**THEA 362- Directing II**

Instructor: Tara Weintraub Email: helrichtb@vcu.edu

Spring 2014, TR 9:00-11:00 Office Hours: By Appointment

Shafer 106 Mailbox: Performing Arts Center, 2nd Floor

**Purpose of Course:** This course is intended to provide an in-depth understanding of the work of the director. We will study play analysis, conceptualization, the way a director works with actors, designers, and all of the various support personnel that contribute to the production of a play.

**Textbooks:**

A Sense of Direction by William Ball

Backwards and Forwards by David Ball

The Empty Space by Peter Brook

*Recommended Reading:*

Directors on Directing by Cole and Chinoy

TIPS: Ideas for Directors by Jon Jory

**Paper :** Each student will attend a university performance that they themselves are not involved in, and write a short (5 page- double-spaced) paper on the production. This paper should be an analysis of the production from a director’s point of view. For example: what problems did the script and the venue present and how were those problems addressed and were they successfully handled?

**Director Presentation**: Each student will choose a director and a production from the attached list and research the production and the director’s working process. The result of that research will be presented to the class in a 15 minute oral report, using visual references as aids. A written outline of the presentation is to be handed in at the same time as the presentation. The grade for this assignment will be 50% quality of research and 50% oral presentation.

**Games Assignment**: Each student will choose five games/ warm-ups for rehearsal and prepare to lead those games with the other students in the class.

**Play Reading Assignments**: You will submit a list of 3 one-act plays that you have considered in your search for appropriate Final Project material. With this list, you will include the following information about each play:

*Name of play and playwright*

*Cast breakdown (male/ female, age range)*

*Brief summary of the play*

*The strengths and weaknesses of the play*

*Why you want to direct this play*

**Final Project**: Each member of the class will choose a one-act play on which to focus for the final project. This play (25 minutes) will be presented at the end of the semester in a fully realized one-act play festival. Each play will be rehearsed outside of class. An audition will be held at the beginning of February to cast all productions. Each director will schedule 3 showings of their play to be seen in class throughout the semester. The class, as a whole, will be responsible for all publicity for auditions and performances. We will hold a production meeting in both March and April (days TBA) between 5-6:15, in which each director will meet with their designer to discuss concept. You are expected to be present for your 20 minute time slot. We will have 3 days of Tech rehearsal, one dress rehearsal, and two performances that you are expected to attend. A promptbook for the play will be handed in for this project and will include:

1. Ground plans
2. An analysis of the play, including given circumstances, theme, plot, concept, style and Backwards and Forwards work.
3. Research, designs, as well as visual materials that you would share with your designers.
4. Finished block for the play
5. Your rehearsal journal (half page –full page review of each rehearsal)
6. A half page written critique on each of the plays presented (including your own)
7. Anything else you feel belongs in the promptbook.

**Director Presentation Information**

Your assignment is to research one of the productions listed below and make a presentation to the class. Your presentation should include the following:

The experience of the audience on opening night of the production

The techniques the director used to achieve that experience

A brief biography of the director, as well as their influences

**Stanislavsky The Seagull 1898**

**Vahktangov Princess Turandot 1922**

**Meyerhold The Inspector General 1926**

**Bertolt Brecht Mother Courage 1949**

**Jerzy Grotowski Akropolis 1964**

**Joseph Chaikin Nightwalk 1969**

**Peter Brook Midsummer Night’s Dream 1970**

**Andre Gregory Alice in Wonderland 1970**

**Julie Taymor The Lion King 1997**

**Grading:** Your grade will be based on a combination of written work, class participation and presentations. In addition to these major areas, your attendance, punctuality and ability to focus on the work will also be considered. Your final grade will be based on a 1000 point total.

Your final grade will be based on the following criteria:

200 points Class Assignments

100 points Paper

100 points Director Presentation

200 points Final Project- Promptbook

200 points Final Project- Production

200 points Participation

**Written Work**

All written assignments will be typed in a **12 point font, double spaced and printed in black ink**. Double-sided printing is encouraged, to save trees, but not required. Printing multiple pages per sheet is not acceptable. Please format all outlines with proper indentation and numbering. Students must submit paper copies of all written assignments. Proper MLA format must be followed for all bibliographic citations.

**Professionalism**

We will spend a lot of time discussing one another's work. As you give feedback on your classmates' work please remember to be courteous and respectful. While constructive criticism is encouraged, you are expected to remain mindful of each other's feelings and respectful of each other's work. It is important that the classroom be a safe environment where everyone can explore and play. Please be respectful of people's boundaries and feelings. If, for any reason, you feel uncomfortable with the work inside or outside the classroom, please do not hesitate to approach me or email me.

**Attendance**

Students are allowed TWO absences.  For each additional unexcused absence, you will lose a full letter grade for the class.  Excused absences must be cleared by the instructor in advance. Arriving late for class disrupts the learning process for fellow students, so every two late arrivals will count as an unexcused absence for grading purposes.  Students arriving more than 20 minutes late to class will be considered absent.  Because each class builds upon previous information, it is not possible to “make-up” class sessions.  It is expected that late and absent students will call/meet other class members to find out what occurred in class and to get handouts and assignments before the next class meets.  Missing all or part of a class is not an excuse for being unprepared.

**Disabilities**

If you have any visual, auditory, ambulatory or cognitive disabilities it is your

responsibility to inform me on the first day of class so that I can try to accommodate your needs. See the *VCU Resource Guide* for details.

**Religious observances**

In accordance with university policy, if you wish to observe a religious holiday you must provide advance written notification by VCU’s deadline, so that I may accommodate your needs.

**Honor policy**

Please visit the VCU website or see the VCU Handbook to review the official university honor policy. One university ruling you need to be especially aware of: **The University requires that cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off while you are in the classroom.**

**VCU Alert and Campus Security**

1. Sign up to receive VCU text messaging alerts [http://www.vcu.edu/alert/notify]. Keep your information up-to-date.
2. Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in on campus classrooms.
3. Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities.
4. Know where to go for additional emergency information [http://www.vcu.edu/alert].
5. Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police: 804-828-1234.
6. Report suspicious activities and objects.

**Note to student:** By choosing to remain in this class, you agree to abide by the standards set forth in this syllabus. Additionally, your signature on your VCU application signifies that you agree to abide by all rules and policies, including the Honor System, of Virginia Commonwealth University. For more information, refer to the Student Resource Guide, at <http://www.students.vcu.edu/policies.html> and the Student Bulletin, at [http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/bulletins/http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/bulletins/](http://www.pubapps.vcu.edu/bulletins/)