



**THE 541 – SEMINAR IN STAGE DIRECTION
COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2020
T 4:30 p.m. – 7:10 p.m. Performing Arts Center #112**

Instructor: Dr. Carrie Klypchak, Associate Professor of Acting and Directing
Office Location: Performing Arts Center #129
Office Hours: M/W/R 3:30 p.m. – 4:50 p.m. & T 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. (and by appointment)
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Office Fax: 903-468-3250
University Email Address: Carrie.Klypchak@tamuc.edu

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| COURSE INFORMATION |
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Textbooks (You must have access to both of version of both of these texts for reading throughout the semester... via classroom copies - that must be returned to me with no markings if you request those in advance by the deadline - or independent purchase by you. Please note that due to expense considerations, these texts will not be carried by the TAMUC bookstore):

***A Director Prepares: Seven Essays on Art and Theatre* by Anne Bogart. ISBN-10: 0415238323**

***Twentieth-Century Actor Training* by Alison Hodge. ISBN-10: 0415194520**

*You may purchase the more updated version instead if you so choose that includes some of our "reserve reading" in it: *Actor Training* by Alison Hodge. ISBN-10: 0415471680

**Note: In addition to readings in the above texts, other readings in this course will come from published journal articles, interviews, and chapters of other texts that the instructor will either provide or that will be placed on reserve in the library for photocopying by the student. Many of the journal articles can also be accessed electronically by the student through the library.*

Required Viewing:

Somewhere in Between
February (Main Stage)

Constellations
April (Studio Theatre)

Tickets for University Playhouse productions are available for a nominal fee. You may make reservations by coming by the University Playhouse Box Office (PAC 101) from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Or, you may make advance reservations by phone at any time by calling 903-886-5900 or by email at playhouseboxoffice@tamuc.edu. The Box Office should also be able to direct you as to how to purchase tickets on the online system.

**Note: Please understand that viewing a performance of both of the University Playhouse shows listed above is an absolute requirement of the course. Part of becoming a skilled director is viewing other directors' successes and challenges. Clear your schedule now!*

Course Description:

The goal of this course is to examine the evolution of the director's role during the course of the 20th and 21st centuries. Since the director's vision of theatre cannot be realized except as part of a collaborative venue, the course will also include attention to acting theory and approaches to performance training. Such study should lead you to consider new perspectives and approaches in your future directing endeavors. Students will engage with written materials as a point of departure for considering issues relating to staging, performance, and the shifting roles of theatre artists. They will engage with these materials through in-class discussion, oral presentations, exercises, research, and written work.

**Note: Although not a formal prerequisite for this course, it is expected that all students enrolled have had some sort of practical directing experience (either through undergraduate coursework or otherwise) to serve as a point of departure in these theoretical studies. If you have not yet practically engaged in directing, it is recommended that you wait to take this course until you have had sufficient experience.*

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. display a learned knowledge of influential theatre directors' artistic approaches.
2. critically, knowledgably, and professionally evaluate varying approaches to actor training and directing.
3. synthesize academic/artistic research into cohesive scholarly writing and oral presentation.

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| COURSE REQUIREMENTS |
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Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION (20%): Your Active Participation will play a substantial role in acquiring your final grade – for good reason! This graduate course is structured to support a “community of learners.” In order to contribute to the community, you must come to class fully alert (not under the influence of... any non-medical substances!), prepared, and ready to actively participate in discussions of assigned readings or engagement in determined activities, etc. Please be advised that your attendance at both University Playhouse productions will be considered part of your Active Participation grade as well. Be aware that the “participation” aspect of your grade requires more than simply being present or arriving to class on time (although absences and late arrivals/early departures will significantly reduce your Active Participation grade - *please keep in mind that, of course, you must be present to participate*). Lack of demonstrable preparation will have a substantial negative impact on your course grade. As graduate students you should realize the importance of acquiring skill in voicing your opinions during discussion in positive and respectful ways. Realize that sometimes you will have to agree to disagree with other members of the class. As I know that you all can do: avoid “knee-jerk reactions” and frame your comments respectfully, with scholarly intelligence, and as

a point of academic discourse. *Disrespect, rudeness, or offensive language of any kind has no place in the classroom. If such an instance occurs (either toward another student or the instructor), I will ask the student to leave and/or substantial points will be reduced from the student's Active Participation grade.*

Participation grades will be calculated daily and reflected upon/tabulated at the end of the semester. *Each student will begin with a mid-passing Participation grade of an 80. Strong effort or lack of effort during each class and over the course of the semester as a whole will either raise or lower that grade. *Measures Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.*

21ST CENTURY DIRECTING MANIFESTO (5%): Think deeply about your own informed beliefs in the 21st century as a director and answer the question: "What are *my* aesthetic theories about directing in contemporary theatre?" In your Manifesto, you can also consider *any or all* of the following questions: What is theatre/performance? What should it be? Why do we do it? Why should we do it? How should we do it? What is its ideal purpose? What's wrong with how theatre and/or directing is done today and what should be done to change that? If you could create a new credo for directing, what would that be? How should the director relate to the audience or to society at large? How or why is theatre still important or relevant (or how could it be made by the director to be so)? How does theatre reflect or differ from real life? You may write your manifesto in *any style* that helps make your point— poetic, ranting, stream of consciousness, reasoned essay, dialogue, etc.). The Manifesto should be two pages in length and read by the writer during class with discussion to follow. I am particularly interested in the depth and clarity of thought displayed in your paper and the professionalism of your formal presentation of the document (rehearse reading it with expression and in a professional manner!). You will be graded on content, depth of thought/reflection, and the professionalism of your presentation. **Measures Student Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.*

GUIDED CRITICAL DISCUSSION PROJECT (5%): Each graduate student will prepare to guide a short, round-table, critical class discussion over a specifically assigned section of *A Director Prepares*. One of the goals of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to hone your critical discussion facilitation skills through interaction with your colleagues. Please understand that you are responsible for leading the class discussion – not just summarizing points and lecturing to the class – and you must come prepared with questions and topics to stimulate that class discussion effectively! Remember, everyone will have engaged in the reading in advance. Plan your discussion prompts very carefully. You should pull out what you believe to be the three most important points in your assigned reading and develop at least one critical discussion question for each point. Remember, you should really think critically when developing your questions – i.e. construct your questions in ways that evoke class discussions about the broader ramifications and/or complexities of the point for the director in contemporary theatre (*not – "what do you guys think of that?" kind of questions!*). Each student's guided discussion will last approximately ten minutes in length. You will be graded on the effectiveness of your ability to evoke and facilitate fruitful artistic/scholastic discussion and the depth of your insights (in both your presentation and in response to your colleagues'). More detailed description of this assignment will be discussed in class. **Measures Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.*

READINGS PRESENTATIONS (3 at 10% each): Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to make three, formal, oral presentations over an assigned reading, as well as to lead discussion for a portion of those days' class. Each presentation/discussion should last forty-five minutes to an hour. Although you are welcome to use a power point, prezi, etc. presentation as support for your ideas, please understand that you are responsible for leading and facilitating the class discussion as well – not just summarizing points and lecturing to the class. You should

plan your presentation very carefully as you are developing a forty-five minute to an hour lesson plan (shorter/significantly longer presentations will receive substantial grade deductions.) You should provide each person in the class (including the instructor) with a handout or study guide, which will include, but will not be limited to: relevant biographical information and professional accomplishments garnered through outside research, an outline of major points in the reading, suggestions for additional reading, etc. *You must also come prepared with questions and topics to stimulate class discussion.* One of the goals of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to hone your teaching and presentation skills. Be imaginative in your presentational strategies, including audiovisual material, activities, etc. The student that is presenting is in charge of arranging for any equipment to be present in PAC 112 that is necessary for the day's activities. You will be graded on the content of your presentation/handout, the structure/construction of your presentation/handout, ability to lead class discussion effectively, ability to field your peers' questions, and the overall professionalism/preparedness exhibited. **Measures Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.*

RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL (5%): An initial proposal for your final research paper presentation of 250 words will be submitted in abstract form. You should spend considerable time and effort in developing your abstract. The abstract will count as 5% of your overall grade in this course. The abstract should include an introduction to your proposed topic, primary research question and/or thesis statement, your primary method(s) of research, relevancy of the study, etc. After your topic has been approved, you may prepare your final essay for presentation. Your research proposal will be graded on both content and construction. I will provide you with a sample abstract proposal as a guide and discuss requirements in more depth during class. **Measures Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 3.*

PERFORMANCE REVIEW ESSAY (15%): Each student will write an academic Performance Review Essay of approximately 1000 words. The Performance Review will address a professional theatrical performance of the student's choosing (community theatre and academic theatre performances will not be accepted for review). Please begin looking for performances now and plan for travel for viewing, etc. The format of the piece will be based on academic theatre journal Performance Review requirements. You will be graded on both the content and the construction of your essay. **Measures Student Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.*

RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION (20%): You will be required to write and present a conference-length research paper on a topic of your own selection that is informed by theoretical and/or historical work in the fields of theatre and/or performance and that intersects with the topic of this course in some way, falling within the timeframe of 1880-present. *You may not choose to focus on a director for which you have provided a readings presentation in this class.* Your paper should be comprised of original, focused research on a selected topic which could eventually lead to a formal conference presentation or be built upon for publication. Your essay should use acceptable quality writing practices, and you should utilize an acceptable number (and variety) of *scholarly* sources. The paper should be approximately eight pages long – typed and written in a standard scholarly form. You are required to present a fifteen minute formal reading of your research essay in a mock conference format; you may incorporate visual aids if you so choose. You will be assigned to a specific panel of 3-4 presenters, and you will also be required to submit a short bio to the panel chair for introduction at the presentation. After all of the panel participants have presented their papers, the panel chair will then field a discussion and answer period regarding the papers with the audience.

Please plan all elements of your presentation carefully and offer it to the class in a formal, well-rehearsed manner. You should dress appropriately for a conference presentation in business

attire as well. You will be required to submit a formal outline of your paper and a formally constructed Works Cited page in MLA format to the instructor as well on the day of your presentation. You will be graded on the content and construction of your outline, Works Cited page, and essay (you *must* use your very best writing skills to develop a tight, well-researched, well-constructed, and well-written essay for presentation – this is absolutely *not* “stream of consciousness writing” – this absolutely *is* writing a formal research essay to the *very* best of your abilities and then taking the project one step further and preparing it for oral presentation!!!), your preparedness, your ability to knowledgeably respond to questions from the audience, and the professionalism exhibited in your formal presentation and as an audience member. We will have additional in-depth discussion about the requirements of this assignment during class sessions. **Measures Student Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.*

Grading:

GRADING SCALE: The following grading scale will be used to determine all individual grades as well as the student’s overall grade in the course:

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| A | 90%-100% | (Exceptional Quality Work) |
| B | 80%-89% | (Good Quality Work) |
| C | 70%-79% | (Average Quality Work) |
| D | 60%-69% | (Below Average Quality Work) |
| F | 0%-59% | (Fails to Meet Acceptable Expectations in Quality of Work) |

Note: Numerical correlations for individual assignments receiving awarded letter grades in this class may be calculated as follows: A 95%; A- 90%; B 85%; B- 80%; C 75%; C- 70%; D 65%; D- 60%.

GRADING RUBRIC:

| Assignment | Grade |
|---|-------|
| Active Participation (20%) | |
| 21 st Century Directing Manifesto (5%) | |
| Guided Critical Discussion Project (5%) | |
| Readings Presentation #1 (10%) | |
| Readings Presentation #2 (10%) | |
| Readings Presentation #3 (10%) | |
| Research Paper Proposal (5%) | |
| Performance Review Essay (15%) | |
| Research Paper Final Presentation (20%) | |
| Semester Grade | |

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

WORKING EMAIL REQUIREMENT: It is a course expectation that you have a working email address that you check daily. There may be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is often the speediest and easiest way of doing so.

SAVING OF ASSIGNMENTS: Unfortunately, papers/projects do occasionally go missing. Please, for your sanity, save your work on a thumb drive, etc. Do not depend on your paper staying on the hard drive of any university computer, as it will be deleted, altered, or worse –

turned in by someone else as his/her work! Be aware that it is a course expectation that you keep copies of your graded and original assignments until you receive your final grade for the semester.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Contacting Dr. Klypchak:

Please feel free to visit me during my office hours at any time during the semester. I am here to help! If you can't make my office hours due to a scheduling conflict, please set up an appointment with me. It is not an imposition. Communicate, communicate, communicate! If something is occurring that is presenting you with difficulties in this class, let me know. Don't be intimidated. I am here to assist you in success and will do my best to help you achieve it. Talk to me! The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is via email. I check it fairly frequently. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office.

Student Resources:

Department of Theatre

Performing Arts Center (PAC) 101
Phone: 903-886-5346 (Main Office)
<http://www.tamuc.edu/mmct/default.asp>

Communication Skills Center

Talbot Hall
<http://www.tamuc.edu/litlang/CSC/index.htm>

TAMUC Actor's Lab

Private Acting Coaching Sessions with Dr. Klypchak during office hours – open to all declared Theatre Majors/Minors and students auditioning for, or cast in, University Playhouse productions. Actor's Lab is also available to any student enrolled in Dr. Klypchak's course(s) during the semester of enrollment. *Important note: in order to participate in Actor's Lab, a student must bring a memorized piece and sign up at least twenty-four hours in advance on the sign-up sheet on Dr. Klypchak's door – PAC #129.* Sign-up sheets are posted every Friday for the upcoming week. Please be advised that in Actor's Lab, we promote the highest level of professional standards. Thus, under normal circumstances, if a student makes an appointment for Actor's Lab and fails to keep his/her appointment without significant advance notice to the instructor, the student revokes the privilege of Actor's Lab for the remainder of the semester.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

ATTENDANCE: Prompt attendance is expected at all class meetings. If, for any reason, you have more than one absence during the semester, this will have a substantial impact on your overall course grade. You are expected to have completed all reading material and/or assignments for a given date prior to class time; the totality of your knowledge of reading materials will be evaluated on the basis of your contributions to group discussion. You are allowed one *emergency* absence in this course. Under normal circumstances, upon the second absence, the student will receive a deduction of six points from his/her final grade; upon the

third absence, the student will receive another six point deduction from his/her final grade; *due to the discussion-based and participatory nature of this course, under normal circumstances, upon the fourth absence the student will receive an automatic F in the course.* *For more information on the university attendance policy please go to the following link:
<http://www7.tamuc.edu/registrar/attendance.asp>

LATE ARRIVALS: Students must be on time for every class. Entering a class late or leaving early is disruptive to the flow of the class. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. If you are late for class, your participation grade will reflect this. The class will begin promptly at 4:30 p.m.! If you arrive after 4:40 p.m., please do not enter the classroom (you will be marked absent regardless). If you arrive within the ten minute grace period, please do so discretely in order to avoid disrupting the class activities/discussions. Arrival within the ten minute grace period constitutes a “tardy.” Also, you are expected to stay until you are dismissed from class. An early departure will significantly reduce your participation grade as well. *Two late arrivals (within the ten minute grace period) or early departures (or any combination of the two) may be counted as one absence in the class.*

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments must be submitted in hard copy to the instructor unless otherwise noted on the syllabus. While you are welcome to email me any questions that you may have, unless otherwise noted, please understand that I cannot accept emailed student work at this time.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Under normal circumstances: 1) late written assignments will not be accepted in this graduate-level class; 2) presentations must be made during the assigned class sessions or these will not count toward the final grade (under normal circumstances, an absence on the date of an assigned presentation will result in a grade of zero for the assignment).

ADAPTATION OF ASSIGNMENTS: Due to the fluid nature of this class, some assignments may need to be adapted. All changes will be announced prior to implementation.

INCOMPLETES: Under normal circumstances, an Incomplete (X) will not be given as a final grade in this course.

CELL PHONES AND LAPTOPS: Please turn off all cell phones upon entering the classroom. Please do not check messages or engage in text messaging during class. This is disruptive to the flow of the course. Further, you are welcome to take class notes on a laptop computer. However, laptops should only be used for taking notes over the current discussions. If I suspect that laptops are being used for other purposes, I will ban them from the classroom.

EXTRA CREDIT: As a general rule, there is no extra credit offered in this class – please, do not even ask.

University Specific Policies and Procedures:

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: This course adheres strictly to the college’s guidelines for Academic Dishonesty printed in the *Student’s Guide Handbook*. Plagiarism, cheating, or otherwise representing another’s work or ideas as your own without proper attribution will not be tolerated.

Note: All work must be new and created for this class during this semester by you; otherwise, you can be accused of plagiarizing yourself – which falls under the category of academic dishonesty. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the definition of Academic Dishonesty at Texas A&M-Commerce. If such an instance occurs, the student will receive an automatic zero for the work in question, and I will immediately report the incident to the head of the department, who will in turn decide the appropriate course of action. Remember: Citing=good; Not Citing=very bad! Make sure that you understand the intricacies of citations, formatting, etc., so that you avoid unintentional plagiarism at all costs. (Please be aware that an instance of academic dishonesty could result in dismissal from school without credit for the semester or worse – overall suspension from the program.)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
 Texas A&M University-Commerce
 James G. Gee Library
 Room 162
 Phone (903) 468-8148 or (903) 886-5835
 StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

**Note: Please be aware that under no circumstances can I implement any disability accommodations without official documentation from the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services at Texas A&M University - Commerce.*

STUDENT CONDUCT: All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct.*)

NON DISCRIMINATION NOTICE: Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement Texas Senate Bill – 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et.al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University–Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M– Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer. Web url: <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34Safet yOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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| COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR |
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***Very* Tentative Schedule:** (subject to change at the discretion of the instructor – many adjustments may take place as a result of the final number of students enrolled in the course)

Tuesday, February 4

Introduction to Course

Directing Manifesto Presentations

Introductory Discussions: A Director's Vision and Differences between Manifestos and Scholarly Research-based Writings/Presentations

Overview of Guided Critical Discussion Project

DUE: DIRECTING MANIFESTO

Tuesday, February 11

Introduction to Anne Bogart

Guided Discussion Projects: *A Director Prepares: Seven Essays on Art and Theatre* (Bogart)

Overview of Readings Presentations

DUE: GUIDED CRITICAL DISCUSSION PROJECT

Tuesday, February 18

Discussion of Historical Considerations (Read "Introduction" in Hodge in preparation)

Stanislavsky (Hodge)

Meyerhold (Hodge)

Overview of Performance Review Essay

Tuesday, February 25

Jacques Copeau (Hodge)

Michael Chekhov (Hodge)

Michel Saint-Denis (Reserve Reading or newer Hodge)

Overview of Research Essays/Presentations

Tuesday, March 3

The Knebel Technique (Reserve Reading or newer Hodge)

Brecht (Hodge)

Littlewood (Hodge)

Tuesday, March 10

NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 17

Strasberg (Reserve Reading)

Adler (Reserve Reading)

Meisner (Reserve Reading)

Tuesday, March 24

Joseph Chaikin (Hodge)

Peter Brook (Hodge)

DUE: RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Tuesday, March 31

Grotowski (Hodge)

Lecoq, etc. (Reserve Reading or newer Hodge)

Eugenio Barba (Hodge)

Tuesday, April 7

Ariane Mnouchkine (Reserve Reading or newer Hodge)

Wlodzimierz Staniewski and the Gardzienice Theatre Association (Hodge)

Stacy Klein and Double Edge Theatre (Reserve Reading)

Tuesday, April 14

NO FORMAL CLASS MEETING

DUE: PERFORMANCE REVIEW ESSAYS – Submission via email attachment in .doc or .docx
only by 4:30 p.m. to Carrie.Klypchak@tamuc.eduTuesday, April 21

Richard Schechner and the Performance Group (Reserve Reading)

Elizabeth Lecompte and the Wooster Group (Reserve Reading)

Robert Wilson (Reserve Reading)

Tuesday, April 28

Peter Sellars (Reserve Reading)

Frantic Theatre Assembly (Reserve Reading)

Mock Conference Format Organization

Tuesday, May 5 (final exam period during normally scheduled class time)

Mock Conference

DUE: RESEARCH ESSAY FINAL PRESENTATIONS, OUTLINES, AND WORKS CITED PAGE