

**TPP 6385**  
**Graduate Directing**  
phone: 352-237-0505  
email: youngd@ufl.edu

Dr. David Young  
Office Hours: TBA  
by appointment

Prerequisite: Undergraduate directing and graduate student status or permission

Texts: The Director's Companion, Mel Shapiro  
And Then, You Act Anne Bogart

**Attendance:** Essential. Two excused absences are allowed  
Two late arrivals = equals one absence  
2 absences = lower grade one half point  
If ill, bring Doctor's note

Perspective: Most professions appear to be profoundly routine and pedestrian. In order to survive, Theatre must have life, joy, meaning, love, passion, and disciples.

Note: Only a disciplined and responsible person should accept the role of the first collaborator in a communal adventure--the director. A live actor and a live audience define the Theatre. So, in the simplest terms, the director focuses the production in order to assist the actor in telling the playwright's story to the audience. The individual who comprehends on an experimental level complexity and difficulty of the director's role in a production almost always evolves into a more skilled, sensitive, and generous actor.

Objectives: To refine the ability to analyze (seeing the structure of the text and preparation for the imaginative leap), to conceptualize (bringing the text to new life through a filter or a metaphor which amplifies and refocuses the text rather than reducing it), and to articulate (in written and verbal forms) your vision of the play.

To amplify your communicative and collaborative skills.

To develop a unique leadership style which will enable you to excite and inspire as well as to shape and coalesce the individual and the collaborative contribution of each member of the production team.

To create and foster a strong sense of support and an ensemble within this class. Success in this area will be an indicator of your future collaborative ability as a director.

To strive towards the life-long goal of becoming better citizens of the world. We are a product of all that has gone before and all that is happening now.

We have an important hand in shaping tomorrow. As a director, we function as a prism that refocuses a playwright's story for an audience. We have a responsibility to the author, the audience, and to ourselves. The finest directors are often prophets. A director must be well informed about politics, architecture, decor, fashion, art, music, manners, and cultures throughout the centuries. Every time a director accepts a directing project, he faces the tripart challenges of the scholar, the artist, and the leader.

To define verbally and in written form a critical aesthetic response to your own and others' directing. Good feedback focuses on the work, on the individual, and the specific, rather than the general. Constructive feedback is honest, direct, and explains the problem as the critic perceives it and offers possible solutions that are related to the director's version of the play. The best feedback never attempts to redirect the director's scene or production.

#### PROJECT I - USE PROSCENIUM STAGING

Please choose a script—preferably modern. Use 3-4 actors. Be sure your actors have their scene perfectly memorized by first showing.

- Time I            A. Select an 8 - 10 minute scene.
- B. Three hours of rehearsal followed by in-class presentation.

- Time II            A. Three hours of rehearsal followed by in-class performance.

\*\*Please write a page or two and be prepared to discuss in class what you did at each rehearsal. After your second showing, please write about the three things you learned about directing from this project.

PROJECT II - USE THRUST, ARENA OR PROSCENIUM STAGING (Preferably thrust or arena). Try something classical or off-beat. Use 3-5 actors. Be sure your actors have their scene perfectly memorized by first showing.

- Time I            A. Select a 10 - 12 minute scene with more than two characters.
- B. Three hours of rehearsal followed by Rehearsal Feedback Critique.

- Time II            A. Four hours of rehearsal followed by Performance Feedback Critique.

\*\*Please write a page or two and be prepared to discuss in class what you did at each rehearsal. After your second showing, please write about the three things you learned about directing from this project.

#### Scene and Play Selection:

1. Should not be part of your studio, educational or professional resume.
2. Time restrictions will have to be enforced. This is an important aspect of learning the craft of directing.
3. Do not select plays you have seen in the last two years.
4. Select work that challenges, excites, moves you or makes you laugh.

Journal- Keep a weekly Journal on each class day and each scene you work on. Make a notation on the most important point the director made and if he/she doesn't do so, how you could have helped these actors, so you will have a guide for the future. I will collect them at midsemester.

PROJECT III-Director Report - Make your requests early. Select an important director from the following list (others by request). Don't report on any that we discussed in Creative Process please:

Duke of Saxe-Mieningen, Jacques Copeau, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Gordon Craig, Elia Kazan, Harold Clurman, Joan Littlewood, Tyrone Guthrie, John Houseman, Peter Hall, William Ball, Joseph Papp, Margo Jones, Franco Zeffirelli, George C. Wolfe, Loyd Richards, Ariane Mnouchkine, Harold Prince, Jerry Zaks, JoAnn Akalatis, Julie Taymor, Peter Brook, Augusto Boal, Max Reinhardt, Richard Boleslavsky, Erwin Piscator, Harold Pinter, Michael Saint-Denis, Richard Scheckner, Judith Malina & Julian Beck, Edward Gordon Craig, Robert Lewis, Zelda Fitchandler, Danchenko, Yuri Lubimov, Robert Wilson, Anna D. Shapiro and Lee Brewer.

Prepare a three-page, typed, chronological reference highlighting the director's major contributions, insights into his/her working process, as well as what you perceive to be his/her strengths and weakness. This paper must be distributed to each member of the class.

PROJECT IV-Production Critiques - Select two productions during the semester. They may be produced in a professional or educational setting. Write a two-page, typed critique on the directing of the production. Be concise and focus on what the director attempted to do and whether or not he/she was successful. It is irrelevant how you might have directed the production. Comments concerning acting must relate to the director/actor relationship. (Feb. 1 --- Mar. 15)

***Please note: Do not plan to be in the final Florida Players show either as a director or as an actor or to use any musical theater actors due to conflicts with their showcase.***

PROJECT V-FINAL PROJECT SHOWCASE---

Performances in April (TBA). Minimally produced production. Select a short one act play or part of a full length play that can easily stand alone. Scripts must play ten minutes (no more). A careful cutting is part of the challenge. Minimum of three to four actors. Please submit the script to me one week before auditions are held as the scripts have to be ok'd the SOTD.

You supply props and music—try to use the black boxes and chairs, rather than a lot of furniture. It just gets in the way for the most part. I believe we will have a stage manager, a sound board operator and a lighting board operator. You will need to supply specific information as to the lights, sound etc. to them, as well as requests to the costume department in regards to costumes (please give me all costume info and I will pass it along to them – they will need the name of the actor and your thoughts on the costume. They will do the best they can).

For the first evening, it will be a TECH/DRESS rehearsal with actors. You will have 10 minutes to talk to the design people—lights and sound. Then, run it.

For the second evening, it will be a DRESS rehearsal, there will be a full run through.

Please, no more than 6 internal light cues and no more than 5 or 6 sound cues.

A) We will work on these in class 2 times--so choose actors who are free at those times. Two rehearsals MUST be shown in class.

B) You supply props and furniture

C) Casting is open. We will select a date in February that is convenient to us all to hold auditions and we'll choose a time (usually after 3 or 4 p.m.) depending on your schedules. The past several years we've had a turnout of about 30 or more actors, so you'll have plenty of people to choose from. BUT after we have about three weeks of class together I suggest you pick a play and precast the two or so leads so you know you have strong actors. AS YOU KNOW, A DIRECTOR IS ONLY AS STRONG AS HIS OR HER CASTING CHOICES. The entire faculty sees this work (it's usually done in G-15).

D) Invite me to a rehearsal of a problem scene or a run-through before tech if necessary.

E) Performance dates will be announced in early February.

F) Final class meeting will be a production discussion, and feedback if schedule permits.

G) Prompt Book to be handed in the last day of class. (See below)

Contents of Directors Prompt Book:

1. Prompt script and ground plan including visual notation of blocking and verbal description of business.
2. Rehearsal schedule and actual time spent in rehearsal.
3. Research to include the world of the play, production reviews, and period analysis which is verbal and visual. Include background on the author and their previous plays.
4. Justification of the ground plan.
5. Prop list.
6. Costume and set dressing list.
7. Explanation of sound effects and music.
8. Description of lighting effects.
9. What did you actually do in each rehearsal? Be specific.

Final Exam - Self evaluation which is due on or before last week of class. Outline your strengths and weaknesses as a developing director. Be specific and candid.

Please note: This is the same paper as listed in the prompt book requirements.

SEE ALL THE PLAYS ON UF MAINSTAGE AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS IN CLASS.

**GRADING SCALE:**

<b>A</b> = 90 or above	Excellent
<b>A-</b> = 87 – 89	Almost Excellent
<b>B+</b> = 84 – 86	Very Good
<b>B</b> = 80 – 83	Almost Very Good
<b>B-</b> = 77 – 79	Good
<b>C+</b> = 74 – 76	Average
<b>C</b> = 70 – 73	Needs Work

**GRADING BREAKDOWN:**

Performance / Production – 65 %  
Papers / Speaking in Class / Promptness – 35 %

**FEEDBACK- for both actors and directors**

Feedback needs always to say what was strong about the work with suggestions about possible changes. Those suggestions about changes should include WAYS to make those changes, not just critiques.

**Regarding students with disabilities:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Honor Code: On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

Please make sure that you understand the University’s Academic Guidelines and policies regarding Academic Honesty and Ethical Conduct.

**UF’s Online Course Evaluation Process:**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.