



Directing I / II THEA 3325 / 4300

*"Welcome to opening night as a director:
two hours of powerlessness with your name on it."*
-Daniel Kremer

Instructor: Jay Stratton
Class: T, TR 1:30-3:20
Fox D071
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Office Hours
Tues, Thurs 12:30-1:30
Or anytime by appointment

Required Texts: We will be reading selections from On Directing by Harold Clurman and A Sense of Direction by William Ball. These selections will be available on Blackboard. We will also be reading certain articles from American Theatre magazine available electronically through our library subscription.

Course Objectives

After this course, you should:

1. Have a greater ability to direct an effective scene.
2. Have stronger tools for communication with actors.
3. Be more able to collaborate with other theatre artists.
4. Have experience devising and producing a show from the ground up!

Grading

Quizzes and Responses (15%)

Throughout the semester, there will be quizzes and written responses to the assigned reading. Assume there will be a quiz or response on every piece of reading. Quizzes and responses may be made up in the case of excused absences only.

Live Production Response: *House on Mango Street* (10%)

Each student is required to see this UTEP production and write a brief response paper. Details to follow.

Traditional Full Scene as Director (25% I's Only)

We will be producing Act II of *The Guitarron*. You will each direct two of the 8 scenes in the act. You will be graded on the process and product of your scenes.

Devised Production as Scenic Director (30% II's Only)

We will be doing two devised productions. You will direct one full scene in ONE of the two productions. You will be graded on the process and product of your individual scene.

Scene Analysis and Breakdown (5% for II, 10% for I)

You will create a scene analysis and breakdown for the scene you direct.

Rehearsal Log (5%)

You will create a rehearsal log for the scene you direct.

Devised Production as Producer (15%)

For the devised piece on which you are NOT a director, you will work as a producer in some capacity. You will be graded on your contribution to the devised piece in total. Details on this to follow.

Producing Journal (5%)

You will create a journal detailing your daily efforts to support the devised production on which you are NOT one of the directors.

Performance Participation (5%)

We will be mounting three productions over the course of the semester. You may be asked to perform in any or all of the three. You will not be graded on your talent as an actor, but you must contribute your enthusiasm, energy, and professionalism. If you are NOT asked to act in a show, this will be folded into your participation grade.

Participation (10% of grade)

You will be graded on your focus, willing participation, supportive attitude, and individual progress in daily class work. Respect and enthusiasm for the lessons and the work of your fellow theatre artists is a crucial part of this class work.

Grading Scale

You will be assigned a letter grade on each of the above assignments. (A=4.0, B=3.0 etc.) Your final class grade is based on a weighted average of these grades (before any modification for attendance) according to the following scale.

A	=	3.50+
B	=	2.50 - 3.49
C	=	1.50 - 2.49
D	=	0.50 - 1.49
F	=	Less than .50

Extra Credit

There are two ways to earn extra credit in this class:

First, I give extra credit to students with PERFECT attendance. For more on this, please see the attendance section of our class policies.

Second, you may earn extra credit by doing additional live production responses.

Every student is required to write a production response for *House on Mango Street*.

However, you can earn extra credit by seeing live performances and writing responses for many other productions in and around El Paso. Examples include *Priscilla*, *Sugar Plum*, *In Between* and many others.

To earn extra credit, your response must be at least 750 words and must touch on what you as a director learned from watching the production. In other words, "I liked it" doesn't cut it. Value of an extra credit response is up to me.

Details on live production responses to follow.

Syllabus may change with appropriate notice



Directing I / II Class Policies

Communication: I rely heavily on email for communication. You **MUST** check your preferred email daily. You should also check Blackboard daily as our reading selections will be stored there.

There are two ways to submit written work: my favorite way to receive written assignments is a **WORD DOCUMENT** attached to an email. I also happily accept hard copies of written work. No other channel but these two is acceptable unless you make prior arrangement with me.

Attendance: The best way to trash your grade is with bad attendance. In the professional world, actors always show up and they are always on time. Nothing less is acceptable. Class starts on time; one minute after is late.

In this class, *absent and late are the same thing*. **You may be absent or late 3 times**, no questions asked. On your fourth attendance issue, your final grade will be reduced one letter grade. On your sixth attendance issue, your final grade will be reduced two letter grades. If you have eight or more attendance issues, you cannot receive a passing grade in the course.

At my discretion, an absence may be excused for legitimate medical reasons, professional obligations, or family emergency. The request for an excused absence must be asked for in writing. I may also ask for some kind of proof of the circumstances.

If you have an absence, you are still responsible for missed work. Absences do not change the due dates of assignments.

At my discretion, a student with **perfect attendance** may be given a *bonus to their final grade!*

The Space: No food or drink is allowed in the studio during class. The only exception is unflavored water. Water is allowed and encouraged.

Phones and Electronics: Phones and electronics in class are a pet peeve of mine. All phones and electronics should be turned off for the duration of class. If you take out a phone, tablet, or other electronic device without permission during class, you may be asked to leave and the day will count as absence. If a phone rings during class, you may be asked to leave and the day will count as absence. Also, I will freak out.

Touching: This course will require touching; however safety is the first priority. ‘Safety’ in this instance refers to both physical safety and respect for personal boundaries. If you have trouble with being touched or touching someone else, tell me immediately.

Absolutely no one should be touching anyone in an inappropriate manner. If you feel unsafe for any reason, tell me immediately, and we will adjust the exercise accordingly.

Attire: This is not an acting class; however, you will be working on your feet a lot. Dress appropriately. Be prepared to remove any distracting clothing items.

Late Work: Written work is due by the *beginning of class* the scheduled calendar day. Written work turned in after the due date will be penalized 1 full letter grade. Written work turned in more than one week late will be penalized 2 full letter grades.

Academic Dishonesty: University Policy will be strictly adhered to and absolutely no academic impropriety will be tolerated. All transgressions of university policy including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, the unauthorized exchange of information for written assignments or tests, theft via the computer or infringement of the rights of other to academic freedom (i.e. disrupting class, disrespectful comments towards classmates or instructor) will result in a failing grade for this course as well as disciplinary procedures as adopted by the university and described in the current student handbook.

Disabled Student Statement: In Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation then the Office of Disabled Student Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. You may call [915-747-5148](tel:915-747-5148) for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you may have as a UTEP student with a disability.

Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and the Disabled Student Services Office at The University of Texas at El Paso.

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