



## Course Syllabus: Principles of Directing

College of Fine Arts

THEA 3433-101

Fall 2023; MWF 1:00-1:50pm

### Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Grace Edgar

Office: 105

Office hours: MWF 10:00-11:00am, T 1-3pm and by appointment

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### Course Description

Exploration of the fundamental techniques and aesthetics of directing. Practice in translating analysis into performance and production through the direction of short scenes. Consideration of the role of the director in play selection, production conception, design, casting, rehearsing, and staging.

Directing students will read plays, select scenes, perform script analysis and research, recruit actors, cast, and rehearse scenes. This work will cumulate in three invited scenes performances. Basic principles of Intimacy Choreography will be covered and directors will be expected to create brave spaces for their actors. Devising techniques will be introduced and a short, devised piece will be composed.

### Course Objectives

- Read plays analytically and expand knowledge of the canon.
- Understand the role of the director in a production process.
- Through extensive research and imagination, create the "world of the play."
- Communicate effectively, efficiently and kindly with actors and/or designers.
- Learn and apply the basic principles of Intimacy Choreography.
- Introduce methods for beginning to devise theatrical work.

### Textbook & Instructional Materials

- *Sense of Direction: Some Observations on the Art of Directing* by William Ball
- Additional handouts or PDFs shared by Dr. Edgar through D2L
- Plays from which the scenes are selected
- Three-ring binder

### Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2020-21](#)

### Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted in this course; therefore, any use of AI tools for work in this class may be considered a violation of Texas Tech's Academic Integrity policy and the Student Code of Conduct since the work is not your own. The use of unauthorized AI tools will result in referral to the Office of Student Conduct.

### Grading

Grades will be comprised of the student director's preparation and direction of two scenes (15% each), a devised performance (15%), three reflective papers on the scenes (10% each), a midterm exam (10%), and two group presentations (7.5% each).

The student is allowed three absences per semester. Three late arrivals equal one absence. Any additional absences will result in a 10% reduction from the final grade.

90% or above=A, 80% or above =B, 70% or above=C, 60% or above=D and 59% or below=F.

Table 1: Percentages allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Percentage
Scene #1	15%
Reflective Paper #1	10%
Scene #2	15%
Reflective Paper #2	10%
Devised Performance	15%
Reflective Paper #3	10%
Midterm Exam	10%

Assignments	Percentage
Anne Bogart Presentation 1	7.5%
Anne Bogart Presentation 2	7.5%
Total Percentage	100%

Table 2: Total percentage for final grade.

Grade	Percentage
A	90% or above
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	Less than 60%

#### Scene Preparation and Direction

Student directors will be expected to read plays, select scenes, and do extensive research on their scene. Research areas include but are not limited to the playwright, the time period when the play is set and the time period when the play was written, the style of the play, historical productions of the play, and ideas about technical elements including set, props, lights and costumes. Student directors will present their research to the class through a PowerPoint presentation.

There will be an invited performance of the scenes. Each student director will briefly introduce their scene to the audience. Each scene will be graded on the student director's preparation and the successful performance of the scene. There will be three scenes' performances and each will count as 15% of your final grade. One of the scenes performances will be a devised piece.

#### Reflective Papers

After the scenes' performance, the student director will write a self-evaluating reflective paper on the successful and less successful aspects of the rehearsal process and scene performance. This is an opportunity to reflect on one's work and make improvements in the next directing project. There will be three reflective papers and each will count as 10% of your final grade. Papers should be uploaded into [D2L](#).

#### Mid-Term Exam

There will be a midterm exam on October 13, 2023 during class time. You will receive a midterm review study guide on October 6, 2023 and we will have a midterm review session in class on October 11, 2023. The midterm will count as 10% of your final grade.

### Anne Bogart Presentations

Each student will prepare two presentations from a chapter of Anne Bogart's *A Director Prepares* in groups of two or three. The groups and topics will be assigned by Dr. Edgar. The two presentations will count as 15% (7.5% each) of your final grade.

### Devised Performance

There will be a final devised performance on December 8, 2023 at 7PM. The devised performance will count as 15% of your final grade.

### MSU Productions and Extra Credit

Attend the Midwestern plays this semester *Hope and Gravity* and *The Marriage Proposal & The Bear*. Your ticket is free to both of these shows with your validated Midwestern Student ID. Seating may be limited for these productions, please ensure you reserve your tickets early. An analysis bonus paper (additional 5% added to your final grade) discussing a successful scene performance of your choice will be due one week after the production closes.

### Late Work

Late work will not be accepted with the exception of an emergency.

### Make Up Work/Tests

No make-up work or tests will be accepted with the exception of an emergency.

### Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 31, 2023

Deadline to file for December graduation: September 25, 2023

Deadline to file for May graduation: October 2, 2023

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" October 30, 2023 by 4pm

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

### Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program.

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. A student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by Dr. Edgar. The student is allowed three absences per semester. Three late arrivals will equal one absence. Any additional absences will result in a 10% reduction from the final grade.

## Instructor Class Policies

### Course Requirements

1. Participation: Daily participation in class activities and discussions.
2. Reading: This course requires a great deal of reading outside of class. Assigned reading is to be completed before the beginning of the week for the material covered during the week. Additionally, the student-director must read the entire plays which contain their directing scenes.
3. Rehearsals: Each student director will be responsible for booking spaces and having rehearsals outside of class times.

### General Notes

Cell phones need to be turned off or to airplane mode during all classes. Dedicate class time to being present and learning your craft.

No gum or food. Please always bring water to drink.

Scenes can be chosen by you, but will need to be email to Dr. Edgar for approval. Content warnings will be given for strong language and/or mature material.

## Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

## Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described

below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

#### Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

#### College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

#### Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of Dr. Edgar.

Course Schedule:

Week	Subject	Assigned Reading
Week 1 8/28-9/1	Intimacy Choreography Basics, How Directors Research, Begin reading plays for scene selection	Chapter 2 of <i>Staging Sex</i> and Chapter 3 of <i>Play Directing</i> on <a href="#">D2L</a>
Week 2 9/6-9/8	"Auditions and Casting" "Relation to the Actor" Select scenes	From <i>A Sense of Direction</i> 37-69
Week 3 9/11-9/15	"Objectives" Begin research	70-92
Week 4 9/18-9/22	"The Rehearsal Process" Presentations of research Cast scenes	93-149
Week 5 9/25-9/29	"Connotation" "An Epilogue" Begin rehearsals	150-177
Week 6 10/2-10/6	"Art, Consciousness, Belief, Unity" Continue rehearsals	3-12
Week 7 10/9-10/13	Midterm review <i>Midterm</i> <i>Perform Scene #1</i>	
Week 8 10/16-10/20	"Intuition, Creativity, Positation" Select Scene #2	13-22
Week 9 10/23-10/27	"The Cornerstones of Success" Begin research Cast Scene #2 Begin rehearsals	23-36
Week 10 10/30-11/3	"Story and anti-story" "Memory" Presentations of research Continue rehearsals	From <i>A Director Prepares</i> 7-42
Week 11 11/6-11/10	"Violence" "Eroticism" Continue rehearsals <i>Perform scene #2</i>	43-78
Week 12 11/13-11/17	Devising Exercises	
Week 13 11/20-11/22	"Terror" "Stereotype" Begin research Cast Devising Performance	79-112 113-136

Week	Subject	Assigned Reading
Week 14 11/27-12/1	"Embarrassment" "Resistance" Continue rehearsals	137-155
Week 15 12/4-12/8	Continue rehearsals <i>Devised Performance</i>	
Week 16 12/11 3PM	<i>Reflection Paper #3</i>	

#### Important Dates

Assignment Due	Date	Percentage of Final Grade
Midterm Exam	October 13, 2023	10%
Scene Performance #1	October 14, 2023 at 2PM	15%
Scene Performance #2	November 10, 2023 at 6PM	15%
Devised Performance	December 8, 2023 at 7PM	15%
Final Reflective Paper	December 11, 2023 by 3PM	15%