

# THTR 356

## Fundamentals of Stage Lighting



Fall 2019  
Tuesday & Thursday 9:40AM-11:10PM  
PLH 202 & Putnam Studio

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Office Hours: By Appointment

### Overview

This course is an introduction to theatrical lighting design. The goal of this class is to explore the theories and technologies of theatrical lighting design and to begin to build aesthetics in terms of theatrical lighting through the creation of two lighting designs. The techniques explored are of industry standard and can be found in lighting shops from Broadway to academic theatre.

### Goals

Goals for this course include

- You will engage in the material (read, think, and discuss texts)
- Contribute positively to discussions
- Think critically
- Present materials clearly and concisely
- Take intellectual and creative risks
- Develop a design concept in a collaborative environment
- Create a minimum of two portfolio pieces
- Have a stronger understanding of one's aesthetic in terms of theatrical design

### Credit Hour Compliance

Students will spend 3 hours on homework and outside assignments for every hour in class. Simply stated, expect to work 9 hours/week on homework and co-curricular activities.

### Safety

There is a dress code during workdays for this class. All participants must wear close-toed shoes; tie long hair back; take off dangling earrings, necklaces, & bracelets; and remove rings. Participants may not wear skirts, dresses, or flowing clothing during class workdays. This is for the safety of all participants as we explore elements of the lighting studio. If the lecturer deems clothing inappropriate for class, students will be asked to stop working and will receive no class participation or attendance credit.

### Class Text and Materials

All texts will be provided on WISE. I will provide a field template and 4 sheets of Drafting Vellum for this class. In addition to the materials I am providing, the following are required for class

### Project Deadlines

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#### Tuesday, September 3rd

Project #1 Presentations & Design Packet

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#### Tuesday, September 10th

Project #2 Presentations & Design Packet

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#### Tuesday, September 24th

Project #3 Presentations & Design Packet

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#### Tuesday, October 8th

Project #4 Presentations & Design Packet

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#### Tuesday, October 15th

Men on Boats Lighting Review

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#### Tuesday, October 29th

Project #5 Presentations

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#### Tuesday, October 31st

Project #5 Design Packet

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#### Tuesday, November 5th

Project #6 Presentations & Design Packet

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#### Tuesday, November 19th

Project #7 Presentations & Design Packet

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#### Tuesday, December 3rd

Dance Concert Lighting Review

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#### Tuesday, December 5th

Project #8 Design Presentations (in class)

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#### Thursday December 12th

Project #8 Design Packet Due at 11am on WISE

- An 8” Adjustable wrench with safety line attached. This may be purchased online or at a local hardware store. YOU MAY NOT USE THE LIGHTING STUDIO’s WRENCHES.
- Basic Drafting Supplies or Vectorworks 2010-2019 (supplies may be purchased at local shops or online).
  - (1) Architectural Scale Ruler
  - (2) HB Drafting Pencils
  - (1) Drafting Eraser
  - (1) Erasure Shield
  - (1) Adjustable Triangle
  - (1) Drafting T-Square (at least 18” long)

\* Please note that if you choose to draft in Vectorworks, your laptop must accompany you to class when necessary. You must also have taken a CAD class in order to use Vectorworks in this class. AutoCAD will not be an acceptable replacement.

\*\* There are drafting supplies located in the design studio (PLH 012). If you choose to use the supplies located here, you must pick them up prior to 9AM as there is a class that meets there at 9:10AM. You MAY NOT DISRUPT THAT CLASS in search of supplies.

## Grading Policy

**Attendance:** Due to the way in which this course is taught, class attendance is mandatory. A missed class will constitute a severe drop in one’s grade. Prompt attendance is also required. Tardiness and Absences are considered synonymous. Lateness is defined by (1) not in class at appointed time or (2) come to class after I arrive - whichever is the later.

**Participation:** Active participation in class discussion and group presentations is expected and will be a factor in each student’s grade. The participation grade will be based upon thoughtful contributions in discussion and other class exercises. You will be expected to participate in thoughtful discussions of close readings and presentations. Note that class participation does not simply entail speaking, but also listening in an engaged and respectful manner. All in-class projects will have a group critique attached to the assignments. Each student is required to participate in group critiques. Active participation in group critiques will count as significant part of the assignment as well as participation credit for the day.

**Group critiques** are fundamental to the process of collaborating. At their heart, the group critiques come from a place of openness and generosity. Asking hard questions is an important part of the process, however mean-spirited critiques will not be tolerated. Each student is asked to participate in each critique so that the work grows. Students will have the opportunity to adjust work based on the critiques given in class.

**Reading Assignments:** This is a seminar/design class not a lecture course. We are going to be talking and listening to one another. Engaging in collective enterprise and exploration. We will be discussing concepts in aesthetics and design that are central to our personal identities. Accordingly, we can and should expect that we will not all agree with one another regarding the topics we will be discussing. This course should neither be seen as an opportunity to compel others to “achieve” a proper stance, nor as a space for trying to impress people. Vital to the success of this class is the commitment we make to listening and speaking with one another with respect and thoughtfulness.

You are required to thoughtfully read every text. When I say that you are required to read, I do not mean that you should mechanically scan every page, but you should grapple with the ideas. You will be required to take notes on each text so that you will read for comprehension rather than reading for completion. I want you to *ponder every idea* rather than looking at every word. This means that you may need to read and reread sections of the articles/chapters. Reading means *engaging* yourself with the ideas of the texts.

**Presentations:** Presentations are fundamental to this course. You will present regularly. The fundamental purposes of the presentation are communication and collaboration. Presentations should be well prepared, concise, and clear. Evaluations for presentations will include: content, collaboration, clarity, critiques (given and received), organization, creativity, risk.

The work load will be quite heavy at times. To stay afloat, plan for a sufficient amount of time to complete the assignment. Remember to make use of your resources: meet with me outside of class, form design groups with your classmates, TALK TO ONE ANOTHER!

**Work Days** are designed to bring ideas, challenges, and questions to the studio. It is expected that each student will bring a minimum of one idea, challenge, or question to each work day. Preparation for work days shall happen prior to class. For example. If a student would like to see

what a certain instrument will do, they must bring that instrument (or arrange for it to be in class) to the work day. It will not be acceptable to hunt for materials during class. Our class time is limited and therefore preparation is vital to get the most out of our time in class.

**Assignments:** Projects will be due at the beginning of class. Late projects will be levied -10% per day. To be clear, materials for in-class presentations must be uploaded to the appropriate assignment on WISE prior to the beginning of class. All assignments must be uploaded to WISE.

**Forums:** For each class with a viewing and/or reading assignment, you are to prepare one (1) compelling question that could be used in class discussion. A compelling question is one that challenges all of us to think critically about the text – what it means, its relationship to objects/events/reasons in our daily lives, theatre, art, etc. The questions are not simply journalistic-type questions about “facts” in the text themselves; rather the questions are engaging in the material that may be personal, experiential, synthesis within texts, as well as finding the AND. Forums ARE NOT synopsis of the texts.

In addition, you are to compose a short paragraph (at least 150 words) in which you will begin to answer your compelling question. You do not have to answer the question completely, but you must demonstrate that you have thought about where the answer might lie (or, at a minimum, where a discussion of the answer would begin). The goal is to demonstrate you are reading closely and critically, and beginning to engage and synthesize texts with your experiences and beliefs.

Your compelling questions and short paragraphs must be posted to the Forum tab on our course WISE site by 8AM THE DAY OF CLASS. Late postings will not be evaluated and may be considered in class discussion.

## Project Criteria

An **“A”** assignment actively seeks and follows through on appropriate yet untested and potentially risky directions/approaches to the design question. It has a transparent process and communicates clearly to both artistic and production collaborators. It incorporates new directions/approaches into the design project while supporting the directions/approaches with thoughtful and creative evidence and analysis. An **“A”** assignment considers the intended audience and is distinctive, furthering the designer’s choices.

A **“B”** assignment incorporates new directions/approaches to the final project within the design question. It selects a consistent plan and communicates amongst collaborators. It considers alternative directions/approaches to the design project while supporting the directions/approaches. A **“B”** assignment is relatively clear and error free. It grasps the significance of its intended audience and its connection to designer’s choices.

A **“C”** assignment has a direction/approach to the design question but does not take creative risks in its development. It may fail to develop a consistent process and may be ineffective in its communication amongst collaborators. In addition, an assignment will receive a **“C”** if it does not have supporting material for design choices/decisions, lacks a sense of audience, and is stylistically unsophisticated.

A **“D”** assignment fails to present a direction/approach to the design question. It lacks process and communication amongst collaborators. Additionally, a plethora of mistakes may turn any assignment into a **“D”** if such lapses significantly affect the project’s process, final product, and/or “readability”.

An **“F”** assignment results when the designer neglects to hand in the assignment; refuses to address the assignment’s topic; or violates common standards of decency. Additionally, plagiarism will result in an assignment grade of **“F”**.

The following is the grading breakdown for this semester:

Attendance: 10%  
Class Participation: 10%  
Forums: 20%  
Performance Reviews 10%  
Projects/Assignments: 50%

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needed accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me as soon as possible. Also, please request that the counselor for students with disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics.

We will be analyzing multiple standpoints and, at times, we may encounter individual resistance to the text(s). At times, such resistance may provoke unexpected responses. In such cases, please take personal care. Support services are available through Bishop Wellness and the Chaplain's office. I will always be available to assist as desired/needed.

**Commitment to Positive Sexual Ethics:** Willamette is a community committed to fostering safe, productive learning environments, and we value ethical sexual behaviors and standards. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct—including discrimination, harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We understand that sexual violence can undermine students' academic success, and we encourage affected students to talk to someone about their experiences and get the support they need. Please be aware that as a mandatory reporter I am required to report any instances you disclose to Willamette's Title IX Coordinator. If you would rather share information with a confidential employee who does not have this responsibility, please contact our confidential advocate at [confidential-advocate@willamette.edu](mailto:confidential-advocate@willamette.edu). Confidential support also can be found with SARAs and at the GRAC (503-851-4245); at WUTalk - a 24-hour telephone crisis counseling support line (503-375-5353); and via the University Chaplains (503-370-6213). If you are in immediate danger, please call campus safety at 503-370-6911.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. The OED defines plagiarism as, "the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own." Willamette University plagiarism policy can be found in the College of Liberal Arts Catalog. Plagiarism may take many forms, but the common denominator is presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own. If you have any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, I encourage you to err on the side of caution and to seek advice from me. Students found guilty of plagiarism will receive a zero for the assignment and be reported to the honor's council.

## Class Assignments

### Reviews (Due 10/15 & 12/3)

You are required to attend the two Willamette University Theatre productions this fall: *Men On Boats* and *The Dance Concert*. It is highly recommend that you see one more production either at Willamette or in the community. Should you write a 3<sup>rd</sup> review prior to November 21<sup>st</sup> you will receive extra credit for the review. All reviews should focus on how lighting is used in the production. Questions you might seek to answer may include but are not limited to the following - How did lighting establish atmosphere? How did lighting support the energy and timing of the production? How did lighting affect mood? How did the lighting design work with the other design elements (be specific)? Use specific examples to support your viewing.

### Project One (Due 9/3)

THIS IS A NO COLOR & COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

A collaborative team will be assigned in class. You will work together on this project. Each person will complete a part of the project as separately and part of the project in collaboration.

In collaboration, find ONE (1) three-dimensional person-made object in an environment that changes with the time of day (it can be a sculpture outdoors, a building, any person made object that will remain in the same place over the course of three – four days). The object should possess an artistic value to you and/or your community.

Each collaborator will photograph (in black and white) the object at three distinct times of day (we must see the changes in time represented). Each of you will print the three photographs and write a 1200-word essay that answers the following questions:

- What is the artistic value of the object to you and to the community upon which it stands?
- How does light affect the object (how does it affect the structure) and its meaning(s) as the light changes?
- How does the light change affect your emotional and physical response to the object?
- Include the history of the object and an analysis of its purpose in its location.

\*\*Essay with black and white photographs are due on WISE prior to the beginning of class.

In collaboration, choose three photographs that best speak to the questions above. Present the photographs while answering the above questions as a team (NOTE: the questions will incorporate individual answers in a collaborative fashion. The essays on WISE ARE NOT

THE SAME ANSWERS as the presentations. The point is to develop a personal artistic statement and then to work together to develop a collaborative personal statement). Presentations should be clear and concise and last no more than 6 minutes with 4 minutes of critique.

### **Project Two (Due 9/10)**

Monochromatic 3x3x3

Each student will choose a single color in the spectrum (red, green, amber, blue, magenta, cyan, etc). Another student may not use the same color. Using the Putnam Studio Repertory plot, each student will choose three fixtures from three different angles. In each fixture, the student will place three gels within their “color” but with different shades/hues/saturations. The student will then attempt to create three distinct looks from the three fixtures with three different gels within the same “color”. Each look be in contrast with one another (for example: sunny day, romantic evening, rainy day). Students must present research material to support the looks they are attempting to recreate on stage. A white sheet will be used to support the contrasts. I recommend you work with 3 dimensional objects covered by the sheet. You will be evaluated on the success of each contrasting look as supported by your research materials as well as the technical capabilities of supporting your researched looks with instrumentation, angle, luminosity, etc. To be clear, the limits of this project are as follows:

- Choose 1 color
- Choose 3 gels within that color
- Choose 3 instruments in the Putnam Repertory Plot with 3 different angles
- Establish 3 contrasting looks: mood, place, time, etc.
- Support each look with research (there must be a strong connection between your research and what is presented on stage).

You will have 6 minutes to present your three looks (be sure you have supporting materials available in your presentation) with 4 minutes of critique. Note that you may be sharing fixtures. THIS IS OKAY. We will have time to make the gel changes necessary.

### **Project #3 (Due 9/24)**

This project focuses on design and development of Caryl Churchill’s *Far Away*.

Presentations will include:

- Historical Research
- Visual Research
- Personal experience (if necessary)
- Bibliography of all images used (MLA Format)
- Technical research on all equipment in the Putnam Studio

While it will certainly be necessary to incorporate set and costumes in research, it is important to note that the majority of the research should be for the needs of the lighting designer. This is a creative project only – the set and costumes are TBD as the designers will be playing off the design development of the lighting designers.

Presentations should be organized and concise. Prezi is the suggested format. If you choose to use a Google format, please share with me prior to the start of class. Your presentation should be uploaded to WISE prior to the start of class. Presentations should be no more than 6 minutes long with 4 minutes of critique.

### **Project #4 (Due 10/8)**

This project is a continuation of Caryl Churchill’s *Far Away*.

With the basic set in mind, the following is due to WISE prior to the beginning of class:

- Storyboard/schematic sketches for each scene and/or major moments
- Properties of Light Tracking Sheet

In class presentations should include a very quick and concise reminder of design goals and then take the class through your storyboard/schematic sketches and Properties of lighting track sheet. Presentations should take no more than 6 minutes with a 2 minute critique.

### **Project #5 (In class presentations are 10/29 with design packet due on 10/31)**

Project Five is the completed design packet for Caryl Churchill’s *Far Away*. This will include the following:

- Light Plot

- Front & Side Elevations (each wash should be represented in the elevations)
- Channel Hook up
- Instrument Schedule
- Magic Sheet
- Projects 3 & 4

In class presentations will take no more than 6 minutes with 4 minutes of critique. You will give a concise reminder of design concept and then discuss how the materials listed above achieve your design. You must show the class each element of project #5 (except what the class has already seen in projects #3 & 4).

You will be given a day to revise and revamp your paperwork with the design packet due on 10/31. Be thoughtful in how you put together your design packet. This is the first of your portfolio pieces. Presentation is as important as the material itself. Websites and PDF packets are standards within the industry. For those of you not in the arts, think of how you would put together a grant application with multiple parts. 25% of the grade for Project #5 will be your presentation of design packet.

### **Project #6 (Due 11/5)**

This project focuses on design and development of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Presentations will include the following:

Presentations will include:

- Historical Research
- Visual Research
- Personal experience (if necessary)
- Bibliography of all images used (MLA Format)
- Technical research on all equipment in the Putnam Studio

While it will certainly be necessary to incorporate set and costumes in research, it is important to note that the majority of the research should be for the needs of the lighting designer. This is a creative project only – the set and costumes are TBD as the designers will be playing off the design development of the lighting designers.

Presentations should be organized and concise. Prezi is the suggested format. If you choose to use a Google format, please share with me prior to the start of class. Your presentation should be uploaded to WISE prior to the start of class. Presentations should be no more than 5 minutes long with 3 minutes of critique.

### **Project #7 (Due 11/19)**

This project is a continuation of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*

With the basic set in mind, the following is due to WISE prior to the beginning of class:

- Storyboard/schematic sketches for each scene and/or major moments
- Properties of Light Tracking Sheet

In class presentations should include a very quick and concise reminder of design goals and then take the class through your storyboard/schematic sketches and Properties of lighting track sheet. Presentations should take no more than 6 minutes with a 4minute critique.

### **Project #8 (In class presentations are 12/3 with design packet due on 12/12)**

Project Eight is the completed design packet for Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*. This will include the following:

- Light Plot
- Front & Side Elevations (each wash should be represented in the elevations)
- Channel Hook up
- Instrument Schedule
- Magic Sheet

In class presentations will take no more than 4 minutes with 3 minutes of critique. You will give a concise reminder of design concept and then discuss how the materials listed above achieve your design. You must show the class each element of project #8 (except what the class has already seen in projects #6 & 7).

You will be given time to revise and revamp your paperwork with the design packet due on 12/12. Be thoughtful in how you put together your design packet. This is the first of your portfolio pieces. Presentation is as important as the material itself. Websites and PDF packets are

standards within the industry. For those of you not in the arts, think of how you would put together a grant application with multiple parts. 25% of the grade for Project #8 will be your presentation of design packet.

## Class Schedule

T 8/27	Introduction, syllabus, tour of the spaces in the Playhouse
H 8/29	How do we see lighting? WISE: Dunham CH 1 & CH 2 Discuss Project #1
T 9/3	<b>Project #1</b> Design Packet with in class presentations
H 9/5	Color Theory WISE: Taylor CH 1, CH 3, CH 4, & CH 5 Discuss Project #2
T 9/10	<b>Project #2 Due</b> Design Packet with in class presentations
H 9/12	Fixtures WISE: Dunham CH 5 & CH 6 ( <b>Bring wrenches to class</b> ) Workday: create the following “looks”: moonlight, sunlight w/beams, & cloudy day
T 9/17	Script Analysis WISE: Gillette CH 12, Essig CH 6, Churchill’s FAR AWAY Discuss Project #3
H 9/19	Research WISE: Gillette CH 11 & Essig CH 7
T 9/24	<b>Project #3</b> Design Packet with in class presentations
H 9/26	Praxis Wise: Adolphe Appia and Anne Bogart
T 10/1	Visualizing Design WISE: Gillette CH 13 & Essig CH 8 Workday: Capture in Media Studio
H 10/3	Visualizing Design Day #2 Workday: Capture in Media Studio
T 10/8	<b>Project #4</b> Design Packet with in class presentations
H 10/10	Drafting WISE: Shelley CH 5 & Dunham CH 11
T 10/15	<b>Men On Boats Review</b> Drafting cont. Workday: Ground Plan – bring drafting supplies to class
H 10/17	<b>Ground Plan</b> Drafting cont. Workday: Elevations – bring drafting supplies to class Discuss Project #5
T 10/22	<b>Front and Side Elevation</b> Washes and Angles WISE: Shelley CH 6 & Essig CH 12 Bring Ground Plan and Elevations to class
H 10/24	Paperwork WISE: Shelley CH 9 & Essig CH 11 Workday: Project #5 (bring drafting to class)
T 10/29	<b>Project #5</b> in class presentations

- H 10/31 **Project #5** Design Packet  
Praxis  
WISE: Robert Edmond Jones & Bertolt Brecht's Mother Courage  
Discus Project #6
- T 11/5 **Project #6** Design Packet with in class presentations  
H 11/7 Praxis  
WISE: Edward Gordon Craig  
Discuss Project #7
- T 11/12 Workday: Project #7  
H 11/14 Praxis  
WISE: Abulafia CH 3 & CH 4
- T 11/19 **Project #7** Design Packet with in class presentations  
H 11/21 **Bonus Review**  
Praxis  
WISE: Arnold Aronson  
Discuss Project #8
- T 11/26 Thanksgiving Break  
H 11/28 Thanksgiving Break
- T 12/3 Workday: Project #8 Drafting & Paperwork (**Dance Review Due**)  
H 12/5 **Project #8** in class presentations
- H 12/12 **Project #8** Design Packet Due at 11am on WISE