



**THE 541.001 – Seminar in Stage Directing  
COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer 2023**

Instructor: Jackie Rosenfeld, MFA

Email: jackie.rosenfeld@tamuc.edu

Office Hours: I am happy to arrange Zoom meetings as needed. E-mail me to set up an appointment

Office Location: PAC 128

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

***Textbook(s)/Materials Required:***

TITLE: *The Lines Between the Lines: How Stage Directions Affect Embodiment Paperback*

AUTHOR: Bess Rowen

ISBN: 978-0472054367

(Runs about \$34.95 online new. Kindle edition is \$30.95)

We will also be using the website [linesbetweenthelines.com](http://linesbetweenthelines.com) but that does not replace the book.

Scripts, articles, and other readings will be made available as pdf's on D2L. Expect to read 2 plays, 2 chapters, and 1 article per week.

**Course Description:**

**“My aim is not for production teams and readers to be more beholden to the text of all stage directions than they are to the play’s dialogue, but simply that they are worth of sustained creative thought. Stage directions can be a playground instead of a prison, and my goal is to show how much potential and embodied agency lies inside of these underappreciated and underutilized portions of play texts.” - Bess Rowen**

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.

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

1. display a learned knowledge of historical and contemporary use of stage directions
2. critically, knowledgably, and professionally evaluate and discuss varying types of stage directions their implementation in the directing process.
3. synthesize academic/artistic research into cohesive scholarly writing.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:**

#### **Active Participation: (20%)**

Your Active Participation will play a substantial role in your final grade. As this is a seminar you will be expected to arrive in class ready to discuss the week's readings and participate in activities with your classmates. Attendance is mandatory for all classes with the exception of the final class period (July 4) when your final project is due. This grade will be taken for each class period and will involve your presence, discerned listening, as well as your willingness and ability to engage in the subject matter. Lack of demonstrable preparation will have a substantial negative impact on your course grade. Respect for yourself, your classmates, and your instructor are mandatory. Disagreements will happen, and we will approach them with kindness and respect.

#### **Stage Directions in the Wild: (10%)**

Each week we will begin the course sharing an example of stage directions found "in the wild." Explanation and instructions will be provided in class.

#### **Talking Points: (30%)**

Each student will complete six lucid and cogent talking points for each class meeting. These can be in whatever format you choose (bullet points usually work best) but should be questions and/or comments (anything that can assist with a class discussion) that struck you while reading. These will be due before you come to class, and you are encouraged to also bring this list with you.

#### **Final Project: (40%)**

The completion of an analysis of stage directions in a contemporary script that you would like to direct using Rowen's techniques. You will address the types of stage directions used and your concept for embodying them within a stage production. Further details will be provided in class but the grade for this assignment will include the approval of the script choice by June 9, a rough draft on June 23, and the final draft due on Tuesday, July 4 by midnight.

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

Students must have access to a computer and the ability to use Microsoft Word or other word processing software. Students must also be familiar with how to use the D2L Brightspace platform including uploading documents to Dropbox as .pdfs. Students must be able to use Power Point or Google Slides to create an effective presentation.

### **Instructional Methods**

Students will be graded on a series of reading selections, class projects, practical application of the knowledge that they have learned, the completion of a paper applying the principals of Rowen's theory of the embodiment of stage directions.

### **Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course**

1. Be prepared. Read what needs to be read. Write what needs to be written.
2. Participate. There is a great deal of exciting discussion in this course, and it will be even more exciting with your ideas.
3. Check your school e-mail regularly.
4. Be respectful of your instructor, your classmates, and yourself.

## 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:

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%.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Technology requirements for this course include basic computer knowledge and a working e-mail address that is checked often. Students must have access to the internet as well as D2L Brightspace.

LMS: All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### Interaction with Instructor Statement:

If at any time during this course you are in need of further explanation or should need to speak with me about the course or its outcomes, please either stop by my office or e-mail me to set up an appointment to speak in person or on Zoom. I will respond to all e-mails Monday – Friday within 24 hours.

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE

Performing Arts Center (PAC) #101 Phone: 903-886-5346 (Main Office)

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### Course Specific Procedures

**LATE ARRIVALS:** Unless previously arranged, late arrivals will not be let into the Zoom after 9:20am. Early departures not previously arranged will noted on participation grade.

**SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:** Written assignments and projects will be submitted via D2L.

**CELL PHONES:** Please turn off all cell phones upon entering the virtual classroom. Please do not check messages or engage in text messaging during class. This is disruptive to the flow of the course.

**LATE WORK:** Under normal circumstances, I do not accept late assignments or presentations. Extensions are granted on a case by case basis. Reach out to me as needed as early as possible.

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

**SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY:** The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

[http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.a\\_spx](http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.a_spx)

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#). <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

### **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

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

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Nondiscrimination 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/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/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.

### **Missed Class Due to Communicable Disease**

Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments.

