THEA 4360.002 Stage Direction I
Course Syllabus, Fall 2017
TTR 11:00 – 12:15; CA 103

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Stage Direction I is the study and practical application of directing principles for the beginning director. The course begins with the development of the **Directorial Concept** continuing with a directing workshop utilizing the following exercises: *the function and responsibilities of the director, developing leadership and time management skills, analysis of how a play is constructed, silent tension, given circumstances, dramatic action, idea, rhythms and tempo, justifying movement, developing ground plans, blocking, working with actors, and working in collaboration with the production team in developing the visual aspects of the production.* THEA 4360 serves as a foundation course for THEA 4361 Stage Direction II.

The student will direct a **TEN-MINUTE PLAY** for public performance during the “Ten-Minute Play Festival” held at the end of the semester.

Ten-minute plays must be selected from a published script. The department will pay the royalty and rights for your one performance. It is extremely important that you choose your script as soon as possible.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

"*Every child is an artist. The problem is to remain an artist after he grows up*" - *Picasso*

"*When I was a young man I observed that nine out of ten things I did were failures. I didn't want to be a failure so I did ten times more work.*" - *George Bernard Shaw*

➢ To lead the student through a personal examination of directing methodologies.
➢ To empower the student director to discover his/her own methodology.
➢ To give the student information and practical experience in the following:

1. **TIME MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS: YOUR FOUNDATION TO ACHIEVING SUCCESS!**
2. Achieving a sense of collaboration, ensemble, and interactive commitment.
3. Creating the right kind of environment for working.
4. Developing a sense of trust.
5. Respecting the actors, designers, and crew.
6. Mastering organization as a top priority.

The success of this course depends upon creating a workshop atmosphere. It is important that each class member supports constructive interactive dialogue. With each class members combined ideas and energy, the student will experience collaboration. As does theatre itself, this course demands a highly interactive, team playing commitment.

The Director’s Oath: **It is not my show, it is our show!**
Major Course Requirements:

1. Class participation, discussion, reading and comprehension of required textbooks and plays, attendance (see departmental attendance guidelines below).

2. **Assignment #1:** Each student will write a “One Page Play” (10 points). The play will focus on “dramatic structure”. The class will read the plays and select 7 for performance. The class will be divided into 7 teams, 1 director and 2-3 actors. Director’s 1 – 7 will rehearse the scripts during a class period, present the following class period, and afterward talk about the process. (20 Points)

3. **Assignment #2:** Each student will write a “One Page Play” (10 points). The play will focus on “physical action”. The class will read the plays and select 7 for performance. The class will be divided into 7 teams, one director and 2 -3 actors. Director’s 8 - 14 will rehearse the scripts during a class period, present the following class period, and afterward talk about the process. (20 Points)

4. **Exam #1:** Part One, “Basics Getting Started, Ahart. (50 Points)

5. **Assignment #3:** Team Conceptual Presentations: *The Little Foxes*, by Lillian Hellman. The class will be divided into 3 teams. Each team will present a Production Concept for *The Little Foxes*. (Script and criteria for a Production Concept can be found on Black Board under Content). (50 points)

6. **Exam #2:** Part Two, “Rehearsal: A Time for Experiencing”, Ahart (50 Points)

7. **Assignment #4:** Each student will write a “One Page Play” (10 points). The play will focus on “anti-realism”. The class will read the plays and select 7 for performance. The class will be divided into 7 teams, one director and 2-3 actors. Director’s 15 - 22 will rehearse the assigned scenes during a class period, present the following class period, and afterward talk about the process. (20 Points)

8. **Assignment #5:** The student will direct an assigned scene handed out by the professor. Each director will select 2-5 actors (from class or outside class). Each actor can only be in two scenes. Rehearsals will take place outside of class. (50 points)

9. **Ten-Minute Play Journal** The journal of the Ten-Minute Play Process will be handed in with the student’s Director’s Book. (10 points)

10. **Notes on Directing: 130 Lessons in Leadership from the Director’s Chair,** Hauser, will be used during class as examples and exercises in directing.

11. **Ten-Minute Play Director’s Book** (Criteria to be handed out by professor). (50 Points)

12. **Final Project: Ten-Minute Play Performance.** (100 Points)

**Grading:**

**Attendance Policy:**

Attendance in this course is critical to your success. For purposes of grading, no distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences (excluding absences for recognized religious holidays, deaths in the family, doctor’s excuse with documentation, and approved university functions.) Your absence affects the progress of the entire class. Each absence in excess of **TWO** will lower your average a full letter grade. More than six absences will result in a failing grade for the course. Exceptions under extreme circumstances may be made at the discretion of the professor.
Arriving Late to Class:

Roll is taken at the beginning of each class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility after class to inform the professor to make the change in the roll book. Three late arrivals to class count as one absence. If you arrive more than ten minutes late you will be considered absent. Time management skills are some of the most significant tools of the profession. The practice and development of these skills is expected.

GRADING RUBRIC: (Total Points: 450)

The final course grade will be based on the following grading rubric:

- 450 - 400 A
- 399 - 349 B
- 348 - 298 C
- 297 - 247 D
- 246 – 0 F

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

3. **The Little Foxes**, by Lillian Hellman (Located on Black Board under Content))
4. Additional reading materials to be handed out by professor.

IN CLASS DIRECTING SCENENWORK: WORKSHOP FORMAT

The course will be divided into three sections:
- Developing the "Directorial Concept”.
- The Process
- The Performance.

All students must participate as an actor in the class directing scenes.

TEN-MINUTE PLAY

Select your Ten-Minute Script Now! Rehearsal space is very limited. You must plan ahead.

Casting

For your Ten Minute Play you are required to cast at least one of the ACTING I students in a speaking role. There will be a showcase audition in early October, time and date to be announced. The Acting I students must be cast before you open up your show to other actors. Students are required to attend all performances of the Ten-Minute Play Festival. Students are expected to serve as crew members and help each director as needed for the success of the Ten-Minute Play Festival.

The Director’s Book

Keep all research, notes, rehearsal schedules, possible photos, etc. for your director’s book. You should be putting together a portfolio of your work for future interviews, and entrance into graduate school.

Course Guidelines:

1. Due dates will be strictly observed. Assignments are due even if you are absent. There will be no make-up work unless you have a verified medical emergency. Written work must be submitted
before or during the class period due date. Work submitted after the class period will not be accepted.
2. The professor reserves the right to adjust the course syllabus as needed.
3. TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES WHEN YOU COME TO CLASS! Be considerate of your fellow classmates.
4. Laptops: You may bring laptops to class in order to take notes. However, if the professor finds you online on a site not immediately and directly related to what we are covering in the classroom, you will not be permitted to bring your laptop back to class.
5. Students must keep duplicate copies of all work submitted.
6. Your individual participation is very important to the group presentation. At the end of the semester, each student will complete an evaluation on the group activities and individual participation.

### Fall Semester 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Discussion:</th>
<th>Assignment/Reading Due</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 29</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Discussion: “Syllabus and Course Requirements”</td>
<td>Students hand in semester schedules</td>
<td>Begin Reading Part One, Ahart, Notes on Directing, Hauser. Begin writing One Page Play “Dramatic Structure”</td>
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<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Select teams and One Page Plays “Dramatic Structure”</td>
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<td>Begin writing One Page Play “Physical Actions”</td>
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<td>Sept. 19</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Select One Page Plays and directors 8 - 14 “Physical Action”</td>
<td>Hand Out: Assignment #5, Scenes from published plays.</td>
<td>Continue reading: Notes on Directing, Hauser</td>
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<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>In Class Rehearsals of directors 8 - 14 One Page Plays “Physical Action”</td>
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<td>Sept. 26</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Assignment #2: Presentations/Evaluations: Directors 8 - 14 One Page Plays “Physical Action”</td>
<td>Have Read: Notes on Directing, Hauser</td>
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<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Exam #1: Part One, Ahart</td>
<td>Begin reading: Part Two, Ahart</td>
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<td>Oct. 3</td>
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<td>Team Production Concept Presentations: <em>The Little Foxes</em>, Hellman</td>
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<td>Oct. 5</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Team Production Concept Presentations: <em>The Little Foxes</em></td>
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<td>Oct. 10</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Team Production Concept Presentations: <em>The Little Foxes</em></td>
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<td>Oct. 17</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Discussion: Directing “Anti-Realism”</td>
<td>Bring 1 copy of your One Page Play “Anti-Realism”</td>
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<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Workshop: Directing Anti-Realism</td>
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<td>Oct. 20</td>
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<td>SHOWCASE AUDITION FOR THE ACTING I CLASS 2:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Select One Page Plays and directors 15 - 22 “Anti-Realism”</td>
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<td>Oct. 26</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>In Class Scene Rehearsals: Directors 15 - 22 “Anti-Realism”</td>
<td>SHOWCASE AUDITION FOR ACTING I CLASS 2:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 27</td>
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<td>Oct. 28</td>
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<td>Casting Session Ten-Minute Play Festival 9:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 31</td>
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<td><strong>Assignment #3:</strong> Presentations/Evaluations: Directors 15 - 22 “Anti-Realism”</td>
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<td>Nov. 2</td>
<td>R</td>
<td><strong>Exam #2: Part Two,</strong> Ahart</td>
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<td>Nov. 7</td>
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<td>Discussion: Part Three, “Directing concept and choices”, Ahart.</td>
<td>Paperwork due on Assigned Scenes!</td>
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<td>Nov. 9</td>
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<td><strong>Assignment #4:</strong> Presentations/Evaluations Directors 1 – 7 Assigned scenes</td>
<td>Assigned scenes must be rehearsed outside of class!</td>
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<td>Nov. 14</td>
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<td>Presentations/Evaluations Directors 8 – 14 Assigned Scenes</td>
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<td>Nov. 16</td>
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<td>Presentations/Evaluations Directors 15 - 22</td>
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<td>Nov. 21</td>
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<td>Evaluate: Assigned Scenes</td>
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<td>Nov. 23</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving</td>
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<td>Nov. 28</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Set Technical and Performance Dates Ten-Minute Play Festival</td>
<td><strong>Hand Out: Exam #3, Part Three,</strong> Ahart. (Take Home Exam)</td>
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<td>Nov. 30</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Discussion: Ten-Minute Play Festival</td>
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<td>Dec. 5</td>
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<td>Evaluate: Assigned Scenes</td>
<td>Last Day of Class</td>
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<td>Dec. 7 - 10</td>
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<td>Ten-Minute Play Festival</td>
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<td><strong>DIRECTORS BOOK DUE!!!</strong></td>
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**Technical rehearsal and performance dates and times will be scheduled at a later date!**

**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto [http://cla.tamu.edu/advising/](http://cla.tamu.edu/advising/).

**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details,
including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work).

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 15 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom/professional behavior

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Statement of Civility

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex,
ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.