

THDA 45 course comments

Here are some comments you may find helpful to orient yourself to work in this class.

Starting out

In the first few weeks, we will undertake a series of exercises and topic discussions in text analysis and directing. Please expect targeted assignments from one class meeting to the next. Keeping up with the reading as indicated on the schedule is essential. As soon as you have scene work ready to share in class, we will begin that phase of our work.

Embracing the process

Directing is a complex activity that combines a variety of skills. Each of you will bring different strengths to our collective learning experience. By appreciating the diversity of others' perspectives and abilities, you will enhance your own development. Learning to direct is a process that happens in different ways for different students, and not always in a "straight line."

Writing (and keeping a notebook or journal)

You should keep personal, informal notes about your experiences in class, reading and rehearsing. You should follow any impulse to conduct research related to your work, and keep research notes together with your personal notes. I think you will find that your notes will be helpful in completing weekly writing and essay assignments. Please save your all your writing assignments to submit as a collected portfolio on December 8, along with any other materials you would like to include. I will provide additional guidelines.

Scene work and later group-directed work

You will serve as actors in one another's scenes, and divide other responsibilities as you see fit. The number of scenes you undertake as a director is up to you: you may find it useful to keep exploring the same scene, or to move on to new ones. Studio time will be used to discuss your work, and to explore the process of directing in a lab rehearsal format. My goal will be to move through comments on scene work relatively quickly, so we can maximize the number of times each of you presents work. Overall, during class meetings you may present work as a director, act in a scene directed by a peer, or simply observe and contribute to the discussion. All of these activities will help you grow as a director.

In order to explore issues related to collaboration, ensemble and story-telling more deeply, we will do longer group-directed project work toward the end of the semester.

Rehearsal time outside of class meetings

Our limited class time will be spent discussing your work-in-process and considering rehearsal techniques. Our studio time will be most productive if you have spent time preparing. In order to make adequate progress, you will need to arrange time together outside of class to meet and rehearse. I recommend that you arrange a minimum of 2 hours per week for this purpose, though some weeks you may want to rehearse significantly longer. It may be helpful to arrange this time as a regular part of your weekly schedule.

Memorization & Public presentations

When acting in scenes you should make your best possible effort to memorize your lines as soon as possible, or at least well enough to act freely with script-in-hand as for reference only.

Please keep open the possibility that we may want to present some of your work publicly outside of regular class time. We will discuss this possibility together.