

THTR 442: INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE DESIGN NONCREDIT

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	0
Hours:	3 lecture, 3 laboratory per week (72 total per quarter)
Advisory:	ART 4A or equivalent.
Degree & Credit Status:	Non-Degree-Applicable Non-Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	None
Grade Type:	Non-Credit Course (Receives no Grade)
Repeatability:	Unlimited Repeatability

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to assess and prioritize the scenic needs of the play through a detailed analysis of the script
- Students will use two-dimensional drawing and graphic design skills to communicate the design requirements of the script to other theatre professionals

Description

A survey of the theory and practice of theatrical design using traditional and digital tools. Introduces basic concepts applicable to scenery, lighting, sound, costumes, makeup, and properties. Coursework includes research and analysis, sketching and drafting, rendering and model making, and the use of computer graphics software and equipment to create three-dimensional designs for the performing arts, film, and television. Introduction of equipment and construction techniques through demonstration and laboratory experience.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Define and distinguish between commonly used theatrical terms applied to design and the technical elements of theater production.
- Define and evaluate the relationship between design concepts and how they are translated and executed in production process.
- Demonstrate and use basic skills in creating and organizing a design project from concept to execution.
- Demonstrate and apply basic techniques used in theater design and production areas.
- Demonstrate basic skills and proficiency in the operations of a working technical theater environment.
- Outline and analyze the basic steps necessary to coordinate and integrate the various aspects of theater design and production.

Course Content

- Organization of theater technical personnel (Lec)
 - Design areas and personnel (Lec)
 - Production departments, tasks, and personnel (Lec)
- Theater architecture (Lec)
 - Historical forms (Lec)
 - Modern innovations (Lec)
- Design analysis (Lec)
 - Scenery (Lec and Lab)
 - Sound and lights (Lec and Lab)
 - Costumes and makeup (Lec and Lab)
- Drawing and rendering techniques (Lec and Lab)
 - Concept sketching (Lec and Lab)
 - Design presentations (Lec and Lab)
 - Models (Lec and Lab)
 - Renderings (Lec and Lab)
 - Virtual modeling (Lec and Lab)
- Stage and hand properties (Lec and Lab)
- Drafting and computer aided design (Lec and Lab)

Lab Content

- Students will use a variety of materials and techniques to communicate design concepts.
- Draft plans and build models for theatrical and film projects.
- Learn basic theatre construction and painting skills as they relate to the design process.
- Develop sketching and rendering techniques for design presentations.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

- Drafting/design studio and computer laboratory.
- Access to fully-equipped theatre scenery and costume shops.
- Regular weekly access to computer for online instruction.
- When taught via Foothill Global Access: on-going access to computer with email software and capabilities; email address; JavaScript enabled internet browsing software.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Individual projects in and outside class
Assigned design exercises
Portfolio review
Written analysis of design aspects of public performances
Final exam/project

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture presentations and discussion using the language of theatre
In-class reading of dramatic texts by the instructor and students followed by instructor-guided interpretation and analysis
Oral presentations of projects followed by in-class discussion and evaluation

Independent creative exercises in design and construction using techniques demonstrated by the instructor
Independent and group viewing of stage and film productions followed by discussion and evaluation

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Gillette, J. Michael. Theatrical Design and Production, 8th ed.. 2017.

Crabtree and Beudert. Scenic Art for the Theatre, 3rd ed. (recommended supplemental text). 2011.

Winslow, Colin. The Handbook of Modelmaking for Set Designers (recommended supplemental text). 2008.

Although these texts are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal texts in this area of study.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Students will read, analyze, and prepare design presentations for theatrical plays. Plays used have included "The Glass Menagerie" by Tennessee Williams, "Doll's House" by Henrik Ibsen, "A Midsummer Nights Dream" and "The Tempest" by William Shakespeare.
2. Students are required to attend local theatrical performances and provide a written evaluation of the effectiveness of the scenic designs and execution as part of the overall production.
3. Students will work collaboratively to create a comprehensive production design using a play or film script.
4. Students will research a theatre or film designer and create an oral presentation for the class including relevant biographical and artistic highlights of the artist's career.

Discipline(s)

Theater Arts or Stagecraft