Drama 331- Theatre Technology and Scenography

Randolph-Macon College
Spring ‘07

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Course Description
The course continues and elaborates work begun in DRAM330, but with greater emphasis on the design and drafting of scenic and lighting design projects utilizing CAD programs. The course is designated computer intensive. Prerequisite: DRAM 330

Course Objectives
By the end of this course, students should:
1) understand and develop an appreciation of the collaborative nature of theatre.
2) have a basic knowledge of tools, instrumentation, procedures, and materials used in scenic and lighting design.
3) have a basic knowledge of approaches to lighting and scenic design
4) have a basic knowledge of drafting and other methods of visual communication used in theatrical design

Assignments
• Theatrical Design And Production By J. Michael Gillette – The text is a secondary source of information and inspiration. Not everything discussed in the text will be discussed in class. It is still important information. You are expected to have completed the assigned readings at the beginning of the week noted. Come to class ready to ask and answer questions, discuss, argue, defend, etc. Remember that theatre and drama are ART, which means that there are no right or wrong ideas or thoughts, there are only those that are supportable, workable, and comfortable-- or not. Failure to read the assigned text will result in a lower class participation/attendance grade.
• Sketchbook/Journal: (10% of your Final Grade) A sketch a day will get you an “A.” In addition, there will be a number of mandatory exercises that must be in your sketchbook. I will also be looking for written comments on assigned readings, on class experiences, on plays seen, etc. See the handouts for more information.
• Scenic Design: (20% of your Final Grade) We will design scenery Ghosts by Henrik Ibsen. This will include an analysis, visual research, a properly drafted floorplan and elevations, and a full model. This will be the basis for a Final Project as well.
• 15 lab hours. (10% of your grade) This is the minimum number of hours required to PASS the course -you are encouraged to do more. This is a class that deals with the backstage aspects of theatre and having a hands-on experience is important to the understanding of the material.
  - You must sign up for labs in advance. The official shop schedule will be posted.
  - All Class Members MUST be signed up for required hours by the end of the second week of classes. Failure to sign up will result in a failing grade.
  - Once signed up for required hours, arbitrary or unapproved changes or failure to show up without a valid excuse will result in a failing grade.
  - You must sign up for a minimum of 2 hours at a time.
  - Extra hours need no advance warning or duration.
  - You must make it to at least one strike.
  - You must complete 1/2 of your hours before mid-Semester.
  - The grade for lab will be no higher than F if any lab hours are not completed on time.
  - You must read and follow the rules outlined in the Safety Guide posted in the shop and available online.
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- Come dressed for work. You will be sent home if you are dressed inappropriately-INCLUDING SHOES.

- **Topical Projects:** (10% of your final grade) I anticipate 7 projects: they might be four drawing exercises, a Drafting project, and a lighting project. (TBA)

- **Design Critiques:** (20% of your Final Grade) You must see and write about design choices for two professional productions of your choice. Anything at Barksdale Theatre, Hanover Tavern, The Carpenter Science Theatre Company, The Carpenter Center or the Landmark in Richmond, The Riverside Theatre in Fredericksburg, or a variety of professional theatres in DC would be acceptable. You must have the instructor’s approval for any other possibilities. You are also required to see the two RMC productions this spring; *An Inspector Calls* (February 21-24), and *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (May 2-5). and write about them as well. Critiques are due within a week of seeing the performance, and by the dates listed on the schedule. See the performance critique handout for more information.

- **Final Project:** (20% of your Final Grade) We’ll each design scenery as part of a project above. For your Final Project, you’ll design the lighting in someone else’s scenery. The final project will consist of a light design, including a cue list, visual research, a properly drafted plot and section, and all necessary paperwork.

- **Class Participation/Attendance:** (10% of your Final Grade) Work done IN CLASS, and discussions in class will make up the majority of information necessary to complete your projects. Therefore, attendance is exceedingly important. If you are absent, 1/3 of a letter grade will be subtracted from your FINAL GRADE for each hour of class missed over 3 hours. If you arrive after attendance is taken you will be considered absent. If you leave or otherwise stop attending to class, you will be considered absent. You will be held responsible for all information discussed during all class periods. Should you have questions or need further clarification of material covered in class or in the readings, don’t hesitate to talk to your instructor (This is true even if you didn’t miss class). **If, however, you have missed a class without a valid excuse, don't ask your instructor to explain the material. It only makes him angry.**

**Grading:**

Due to the nature of the projects some of the grading in this class is subjective. There will be standards that govern this grading. Merely completing the assigned task or hours is what I consider average work, or a "C." Going the extra mile, completing assignments with enthusiasm or emulating the examples of designs seen in the text and in class, will most likely lead to a "B." Only extraordinary work will be considered for an "A."

- Some projects require working in GROUPS. All group members are expected to pull their own weight, and those that don't will be treated accordingly. ALL group members will receive the same grade.
- Some of the class will be conducted on the stage or in the shop and require that you work with the tools. Please dress in clothing that is appropriate for the shop environment. Due dates can do so will result in a LOWERED Classwork Grade.

**Due Dates:**

All projects or other assignments are due in class on the date listed in the syllabus. All projects not turned in on time will receive a grade of "0." This can be raised to a "F" (50) by turning the project in before the last day of class. Absences, excused or otherwise, are not grounds for turning in work late.

Any student in this class who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me as quickly as possible to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate his or her educational opportunities. To be eligible to receive accommodations, a student with disabilities must register with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS) in the Patrick John Higgins Academic Center.

The College's Code of Academic Integrity sets out a list of prohibited behavior, including plagiarism, cheating, and tampering with or destroying College property (including computers in computer labs). The most common act of academic misconduct is plagiarism, which is defined "Passing off a source's information, ideas, or words as your own by omitting to acknowledge that source—an act of lying, cheating, and stealing." (Gordon Harvey, Writing with Sources: A Guide for Students) Any student who commits a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity will be subject to the policies and procedures outlined in Fishtales. It is each student's responsibility to read and be familiar with the Code.
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**Calendar (Subject To Change)**

**Week of February 12**
- **Introduction, What is “Theatrical Design?”**

**February 19**
- **Script Analysis**
  - **Read:** Chapters 2 & 7
  - **See:** *An Inspector Calls* at RMC (February 21-24)

**February 26**
- **Elements and Principals of Design**
  - **Read:** Chapters 5 & 6
  - **Due:** March 1st – *An Inspector Calls* Performance Critique

**March 5**
- **Designing the Floorplan/ Thumbnails**
  - **Read:** Chapter 20
  - **Due:** March 8th - Signature Project

**March 12**
- **Vectorworks Review**

**March 19**
- **Research/ Refining the Design**
  - **Due:** March 20th - Drafting Exercise
  - **Due:** March 20th - Sketchbook/Journal
  - **Due:** March 22nd - Typed Script Analysis of *Ghosts*
  - **Due:** Before March 23rd – First Professional Critique
  - **Due:** Before March 23rd – Half of shop hours finished

**March 26**
- **Student Road Trip to visit professional theatres in Florida**

**April 2**
- **Rendering/Model Making**
  - **Read:** Chapter 22
  - **Due:** April 5th – Preliminary Floorplan

**April 9**
- **Computer Rendering**
  - **Due:** April 12th - finalized floorplan & Research Board

**April 16**
- **Colour, Qualities and Functions of Light**
  - **Read:** Chapters 6 (again) & 12
  - **Due:** April 19th - final Elevations
  - **Due:** April 19th – Sketchbook/Journal

**April 23**
- **Cuing the Show, Visualizing Lighting**
  - **Due:** April 24th - final Scenic model
  - **Due:** April 26th - Lighting Color Project

**April 30**
- **Drafting the Light Plot**
  - **Due:** May 3rd - Lighting Analysis/ Key
  - **See:** *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (May 2 -5)

**May 7**
- **Plot & Paperwork**
  - **Due:** May 3rd - Lighting Thumbnail Project
  - **Due:** May 10th - Lighting Visual Research
  - **Due:** May 10th - *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* Critique

**May 14**
- **Lighting as a Profession**
  - **Due:** May 15th - Preliminary Plot
  - **Due:** May 15th – Second Professional Critique

**May 24th**
- **Final Projects Presentations**
  - **8:30 AM**
  - **Due:** Sketchbook/Journal

[webcal://ical.mac.com/greggx4/331.ics]