

Instructor:

Tom Zhang (pronouns: he/him)

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352-273-0512

Office Location: Nadine McGuire Theatre & Dance Pavilion, 2nd floor, Rm 222

Zoom Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 9-11am, or by appointment

Zoom Office Hours Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/3669416963>

Course Description/Purpose:

TPA 4601 Stage Management, is a course for undergraduate School of Theatre and Dance students that introduces the principles and techniques of stage management, explores practical application, and examines topics specific to the work of a stage manager.

Course Objectives and Student Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Explain essential stage management concepts and methods
2. Describe stage managers' roles and responsibilities in different stages of production
3. Carry out specific tasks using methods learned, such as measuring & taping ground plan, using paperwork software, recording blockings, prompting lines, etc.
4. Demonstrate the organizational, time management, and communication skills needed to manage a production
5. Identify collaboration, problem solving, and team management within the theatrical creation process

College of the Arts (CoTA) Meta-Strategy 2021-2025: Systemic Resilience:

Course discussions will center our College Meta-Strategy

The University of Florida College of the Arts intends to be a transformative community, responding to and generating paradigmatic shifts in the arts and beyond. We do so by:

- Embracing the complexity of our evolving human experience and seeking to empower our students and faculty to shape that experience fearlessly through critical study, creative practice, and provocation.
- Collaborating effectively with the forces of change.
- Preparing students to access and unsettle centers of power in a radically changing world.
- Facilitating an arts education that will position emerging artists and researchers as catalysts for equity on local and global levels.

Required Texts:

- *The Stage Manager's Tool Kit* (3rd Edition) by Laurie Kincman (2021)
- *Sweat* by Lynn Nottage
- Additional readings to be provided via canvas or by the course instructor

The plays and dance work we examine in this course may contain difficult material including (but not limited to) sexual violence, racial violence, self-harming behavior, mental health struggles, physical violence, and coarse language. Summaries specific to each play and work will be detailed on the course Canvas page. Please connect with me in person or via email if you feel that you are unable to read/watch or engage in discussion and assignments for a specific play/dance work. I would like us to discuss alternate arrangements to ensure your full participation in the course.

Suggested Texts:

- *Stage Management Theory as a Guide to Practice, Cultivating a Creative Approach* (2nd Edition) by Lisa Porter and Narda E. Alcorn (2024)

Required Materials:

- Access to a computer with Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel programs and/or Google Docs (using UF email credentials)
- Access to a computer with internet connectivity to access the course Canvas site
- Architect Scale Ruler

Grading:

Submitted Written Assignments	45%
In-class Presentation	10%
Reading Discussions/Class Participation	25%
2 Quizzes	20%
Total	100%

The final course grade is based on the following percentages:

A	94-100%	B-	80-83%	D+	67-69%
A-	90-93%	C+	77-79%	D	64-66%
B+	87-89%	C	74-76%	D-	60-63%
B	84-86%	C-	70-73%	E	0-59%

- Information on UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be found:
- <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Assignments (subject to change):

SM Skills Assignment (5 points): Based on readings and discussions, write 10 most important skills required by a stage manager, as well as their soft/hard skill category.

Calendar Assignment (5 points): Create a “weekly schedule” representing your class, production, job/work study and life responsibilities for your regular week. Examples will be available on Canvas.

To Do List Assignment (5 points): Complete a Stage Management Team To-Do List for use during Prep Week before rehearsals begin. This list should include everything that the stage manager and Deck SM need to do to prepare for rehearsals, techs and performances. The list with most tasks will be provided and you need to fill in the assignment and certain tasks’ names. After completing the list, briefly write about your thought process.

Scale Rule Measuring Assignment (5 points): Handout in class. Architect’s Scale Rule necessary for assignment.

Prop List Assignment (5 points): Create a detailed Prop List for the designated part of *Sweat*, using the text of the script and additional details provided by course instructor. Specific assignment details to be provided separately. Consider format.

Stage Manager Presentation (10 points): Students will be assigned to groups of two. Based on the Information packet provided, each group will give a 10-minute informational presentation as the stage management team at first rehearsal/crew orientation/1st onstage rehearsal. A successful presentation should be both informative and welcoming, present yourself as a cohesive team of stage managers. Additional guidelines will be provided.

Shift Plot Assignment (5 points): Create a Shift Plot for the designated part of *Sweat*. Use the example handed out in class. Additional guidelines will be provided.

Costume Change Plot Assignment (5 points): Create a Costume Change Plot for the designated part of *Sweat*. Specific assignment details to be provided separately.

Shadowing Experience Reflection Assignment (10 points): Shadow the stage management team for one regular rehearsal and one tech rehearsal for one of the theatre productions this semester. The observation should last a minimum of 1 hour. Write a response paper about the observation experience. Additional guidelines will be provided on Canvas.

Course Fees:

- Course fees are assessed for certain courses to offset the cost of materials or supply items consumed in the course of instruction. A list of approved courses and fees is published in the [schedule of courses](#) each semester. The UF schedule of courses lists \$109.70 as the additional fee for this course.

Course Requirements:

- Full participation in all class discussions, activities, and assignments
- Complete all assignments on time
- Be prepared to present and discuss your assignments each week
- Exercise inclusivity and be open to viewpoints of fellow classmates as course material is explored

Assignment Guidelines:

- All written assignments should follow MLA (Modern Language Association) style guidelines. (The MLA guidelines do not apply to stage management paperwork assignments such as prop lists, scene breakdowns, etc.). Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL) is a terrific MLA resource. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- All assignments should be submitted via the course Canvas site as PDF documents.
- Submitted assignments will be accepted until **12:50pm on the day they are due**. After 12:50pm the assignment will be considered late. Grades on late assignments will be lowered one (1) letter grade for each late day. Reading assignments are due at 12:50pm on the day they are due.

Please note: Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, is subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor to enhance learning opportunities. Any changes will be clearly communicated in class and via the course Canvas site.

Course Attendance:

The success of this course is based on discussion and class participation. Attendance is vital. Only one (1) unexcused absence from class will be permitted without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your final grade by 5%. Two (2) late arrivals and/or early departures to/from class will count as one (1) absence. Three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade in this class. Excused absences are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog and require appropriate documentation. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)

Accommodations:

If you anticipate challenges related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluer.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](#).

Student Conduct Code:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the 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.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have questions or concerns, please consult the instructor.

University Policies and Additional Information:

Please [click here to view the Academic Calendar](#) for important dates including holidays and drop/add deadlines.

UF’s Health and Wellness Resources are available to assist you. Please feel encouraged to reach out for assistance if needed:

- *U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center:* [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center:* Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department:* [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services:* For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Additional Academic Resources include:

- *E-learning technical support:* Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Career Connections Center:* Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. [Career assistance and counseling services](#).
- *Library Support:* Various ways to receive assistance with respect to [using the libraries or finding resources](#).
- *Teaching Center:* Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. [General study skills and tutoring](#).
- *Writing Studio:* 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. [Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers](#).

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T/Th Periods 6-7 (12:50-2:45pm) • 3 Credit Hours • McGuire Pavilion, Rm 219 (Design Studio)

- *Student Complaints On-Campus*: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.
- *On-Line Students Complaints*: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

Class Schedule (Subject to Change):

Note: READ means the reading listed is due before that class; ASSIGN means the instructor will announce and explain the assignment in-class; DUE means the assignment is due before class on that day. All dates here are subject to change, check Canvas for actual due dates.

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
Thu, 8/22	Course Introduction, Syllabus Overview SM as a Profession, 6 Phases of Production SoTD Stage Management Opportunities	READ: Syllabus ASSIGN: Show Shadowing assignment
Tue, 8/27	Stage Manager Definitions & Articles, Members of an SM Team	READ: SM Articles, Introduction Chapter ASSIGN: SM Skills Assignment
Thu, 8/29	Communication Approaches Principles for written communication	READ: Chapter 1 DUE : SM Skills Assignment ASSIGN: Presentation assignment
Tue, 9/3	Time & Focus Management	ASSIGN: Calendar Assignment
Thu, 9/5	Pre-production Overview Given Circumstances & Team Management	READ: Chapter 3 DUE : Calendar Assignment ASSIGN: Prep List Assignment
Tue, 9/10	Discuss: <i>Sweat</i> script Script Analysis for the SM	READ: <i>Sweat</i> Script
Thu, 9/12	SM Paperwork and Document Design Principles	READ: Chapter 2
Tue, 9/17	Production Book & File Organization SM Toolkit	READ: Chapter 4
Thu, 9/19	Setting up the Rehearsal Room Working with Ground Plans & Floor Taping	READ: Chapter 5 “Preparing the rehearsal room” & “floor taping” part DUE : Prep List Assignment ASSIGN: Floor Measurements
Tue, 9/24	Floor Taping Exercise	DUE : Floor Measurements
Thu, 9/26	First Rehearsal PRESENT: Company Business Table Work, Music Rehearsal	READ: Chapter 5 before “Blocking” & Company Business Documents
Tue, 10/1	Facilitating Rehearsals	READ: Chapter 5 complete ASSIGN: Prop List Assignment
Thu, 10/3	Rehearsal Props and Costumes	
Tue, 10/8	Blocking Notation: Theatre	
Thu, 10/10	Blocking Notation: Dance	DUE : Prop List Assignment
Tue, 10/15	Prompting & Line Notes Review for Quiz 1	ASSIGN: Quiz 1
Thu, 10/17	Pre-Tech PRESENT: Crew Orientation	READ: Chapter 6 before “Preset List” & Crew Orientation Documents DUE : Quiz 1
Tue, 10/22	Run Sheet & Other Run of Show Paperwork	READ: Chapter 6 before “Costume Plot” ASSIGN: Shift Plot Assignment

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Thu, 10/24	Running a Tech Rehearsal Tech Etiquette & Protocols	READ: Chapter 6 after "Costume Plot"
Tue, 10/29	Working w/ Designers in Tech Tech Notes & Cue Notation	
Thu, 10/31	Cue calling in-class practice	DUE: Shift Plot Assignment
Tue, 11/5	Working w/ Wardrobe team Costume Change Plot	READ: Chapter 6 "Costume Plot" ASSIGN: Costume Change Plot
Thu, 11/7	Previews and Opening Night Performance Reports	READ: Chapter 7
Tue, 11/12	Show Maintenance PRESENT: Safety & Emergency Speech	READ: Chapter 8, Epilogue
Thu, 11/14	Understudies & Closing a Show	DUE: Costume Change Plot
Tue, 11/19	AEA & SMA	READ: AEA/SMA websites & articles
Thu, 11/21	Future of SM: Technology, EDI, Sustainability, etc.	READ: assigned articles
Tue, 11/26	Thanksgiving Break	
Thu, 11/28		
Tue, 12/3	Discuss: Shadowing Experience Review for Quiz 2	ASSIGN: Quiz 2
Wed, 12/11	Final Exam Day (NO EXAM)	DUE: Shadowing Reflection Assignment DUE: Quiz 2