

# THD 195 – Stage and Production Management

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## Course Calendar and Weekly Schedule:

### **Week 1 (Jan. 27): Pedagogy of Leadership**

During this class period we will have an introductory discussion about leadership. What is leadership? What makes a good leader? How do we build our leadership skills and those of others? How do we create a successful collaborative team?

### **Week 2 (Feb. 3): From Page to Stage**

This class will be an examination and discussion of the play analysis process. What are the differences between a close-reading for the performer and a director's analysis? How does this differ from a stage management analysis or that of a theatre administrator? What does a stage manager bring to the table during the first production meeting?

### **Week 3 (Feb. 10): Systems of Communication**

In this class, we will examine techniques to create effective communication between collaborative partners. While the discussion will provide background in some platforms for communication, the focus of the class will be upon methods for creating effective connections between partners and systems to filter communication to appropriate collaborators through the lens of importance and urgency.

### **Week 4 (Feb. 17): Pre-Production**

This class will be an examination and discussion of the pre-production process with a primary emphasis placed upon the stage manager's duties from the moment of production conceptualization. Secondary topic of discussion will revolve around the other members of the production team. What are they doing and what are their responsibilities? What level of involvement should the stage manager have in the production team's business?

### **Week 5 (Feb. 24): The Rehearsal Process**

Stage managers must maintain a continuous balance between the need of the director, demands of the producing organization, technical crew, specifics of the play text, and the well-being of the performers. During the week, students will explore possible answers to the questions: What is best for the production? Who is the most important person in the room? What is the most successful balance of opinion and fact?

### **Week 6 (Mar. 2): Taking Ownership of the Production**

Week six is an examination of the stage manager's responsibilities during the technical rehearsal process. What must the stage manager accomplish during the transition from the rehearsal room to the stage? How much help, if any, will the stage manager need? What are the responsibilities of the rest of the production team? The creative team? How does the stage manager both support the team but also take control of the production?

### **Week 7 (Mar. 9): Calling Cues and Running the Show**

During this class period, students will discuss the artistic responsibilities of the stage manager. How does the stage manager make the sun rise and set? How is it that the stage manager transports the audience from the interior of a duke's palace to the Arden Forest? Or from a dressing room in Germany to a London theatre decades in the past? Or make sure that a live production integrates with the strict timing of a live television broadcast?

### **Week 8 (Mar. 30): Regathering After Covid-19 Campus Evacuation**

During the weekly drop-in hours, which will be recorded, we will review the changes to the course material, assignments, and approaches to the study of stage and production management. You will be asked to create questions regarding course

### **Week 9 (Apr. 6): Transition to Production Management**

During this week, we will explore the role of production manager in a variety of performance-making companies. We will also interview Cary Gillett, Director of Production for Baltimore's Center Stage. Prof. Gillett's career encompasses stage and production management for a variety of academic and professional organizations both domestically and internationally, and she is currently coordinator of the Coordinator of the Stage Management Mentor Project for the United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT). Prof. Gillett was also recently elected to the board of USITT, a position she will start later this year, and she is on the faculty of the University of Maryland, College Park where she teaches in the School of Business.

### **Week 10 (Apr. 13): Production Manager – Hard and Soft Skills, Duties, and Responsibilities.**

During this week, we will examine the hard and soft skills of Production Managers and the ways PMs utilize these skills in their work. We will review specific examples from performance companies and the methods and tasks PMs utilized to address challenges.

**Week 11 (Apr. 20): Genres of Performance and Company Management**

During this week, we will examine the challenges posed by different genres in performance. What is the difference between unionized organizations and non-union companies? What is the relationship between full-time salaried employees and independent contractors? How do we create and implement effective strategies for collaboration amongst departments?

**Week 12 (Apr. 27): Production Management and Organization Mission**

During this period, we will discuss the role of the production manager in supporting an organization's mission. Utilizing theories and techniques from prior course material, how can a production manager effectively contribute to building an ethos which supports the artistic goals of an organization?

**Week 13 (May 4): Season Proposal Meetings**

During this week, student pairs will meet with the instructor to review progress of their season proposal projects and work on improvement plans and next steps.

**Final Exam Period (May 13 - 9:00am): Reflection - Course Post-Mortem - Season Proposal Submission**

In the final examination period, we will review the season proposal projects, evaluate the success of the course through a post-mortem discussion, and create methods to connect course material to future projects and roles.