

TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Larkspur, California

Course of Study

Stagecraft 3-4

Introduction: Stagecraft 1-2, Visual and Performing Arts, 4th year Drama, year-long course

Schools where course is taught: Tamalpais High School, Redwood High School, Sir Francis Drake High School.

Length of Course: One year

Subject Area and Discipline: Fine Arts -- Drama

Grade Level: 12

Is this course an integrated course? No

Course Description

This course allows students the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of theatrical production, production management, theater front-of-house management, and leadership skills. During the course of the year, students will develop techniques introduced in Stagecraft 1-2, including theater design— scenic, lighting, costumes, props and sound— hanging and focusing lighting instruments, light and sound board programming and operation, scenic construction techniques, prop and costume construction, backstage crew procedures, stage management, production safety and best practices. Students will take responsibility for front-of-house management, including box office, concessions, publicity, program creation, and fundraising. Students will manage accounting and scheduling, participate in budgeting, run production meetings, manage and maintain inventory, make company decisions, and solve problems for the project-based student-run theater company. Students will be responsible for applying their classroom instruction in a hands-on production setting. Students will be able to use and understand a content-specific theatrical vocabulary.

This course supports TUHSD’s priority to provide rigorous and authentic learning opportunities for students by providing 21st Century Skills including critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, risk-taking and problem solving.

Prerequisite skills and knowledge:

Stagecraft 3-4 is open to students who have successfully completed Stagecraft 1-2, or permission from the instructor. Students must be concurrently enrolled in Advanced Drama 7-8.

List of program goals/learning outcomes:

Program Goals to be addressed in this class:

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work
- Refine and complete artistic work
- Analyze, interpret and select artistic work for presentation
- Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation
- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work
- Perceive and analyze artistic work
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work

Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art
Relate artistic ideas and work within societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding

The 21st Century Skills that will be included in this class are: *critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, risk-taking and problem solving.*

Suggested textbook(s), materials, equipment and resources

There is no single text, but many references and sources will be used including:

Books:

A Sense of Direction

William Ball

Theater Production and Design

J. Michael Gillette

Scene Design and Stage Lighting

W. Oren Parker and R. Craig Wolf and Dick Block

The Director at Work

Robert Benedetti

The Empty Space

Peter Brook

Students enrolled in Stagecraft 3-4 are involved in projects with professional theater practitioners who provide significant mentoring in addition to individual work with course instructors.

These books and materials have previously been approved by the board

Requirements satisfied: Elective

Appendices:

Unit 1

Producing: Company Leadership, Administration and Organization (Artistic Perception; Connections, Relationships and Applications)

Program Goals:

- Refine and complete artistic work
- Analyze, interpret and select artistic work for presentation

21st Century Skills: Collaboration, Critical thinking and Problem Solving

Description: In this unit students will participate in organization-wide decision making; collaborate with faculty on steering the theater company; perform administrative duties of the company; create and distribute marketing and publicity materials; write grants; engage in financial planning and donor management using QuickBooks; participate in the student non-profit board of directors; produce and manage fundraising events.

To that end, the student will:

Produce an event, creating production calendar and schedules, organizing and supervising crew members and tracking deadlines, and facilitating communication.

Example assignment:

Student will run a planning meeting. This must include creating an agenda, organizing colleagues, delegating responsibilities and communicating outcomes.

Skills Acquired:

Collaboration: working within a team.

Communication: Articulating tasks and issues that arise within the team.

Problem solving: Analyzing and addressing needs of the production and developing a plan of action.

Creativity: Finding a way to meet the often bizarre or unusual needs of certain plays within the parameters of the performance space.

Assessment:

Students complete a set number of hours for a particular production, track their hours and write reflectively about their experiences and articulating their achievements and challenges.

Unit 2

Theatrical Design (Artistic Perception; Creative Expression; Aesthetic Valuing; Historical and Cultural Context)

Description:

Students will learn and practice the following: crafting a specific, personal visual response to a text. This includes script analysis; close reading skills; comprehension of subtext; historical and visual research; decision making supported by the text. Students will make and communicate clear artistic choices: they will collaborate with cross-age peers, adult guest artists and teachers; produce artistic renderings and working drawings; practice negotiation and presentation skills, and will lead a team for actualization of the design.

To that end, the student will demonstrate his or her understanding by:

- Maintaining a journal portfolio of work
- Reflective writing on his or her process
- Provide a written analysis of the script, justifying his or her artistic choices
- Producing renderings, drafting, cue sheets and other content specific documentation of their ideas and processes
- Demonstrating the evolution of a creative process through sketches and revisions leading to a culminating design

Example Assignment: Costume Design

Student will:

- Read and annotate the play, highlighting all costume references: what the character says about herself, what other characters say about her, what the playwright includes in stage directions.
- Research historical period of the setting, when the play was written and any other pertinent information to provide context
- Find visual emotional research to support the production concept and the designer's approach to the work
- Create a color and texture palette collage for each character
- Collaborate and coordinate with other members of the design team and with the director to align design choice and unify vision for the work
- Revise as necessary
- Provide detailed renderings for each character

- Create and update a costume plot, piece list, punch list and build schedule
- Work with and oversee costume production team

Skills Acquired:

Collaboration: working within a team.

Communication: Articulating tasks and issues that arise within the team.

Problem solving: Analyzing and addressing needs of the production and developing a plan of action.

Creativity: Finding a way to meet the often bizarre or unusual needs of certain plays within the parameters of the performance space.

Assessment:

Students complete a set number of hours for a particular production, track their hours and write reflectively about their experiences and articulating their achievements and challenges.

Unit 3

Stage Management and House Management (Connections, Relationships, Applications)

Description:

Students will learn: collaboration across production departments; guiding peers and adults in a project; scheduling; negotiation; documentation of the process, tracking production choices; coordinating communication between participants; long range planning and goal setting; problem solving; and facilitating rehearsals or front-of-house coordination. Students will synchronize the needs of the production with the needs of the audience. Students practice conflict resolution; students establish and maintain rehearsal protocol.

To that end the student will:

- Take on a specific management role within the theater company, manage schedules, run and organize crews, strategize and oversee timing coordination between various departments and production aspects.
- Students will invent solutions for problems that occur in real time.

Example assignment: Stage manage a production

- Work with adult director to create rehearsal and performance schedules.
- Create show documentation including scene breakdown, blocking script, contact sheets, rehearsals reports, production meeting minutes.
- Coordinate all rehearsal props and costumes
- Manage prop and costume lists
- Oversee rehearsal environment, including managing the time and setting the tone
- Choreographing all set changes, preshow organization and intermission changes
- Track all prop and costume movement backstage.
- Calling all cues: coordination of all aspects of the production in live time from the operation booth.

Skills Acquired:

Collaboration: Working within a team.

Communication: Articulating tasks and issues that arise within the team.

Problem solving: Analyzing and addressing needs of the production and developing a plan of action.

Creativity: Finding a way to meet the often bizarre or unusual needs of certain plays within the parameters of the performance space.

Assessment:

Students complete a set number of hours for a particular production, track their hours and write reflectively about their experiences and articulating their achievements and challenges.

Unit 4

Dramaturgy (Historical and Cultural Context)

Students study the world of the play, including information about the life of the playwright, the time the play was written (social, political and economic climate and events), heightened language and vocabulary, and the place and time period in which the play is set. Dramaturgy students research and present context for the production, acting in an expert capacity for understanding the world of the play. Students provide information and documentation, both visual and intellectual, as a resource bank for peers: actors, directors and production staff.

To that end the student will:

Example assignment: Research and present a topic to the production staff

- Research the topic using multiple sources, both primary and secondary, internet and traditional, and visual
- Relate the research to the text of the play; analyze how the context affects interpretation and presentation of the artistic work
- Create documentation including journal work, image boards and time lines to share in the rehearsal room.
- Verbally present the material to peers, teachers and guest artists, highlighting the relationships between the information and the literature.

Skills Acquired:

Collaboration: working within a team.

Communication: Articulating information to a team and making connections between artistic expression and historical events.

Problem solving: Analyzing and addressing needs of the production and developing a plan of action.

Creativity: Finding a way to meet the diverse needs of certain plays within the parameters of the written word.

Assessment:

Students present a verbal presentation with visual illustration. Students curate and manage a research bank for use of the production in the rehearsal process. Students analyze and apply historical research in a journal portfolio; visual research boards and visual timelines.

Dramaturgy skills transfer to work in acting, directing and designing, as well as to other academic pursuits.

Course Authors: Erik Berkowitz, Ben Cleaveland and Heather Basarab - Drama Instructors in the Tamalpais High School District.

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