THED 541 DIRECTING/ACTING MUSICAL THEATRE (3 hrs)
Musical Theatre Section

Professor: John Leonard, Head of Musical Theatre
Class Days: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
Classroom: Frasier 205, Guggenheim 1
Office: Frasier 120
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Course Description
Directing/Choreographing Musical Theatre is a class designed to involve the director in search of
artistic and qualitative process and product. It is, in essence, a course that requires the Musical Theatre
director to explore the total task of mounting the Broadway Musical.

Directing and choreographing Musical Theatre has many striking similarities to directing straight
theatre but there are also some glaring differences. We will examine these connections and diversions.
This course will also identify the components involved in a musical production and to realize the skills
needed to direct a musical. We will take a comprehensive look at as many components that make up a
musical as time allows.

Outline of Course Content
Using the musical LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS as a model we will go through the process of
bringing a musical to life. This will be a “hands on approach” and will cover such aspects as: script
analysis, choosing a style, rehearsal schedules/breakdowns, staging scenes into songs, staging in
different sizes of spaces, directing the musical actor, and communicating with designers and
choreographers.

Each graduate student will choose a Male/Female duet scene/song from a musical they are
passionate about or will be directing in the upcoming year. Please choose a scene/song with extensive
movement that you feel will be challenging to stage/choreograph.

Each graduate student will be assigned 2 Musical Theatre or acting majors (1 male, 1 female) to
work with over the 3-day period.

Course Requirements
*Perfect class attendance, and responsible for all lecture notes given in class.
*Read ACT 1 of script to LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS. If you are unable to locate a script,
I will have one for you the first day of class.
*Choose a 2-person scene/song from a musical of your choice.
*Direct a 10-minute scene/song (max.) from selected script.
*Complete all requirements for the musical theatre prompt book.
Due FRIDAY, JULY 17th by 5:00pm in designated box outside my office.

Course Calendar
Monday, July 13th (10-12:00, 1:00-5:00) (Director’s Lab 7-10pm)
Guggenheim 1, Frasier 205
Introduction / Discuss Director’s Lab
History of Musical Theatre
LUNCH
Professional Musical Theatre Auditioning Techniques
Scene Breakdown and Rehearsal Schedules
MT Character Analysis
Musical Theatre Directing (differences/similarities)
Concept
Musical Theatre Lyric Analysis
Staging The Duet

Tuesday, July 14th  (10-12:00, 1:00-5:00) (Director’s Lab 7-10pm)

Frasier 205
Warm ups
Music/Dance Analysis
Duet Assignment
Staging the Trio
Dancing With Props

Wednesday, July 15th  (10:00-3:00pm)

Frasier 205
Class Meeting (10-11:30am)
Final Performance presentations of ALL SCENES/SONGS (1:00-3:00pm)
Class discussions and Professor feedback (3:00-4:00pm)
Graduate/Volunteer actors BBQ 5:00pm John Leonard’s home, 1932 28th Ave.

Required Materials
Male/Female DUET SCENE/SONG of choice to direct/choreograph
CD player or IPod for out of class rehearsals
Lap Top, Note book, pen, pencils

Recommended Texts
Acting in Musical Theatre: A comprehensive course
Joe Deer and Rocco Dal Vera
Staging Musical Theatre: A complete guide for directors, choreographers, and producers
Elaine A. Novak & Deborah Novak (Better Way Books)
From Assassins to West Side Story: A Director’s guide to Musical Theatre
Deconstructing Harold Hill: An insider’s guide to Musical Theatre
Scott Miller

Recommended Dress Requirements
Street clothes that fit snugly and do not inhibit range of motion are acceptable. Dance clothes, such as leotards, bike shorts, sweats, etc., are recommended. Men please wear tennis shoes or jazz shoe, Women please wear tennis shoes and please bring jazz and character shoes if you have them in your possession. No food, gum, smoking, etc., in class rooms.

Method of Evaluation
Solo Assignment 10 pts
Duet assignment 10 pts.
Scene (Director) 50 pts
Prompt Book 30 pts
TOTAL POINTS 100
PROMPT BOOK REQUIREMENTS
(Nothing is to be handwritten)
All material presented in 3 ring binder
BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF MUSICAL
CHARACTER ANALYSIS (2 characters)
5 PAGE SELF EVALUATION

Musical Theatre Websites
playbill.com   broadway.com   bluegobo.com   youtube.com