There is no right or wrong in playmaking. In order for us to create a safe, thriving, and productive writing environment, we must gear our commentary and be receptive from a place of abundance and not scarcity. Generosity of spirit is key to new play creation, especially in a collective environment.
- **GENEROSITY:** Remember that your instructor is also a human being. She is also a working, commissioned playwright whose home and artistic base remains New York City: She is **BUSY**. Please know that as a practicing artist she has many other responsibilities outside of this class, just as the student has several responsibilities outside of this one class, however she is well-versed in the creation of new plays. Trust that your best interests are ALWAYS at the center of her teaching and focus and know you can always reach out to her as someone who is in the interest of, and a champion of your artistic growth.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Please read the syllabus, stick to class/university policies, utilize common etiquette and respect, and know that your instructor wants you to succeed in this course, but she is not responsible for that, you are. In addition, do not expect the instructor to make exceptions for you.
- **ABUNDANCE:** When participating in class discussions, feedback, and creation, make sure that you access all the things you've listened to, thought about, and considered, from a place of abundance. This means, think about what you can ADD to the discussion rather than thinking of it as lacking in something. It's the "yes, and" version of the creative room. Participate freely and know that you are in a safe environment where no question is a 'stupid' question.
- **RESPECT:** Like in the movies—Please make sure that you turn your cell phone OFF prior to the beginning of class. Also, please DO NOT text during class. If this becomes a reoccurring issue, the instructor will take the appropriate steps necessary.

CLASS POLICIES

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Office of Student Life for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions (<http://issweb.utep.edu/home/media/SampleOnlineCourseSyllabus.pdf>).

Any form of academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated in this course. I do read all of your papers and expect the work you submit to be ORIGINAL work.

Tentative Class Schedule:

UPDATED: January 10, 2020

WEEK 1 & 2—THE COURSE STRUCTURE, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & COMMITMENTS

- W 1/22 Syllabus Review, Course Orientation + Introductions
Homework: Identify Goals & Inspirations and ready to share for next class.
- M 1/27 Remembering Directing I: Carry-over questions, Fears, Inspiration & Goals sharing.
- W 1/29 Intro to Peer Review/Feedback: Discussion & Application of Feedback principles and peer Review dynamics.
Homework: Read Chapter 1: Creating a Positive Environment for Theatre Collaboration (Burgess; pp. 3-19)

WEEK 3—ENSEMBLE-BASED THEATRE DIRECTING/MAKING feat. Theatre Mitu (NYC)*

- M 2/3 Ensemble-Based Theatre: Collective Research on Theatre Mitu + Exercises in Ensemble-Driven Dynamics*
- W 2/5 Ensemble-Based Theatre: Collective Research on Pig Iron + Exercises in Ensemble-Driven Dynamics*
Homework: Read *Waiting for Lefty* by Clifford Odets

*Theatre Mitu (NYC) will have a workshop from 1:30-4:00 pm on Monday Feb. 3 and Wed. Feb. 5; if you attend you are NOT expected to attend class. IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND WORKSHOP please attend class or you will be counted absent.

WEEK 4—RE-IMAGINING & DISCUSSION OF TEXT FOR FINAL

- M 2/10 Reimagined Theatre: *Waiting for Lefty*, re-imagined discussion and group assignments. (7 vignettes, plus pre-show and post-show.)
- W 2/12 Reimagined Theatre: Creating a Cohesive Production Concept and Rehearsal Set-Up.
Homework: Read Chapter 2: Creating a Positive Environment for Theatre Collaboration (Burgess; pp. 21-34)

WEEK 5—ENTERING THE WORLD OF THE PLAY

- M 2/17 DISCUSS Chapter 2 (Burgess) and *Waiting for Lefty* vignette/reimagined choices.
- W 2/19 **CHARACTER BREAKDOWN & REHEARSAL CALENDAR DUE**
Homework: Read Chapter 3: Managing the Collaborative Theatre Environment (Burgess; pp. 34-55)

WEEK 6—PRE-PRODUCTION SCRIPT ANALYSES—(Instructor away at KCACTF)

- M 2/24 PEER LEAD Discussion: Beat-by-Beat Breakdown for *Waiting for Lefty* & instruction sheet
Homework: Do Beat-by-Beat for your scene/vignette.

- | | |
|--------|--|
| W 2/26 | NO CLASS: BEAT-by-BEAT BREAKDOWN DUE (via email; gfernandez9@utep.edu) |
|--------|--|

WEEK 7—BLOCKING & REHEARSALS

M 3/2 Discuss: Blocking Your Scene: In-Rehearsal Blocking v. Pre-Conceived Blocking.
Homework: Make a Xeroxed copy of the assigned section of script with blocking and unit notations

W 3/4 IN CLASS **BLOCKING BREAKDOWN DUE**
Discuss: Rehearsal and Peer Feedback dynamics for Week 7.

WEEK 8—SELF-DIRECTED REHEARSALS—(ACDA Festival, No Classes)

M 3/9 *Suggested:* ON YOUR OWN Rehearsals—Blocking & Rehearsals (Groups 1-6)

W 3/11 *Suggested:* ON YOUR OWN Rehearsals—(Groups 6-12)

—SPRING BREAK—(No Classes)

M 3/16

W 3/18

WEEK 9—IN CLASS REHEARSALS—(ReUnión rEvolución Festival)

M 3/23 In Class Rehearsals, (Blocking) *Waiting for Lefty* (Groups 1-6) + Notes/Feedback

W 3/25 In Class Rehearsals, (Blocking) *Waiting for Lefty* (Groups 6-12) + Notes/ Feedback
Homework:

WEEK 10— IN CLASS REHEARSALS, CONT'D

M 3/30 In Class Rehearsals, (Stumble-Thru) (Groups 1-6)

W 4/1 In Class Rehearsals, (Stumble-Thru) (Groups 6-12)

WEEK 11—PRODUCTION MEETINGS

M 4/6 Read and Discuss Burgess' Chapter 8: Application of Guiding Questions (pp.97-102); as applied to *WFL*; Assign roles for production meeting.

W 4/8 IN CLASS **RESEARCH & DESIGN/TECH PRESENTATION DUE**
PRODUCTION MEETING w. TECH

WEEK 12—WORKS & DETAILS—(Staging of *The Daffy Dame at Siglo De Oro*)

M 4/13 In Class Rehearsals, (WORKS with props) (Groups 1-6)

W 4/15 In Class Rehearsals, (WORKS with props) (Groups 6-12)

WEEK 13—RUNS & SHARPENS

M 4/20 In Class Rehearsals, (SHARPENS) (All Groups)

W 4/22 **PRODUCTION MEETING w. TECH (TBD)**

WEEK 14—RUNS & SHARPENS & TECH

M 4/27 RUN SHOW + PAPER TECH (W. Stage Manager)
W 4/29 CUE-TO-CUE (W. DESIGNERS & ACTORS)

WEEK 15—TECH & SHOW

M 5/4 TECH & DRESS (ALL)
W 5/6 **DIRECTING PROMPTBOOK DUE**
TR 5/7 **DIRECTING II FINAL PRESENTATION**—*Waiting For Lefty* (DETAILS TBD) 7:00pm

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE as per your instructor's discretion.

INSTRUCTOR BIO

Georgina Hernandez Escobar is a playwright and director who employs multiple mediums to create and define the Latinx aesthetic as Sci-Femme and Frontera Funk in creating impossible narratives for the stage. She has participated in residencies including the MacDowell Colony, the Djerassi Artists Residency and is a recipient of the Theatre For Young Audiences National Award from the Kennedy Center. Her work has been exhibited throughout the USA and participated in festivals internationally (Denmark, Sweden). Her plays have made Steppenwolf's "The Mix" List, the Kilroy's List, Finalist at the National Playwrights Conference at the O'Neill and the Clubbed Thumb Biennial Commission. Artistic partners and presenters have included Gregory Hancock Dance Theatre, Primary Stages, Two River, INTAR, Clubbed Thumb, Lincoln Center, Milagro, Aurora Theatre, and Bushwick Starr, among others. She serves on the Board of Marfa Live Arts, is on Advisory Committee for the Latinx Theatre Commons, and an active steering committee member for the Climate Commons for Theatre and Performance. www.georginaescobar.com

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN & REHEARSAL CALENDAR

Assignment Due February 19, 2020
IN CLASS

Guidelines

- Download a printable/format friendly calendar on Word.
 - Make one (1) page for each of the following months: February 2020, March 2020, April 2020 and May 2020.
 - Insert all important due dates from our syllabus into the production calendar.
 - Make sure to note any rehearsals you can confirm or are planning to have *clearly*.
 - Make one (1) additional page that reads “[NAME OF YOUR SCENE/VIGNETTE] CHARACTER BREAKDOWN”
 - Type or insert a character description for each of the people in your scene, if you have ideas about actors or have confirmed casting, please note that as well.
 - Save entire document as “LAST NAME, CALENDAR”
 - SAVE AS PDF, attach to email directed to ghernandez9@utep.edu.
 - **PRINT A COPY FOR YOURSELF** and add to your Director’s Promptbook.
-

BEAT-by-BEAT Breakdown

Assignment Due February 26, 2020
Via email: ghernandez9@utep.edu

Guidelines

- Make a document with your scene TITLE on top, “Beat-by-Beat Breakdown” by: your name following.
 - Write a SCENE OVERVIEW (2-3 sentences) that tells us what the scene is about as you are directing it.
 - TITLE each beat.
 - Example: “The Trigger”
 - Follow each beat title by an ACTION that a character is pursuing or a want.
 - Example: “The Trigger” Jon wants Olivia to spill the beans.
 - Identify AT LEAST 3 of these beats/shifts or changes in your script and add here.
 - Save entire document as “LAST NAME, BREAKDOWN”
 - SAVE AS PDF, attach to email directed to ghernandez9@utep.edu.
-

STUDENT DIRECTING OPPORTUNITY

LOVE SONG

Student Directed/Faculty Mentored

Requirements:

Must be a Theatre/Dance major

Must be in good academic standing (2.5 GPA)

Must have taken and passed Directing I with at least a B

Must meet with faculty director/mentor to discuss: auditions, production meetings, rehearsal process during the week of March 23

Must be available for production meetings starting April 2020

Must be available for auditions May 2020

Must be available for rehearsals beginning August 2020

Production Dates: September/October 2020 (final calendar TBA)

Application:

Due January 27: adrianad@utep.edu

Name

Classification

GPA

Major/Concentration

Director's Concept Statement

Commitment Statement (acknowledging that you will be available for all production meetings, rehearsals, mentor meetings and performances)

Selection Process:

A committee will select the students to move forward to the next step by Feb. 7

Selected students will need to present one scene from *Love Song* the week of Feb. 17

Student director will be selected by March 2