

249-1 Introduction to Stage Management

Northwestern University, Fall 2017

Theatre, 249-1: Introduction to Stage Management

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday 11:30am – 12:50pm in Large Conference Room, Wirtz (please note, during Faculty meetings, we will move to an alternate class room or you will receive and independent work assignment.

Barbara Butts, B-butts@northwestern.edu

(I am a morning person, so expect an early morning reply if you email me after 10pm)

Cell: 773-251-0756 – no text, calls after 10pm.

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11-1,

Office Location: Ryan Center for Musical Arts, 70 Arts Circle Dr., 5-170

Texts: You will not need to purchase any textbooks for this course. If you want a textbook that clearly outlines the stage manager's process (pre-production – closing), please purchase or borrow copy of the Thomas Kelly's Backstage Guide to Stage Management. I have several desk copies that you may borrow. I will provide handouts from several texts and information from my website (NUSMGUIDE).

Instructor Overview:

I am firmly committed to diversity and equity whereby barriers are removed to create space for all individuals to fully engage in our community. Each student's voice has something of value to contribute, especially studying an area of theatre that focuses on leadership, communication and collaboration. We must take care to respect individual backgrounds, personal identities, intellectual approaches, artistic expression, experiential learning, and the demographics expressed by everyone in our community. Individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another, the world around us and our role as lifelong artist. I approach each class as if you have something to teach me – together we learn.

Course Description:

Introduction to Stage Management will focus on the skills and mechanics necessary to contribute to the production **process** as a stage manager with a focus on organization, leadership and communication.

Learning Objectives:

Introduction to Stage Management has the following learning objectives:

- To identify and model theatre management industry best practices
- To examine effective written and verbal communication best practices
- To cultivate problem solving techniques

- To develop organizational systems
- To being to understand and articulate your leadership and management style
- To introduce additional perspectives on the role of the Stage Manager from theatre professionals.

Requirements:

You must stage manage or assistant stage manage a Wirtz mainstage or a graduate lab theatre production that performs during the fall or winter quarter. Your final grade will be weighted towards your practicum. If you stage manage in the winter quarter a 'K' grade will be given until the stage managing requirement has been fulfilled.

Supplies: Scale Rule
 3 inch wide 3-ring D binder (Production Book)
 Approximately 20 index tabs to create your production book
 Stopwatch

Grading:

Class Participation	5 points
Assignments/Quizzes	35 points
Northwestern Tech Observation	10 points
Professional SM Observation Report	10 points
Final	10 points
Production Book	30 points

Observation Report:

You are expected to contact a professional theatre of your choice and make arrangements to observe a professional stage manager at work. You may observe a rehearsal, tech or performance. You are then expected to discuss your experience in class and to turn in a written observation report by the end of fall quarter. Please cover the following material in your observation report:

- What part of the process you observed and where
- Theatre's mission statement
- How you were treated by the stage management team
- Observation reflection on the stage management team's leadership, organization, communication and problem solving style
- What you learned that you would or would not do

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCOMPLISH THE OBSERVATION PROJECT IF YOU WAIT UNTIL THE LAST TWO WEEKS TO MAKE YOUR ARRANGEMENTS! Observation Reports will not be accepted after 11:30am on Tuesday, Dec 5.

Production Book Requirements:

The following paperwork must be included in your Production Book:

1. REHEARSAL AND TECH CALENDARS
2. PRODUCTION ANALYSIS
3. ACTOR SCENE BREAKDOWN
4. GROUND PLAN W/ PLOTTED POINTS
5. MINI GROUND PLAN – Blocking Page
6. BLOCKING
7. REHEARSAL REPORTS
8. COPIES OF DESIGN INFORMATION
9. CAST & CREW SIGN IN SHEETS
10. LIGHTING & SOUND CUE SHEETS & PLACEMENT WRITTEN INTO SCRIPT
11. COSTUME QUICK CHANGE PLOT – if there are costume quick changes
12. CREW ASSIGNMENTS/CUE SHEETS
13. PERFORMANCE REPORTS (ALL)
14. COPY OF YOUR PROGRAM
15. PRODUCTION MEETING NOTES (AT LEAST 8)

Note: The Production Book is due during your 1/2 hour meeting on Tuesday Nov. 14 or Thursday, Nov. 16. If your practicum project completes during spring quarter, your completed production book is due the first Tuesday after your production closes.

Final:

There will be a FINAL EXAM for this class. It will be a take home exam due by **11:30am on Tuesday, Dec. 5**. This is NOT a group project. You will need to do individual work on the exam.

Absences:

Stage Managers are never late and rarely absent during rehearsals and performances. Please be on time for this class. I will excuse one absence from class during the quarter. **If you are stage managing a production, you are expected to be at all rehearsals, techs, performances and production meetings (unless production meetings conflict with class). Reach out to me if you struggle with this rigorous schedule. I am your best advocate.**

Stage Management Confidentiality Statement

Stage managers are often privy to and must deal with/handle/discuss confidential or personal information. Therefore, it is vital and imperative that all personal or sensitive information discussed inside or outside of class remain confidential and not be discussed with anyone else.

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU (accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; 847-467-5530) and provide professors with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential. For more information, visit:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/accessiblenu/faculty/general-information/index.html>

Academic Integrity at Northwestern

Students are expected to comply with University regulations regarding academic integrity. (<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/>) If you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, speak to the instructor before the assignment is due and/or examine the University web site. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating on an exam (e.g., copying others' answers, providing information to others, using a crib sheet) or plagiarism of a paper (e.g., taking material from readings without citation, copying another student's paper). Failure to maintain academic integrity on an assignment will result in a loss of credit for that assignment—at a minimum. Other penalties may also apply, including academic suspension. The guidelines for determining academic dishonesty and procedures followed in a suspected incident of academic dishonesty are detailed on the website.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/files/ProceduresAllegedAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Northwestern University that no member of the Northwestern community—students, faculty, administrators, staff, vendors, contractors, or third parties—may sexually harass any other member of the community. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances; the use or threatened use of sexual favors as a basis for academic or employment decisions; conduct that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive academic or working environment; conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity. Sexual harassment is a type of conduct prohibited under the University's Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Stalking, and Dating and Domestic Violence, which can be found at www.northwestern.edu/policies For more information, visit:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-harassment>

