THDA 130 **INTRODUCTION TO STAGE TECHNOLOGY**

Fall 2017

Tuesday & Thursday 10:30 – 11:45
Lab – Wednesday 1:30 – 3:30

Design Lab / Open Studio / Costume Shop / Craft Shop and Dye Room / Scene Shop / Mathers Theatre

Instructors:	Sherry Harper-McCombs
	Jason Nedrow
Office:	Sherry - 1624 (voice mail)
	Jason - 1089 (voice mail)
Costume Shop:	1535
Scene Shop:	1431
E-mail:	Sherry - harpermc@dickinson.edu
	Jason – nedrowj@dickinson.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

Every theatrical production incorporates the use of various media, tools, processes and procedures, most of which are unseen by the standard audience, but are absolutely essential to the creation of the world of a play. The skills employed by theatrical technicians, as taught in this course, may translate to other areas of interest or study and make up the foundation for all technical elements of theatrical production. This course will serve as an introduction to the use of technology, tools, and skills in the areas of Costumes, Crafts, Construction, Painting, and Lighting as they relate to a theatrical production.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The format of this class will be geared toward making – there will be little to no lecture, but rather a further focus placed upon working with your hands to create. We will engage with the material by using a series of in-class exercises and we will study technology by giving students hands-on work to be completed both in and out of a traditional classroom environment. There will be a number of workshops taught throughout the class; class will take place in various shops and environments, and each student is expected to work on elements related to specific productions, as well as engage in crew work on at least one collegiate show.

COURSE GOALS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The objective of this course is to the give the student a general, foundational understanding and skill set in the basic elements of theatrical production. It is expected that during the course of this class students will:

- Develop their abilities in costume, craft, wood and steel construction
- Learn the vocabulary which will allow them to understand, read, and work with technical drawings, costume renderings and patterns, and light plots
- Understand how to select materials for production in both economically and environmentally sustainable ways
- Acquire a working knowledge of the basic tools and trades associated with lighting, sound, and video work
- Gain basic use of various painting techniques in the scenic and costume fields

Through this work, students will broaden their understanding of the processes associated with creating a theatrical production from page to stage. This course also meets the SCON requirement for graduation so we will be approaching the course with an eye toward what we as artisans must do to maintain the economic viability and sustainability of theatre as an art form alongside our responsibility to creating art in a safe and sustainable manner.

Class and laboratory time will be used to give students hands on work in the technical production of elements related specifically to the performances being executed by the college. Students will document their work in the course in order to be able to articulate an account of what they have accomplished both acting as a crew person, running a show, but also in their specific contribution(s) to the executed element(s) of production at the end of the course.

By the end of the course, the student will:

- Be able to know and use the basic tools associated with costume, scenery, and craft shops
- Be able to perform basic construction tasks in the areas of costume, scenic, and craft construction
- Be able to select materials for construction in costume and craft based on performance needs as well as economic, environmental, and safety needs
- Be able to hang, cable, and focus lighting instrumentation
- Be able to run a light board
- Be able to perform basic rigging and knots for theatre rigging and construction
- Be able to handle a variety of basic painting techniques

Due to the size and nature of our spaces and tools, the class will be broken up into multiple sections so that different groups of students will be working in various locations at different times. For example, one grouping of students might be working in the costume studio, while a separate group would simultaneously be completing projects in the open studio, scenic studio or on the stage. Every student will receive the same material but not necessarily in the same order as every other student in the class.

We will create various projects for each section of work; for example a small construction assignment would be followed by a painting workshop in which the student will create their own work based upon the material learned in the previous class. An important component of this course is the hands-on implementation of the skills learned in class to an actual production. To this end, each student will be expected to complete a crew assignment as well as a realized project which will be used on stage in one of the various productions.

TEXT AND MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS

All equipment, text, materials and tools needed for this course will be provided. Access to a computer is essential throughout the semester.

ATTENDANCE

This course is taken to explore the world of the theatre artist. Theatre is one of the few fields today in which deadlines are absolutely fixed – opening night is NOT negotiable. Given this, theatre artists are expected to be on-time and present with the work that is due that day unless true emergencies prevent them from doing so. What this means in terms of this class is that your letter grade will be lowered by one letter for any absence over two class periods or one lab period. Every two times you are tardy to either class or lab will be the equivalent of one absence.

CLASS ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY

All work for this course will take place in the technical support spaces for the department of theatre and dance. These spaces include the scenic studio in Mathers, costume studio, property shop, and open studio in Montgomery, as well as the stage spaces at Mathers Theatre and the Cube and the college farm since our fall production will take place there. These spaces are not traditional classroom spaces but are places where work, which is often messy, takes place. As such, you will be presented with handouts on safety information and rules for use on each of these spaces but what follows are some general rules which apply to work in all of our spaces.

Because of the nature of backstage theatre work, it is essential that when working in any of our technical support spaces, appropriate attire is worn. This includes closed toe shoes, hair pulled back and secured when working with any tools, and comfortable clothes that you don't mind getting stained or dirty when working with paint or dyes. Very loose fitting clothing is also a poor choice when working with power tools and sleeves will be required to be pulled up.

Additionally, safety glasses, ear protection, and gloves will be made available and expected to be worn when using certain tools. Detailed safety information will be given for each space and for using certain tools either in hand outs or during in class presentations or both. Students are expected to follow any and all safety guidelines for the use of equipment and spaces.

Any student not wearing appropriate footwear or clothing will be sent home to change; this will count as tardiness or an absence dependent upon the time taken to complete this expectation. We will find a space for you to leave clothing items in Montgomery House if you would like, but please change into these BEFORE the start of class.

Backstage work can tend to be chaotic and also hazardous; distractions can be dangerous. For this reason, no cellphone use is permitted during class time or work calls and cellphones must be secured away from work areas. If a student needs to take a photo of work in progress or a completed project, that use is permitted but the phone must be secured as soon as that task is completed.

Our backstage spaces can also contain hazardous materials or, in the case of the costume studio, materials that can be ruined by contact with food or liquid. For this reason, food and drink are only allowed in designated locations in the studios and all drinks should have lids in order to keep contaminates out and liquids in.

ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded an equal opportunity to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment– that would impact your educational experience in this class, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to schedule a meeting with Director Marni Jones. She will confidentially discuss your needs, review your documentation, and determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to www.dickinson.edu/ODS, email DisabilityServices@dickinson.edu, call (717) 245-1734, or go to ODS in 106 Dana Hall.

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can meet to review your Accommodation Letter and complete your "Blue Form" Implementation Plan.

GRADING

Project	Points
Craft Project	10 points
Costume Project	15 points
Wood Shape Project	-5 points
Metal Shape Project	5 points
Rigging and Knot Project	5 points
Rehersal Cube Project	5 points
Flat and Jack Project	5 points
Crew Assignment	15 points
Production Project	20 points
Class Participation	15 points

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours will take place for one hour preceding each class and following each lab. Both Sherry and Jason's offices are in the first floor of Montgomery House. If you need more than one hour, cannot meet at that time, or would like to speak to both instructors simultaneously please email us so that we may setup an appropriate time for you to meet and discuss your work.