Stage Management

Randolph Macon College
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Course Description
Exploration of theatrical production focusing on the duties and responsibilities of Stage Managers.

Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course the student should know the basic procedures and nomenclature required to work as an educational or semi-professional stage manager.

Text
Required Texts:
- The Backstage Guide to Stage Management by Thomas Kelly
In addition, you will need one script of your choice.
Recommended reading:
- The Dramatic Imagination by Robert Edmond Jones
- The Stage Manager’s Handbook by Bert Gruver, rev; Frank Hamilton
- Stage Management, a Guidebook of Practical Techniques by L. Stern
- Backstage Forms by Paul Carter

Assignments
- Pre-Rehearsal Prompt Book (20% of your Final Grade)
a pre-rehearsal prompt book including all plots, etc. needed by a stage manager at the beginning of rehearsals. You will be expected to develop your own forms and paperwork based on discussions in class and readings in your text or other sources. Use the script of your choice as the basis. NOTE: Your script must be approved by the instructor.
Due by October 14th

- Stage Managing (30% of your Final Grade)
work as a stage manager or assistant stage manager for any of the department productions this semester. Your assignment of shows will be determined by schedule and needs of each production.
1) Make a written request for the assignment of your choice. State any extenuating circumstances- such as being cast in particular productions that may influence your assignment. Assignments will be made based on the parameters of each production. Due by September 19th.
2) 2)Develop a “contract” specifying exact duties and time schedule, to be approved by the instructor. Due by October 3rd
3) Perform those duties. Please note that the director, stage manager, actors, designers and/or others on the production team may be asked to evaluate your work.
4) Turn in a complete prompt script after completion of the project. An outline of what needs to be included will be developed in class discussions. (Even if you work as an assistant SM, you will be expected to have a complete book.)
Due with your Final Project, date TBD

- Written Journal (20% of your Final Grade)
The Journal entries will be your responses to the text, scripts, and material discussed in class.
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- **Class Participation and Readings** (10% of your Final Grade)
  You are expected to have completed the assigned readings at the beginning of the class noted. Your projects, rehearsals, and so forth will form the basis for discussion in class. Everybody is expected to actively participate in these and other discussions. 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.

- **Oral Presentation Final Project** (20% of your Final Grade)
  You will contact a professional stage manager, interview him/her, and report on your conversation. There will be several stages in this project with different due dates. See the Oral Presentation handout for those dates. Your actual presentation will be as your Final Project, date TBD.

**Attendance:**
Attendance will be taken regularly. If you are absent, 1/3 of a letter grade will be subtracted from your semester grade for each class missed over 3. There are no excused absences without the Dean’s approval. If you arrive after attendance is taken 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 seen in the text and in class will most likely lead to a "B." Only extraordinary work will be considered for an "A."
- 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. 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.

**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 week of the semester. Only excused absences (from the Dean…) will be grounds for accepting work late.
Course Outline

Stage Manager
Who/What is a good Stage Manager?
Basic Responsibilities

Pre-Rehearsal
The Script
Plots
Production and Staff Organization
Scheduling
Company Rules
Auditions
Spiking: Reading Designer Drawings

Rehearsal Procedures
setting up props
recording stage business
prompting
etc.

Tech Rehearsals
planning scenery and property shifts
Dry Tech/Cueing
Wet Tech

Running the Show
Preshow
House Manager
Calls
Removing Improvements
Rehearsals

Post-Show
Touring and Non-Theatre Stage Managing
touring procedure
ballet
opera

Getting a Job