

## **Special Topics: Advanced Stagecraft TA-4540P-02** **Fall 2018**

*Friday: 11:00am – 4:45pm*

*Location: TA 208 (Above Scene Shop) and Scene Shop*

Instructor: Prof. Daniel Czepinski

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Office hours: By appointment only (Suggested time: M/W 9:00am – 12:00pm)

### Course Objective:

- Prerequisite: n/a. Current topics of special interest to students in theatre arts as announced in Schedule of Classes
- To provide students with an advanced understanding and hands-on exploration of the art, materials, technical aspects, and conventions used to design and construct theatrical scenery and properties. In order to best accomplish these goals, students will experience increasingly sophisticated technical theatre/scene shop practices developed through demonstrations and applied workshop experience.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will reaffirm their understanding of fundamental construction practices used when building/repairing stock scenery.
- Students will demonstrate a firm understanding and safe handling of various hand tools, power tools, solvents, adhesives, paints and stains ranging in purpose and complexity
- Students will successfully execute a variety of advanced stagecraft construction techniques utilizing applies materials such as wood, steel, foam and plastics.
- Students will gain the ability to creatively problem solve under exigent time constraints.
- Students will learn the fundamental process of executing a design through the use of conceptual drawings, technical drawings, procedures and organization.
- Students will develop a portfolio of material pertinent to the art of stagecraft.

### Guiding Principle:

- *In order to ensure successful learning outcomes while introducing new tools, materials and methodologies of construction, Advanced Stagecraft is a “hands-on” project based class that will run on the guiding principle of instruction outlined below:*
  - I do; you watch.
  - I do; you help.
  - You do; I help.
  - You do; I watch.

### Text and Materials:

- Personal protective equipment for eyes & ears (PPE) and proper scene shop attire.
- Architectural Scale Rule (Additional drafting supplies may be required)
- Selected materials used for completing personal projects (ex. lumber, steel, plastics, foam)
- Required Text: Carter, Paul and George Chiang, *The Backstage Handbook*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.
- Recommended Text: Raoul, Bill and Mike Monsos, *Stock Scenery Construction Handbook*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.

### Theater/Shop Etiquette:

- While we work in the theater or the shop, proper attire must be worn at all times. This includes NO open-toed shoes, heels, sandals, or loose clothing/jewelry. Long hair must be tied back and pants are suggested. Additionally, PPE **must** be used at all times; **no exceptions!** While performing metal working related activities, the use of long sleeves, pants, gloves, goggles, ear protection and a welding mask and/or shield is needed. If proper safety attire is not worn, the student may be sent away and marked absent from class. Safe theater and shop practices must be followed at all times.

Class Emails/Dropbox/Trello:

- Everyone will be expected to use email and have Internet access regularly.
- Everyone will be required to sign up and use Dropbox for online sharing of class documents. It is free and simple to use. It is a standard tool used by most professional theater companies across the country. If you need assistance, please ask the instructor.
- Everyone will be required to sign up and use Trello for class updates/changes and other task related communications. If you need assistance, please ask the instructor.

ADA Policy:

- The University provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented physical and learning disabilities. Faculty members fully support the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable accommodation to any student with a disability who is registered with the Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) and needs and requests accommodation. OSD may be contacted to verify the presence of a disability and to confirm that accommodation is necessary. The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), located in Student Affairs Room 115 coordinates all documentation of disabilities. (323-343-3140) <http://www.calstatela.edu/univ/osd/>

Deadlines:

- Deadlines for projects and exams will **NOT** be extended; late work will be graded down by ***1 letter grade*** for each day it is late.

Important Dates:

• F: 8/24	Construction Begins (We the Invisibles)
• F: 9/28	Load-In Begins (We the Invisibles)
• F: 10/5	Technical Rehearsals Begin (We the Invisibles)
• F: 10/12	Midterm Projects Due
• S: 10/20	Strike (We the Invisibles)
• F: 10/26	Load-In Preparation (Antigone)
• Th: 11/1	Load-In Begins (Antigone)
• S: 11/3	Technical Rehearsals Begin (Antigone)
• S: 11/17	Strike (Antigone)
• F: 11/23	Thanksgiving Holiday – Campus Closed
• F: 12/7	Final Examination/Projects Due
• F: 12/14	Fall Semester Ends

Course Requirements:

- *Grading will be as follows:*
  - Attendance & Participation (25%)
  - Class Projects (30%)
  - Midterm Exam/Project (15%)
  - Class Portfolio (10%)
  - Final Exam/Project (20%)

Projects & Exams:

- You will have two larger scale exam/projects (1 midterm, 1 final) and a culmination of seven other projects varying in complexity throughout the semester. Your attendance on scheduled exam dates and varying due dates is essential to success. There will be no make-up exams or extended deadlines on projects permitted without an excused absence in writing from the professor.
- *Grades for Exams and Projects will be assigned as follows:*

A = 93 – 100%	B- = 80 – 82%	D+ = 67 – 69%
A- = 90 – 92%	C+ = 77 – 79%	D = 63 – 66%
B+ = 87 – 89%	C = 73 – 76%	D- = 60 – 62%

B = 83 – 86%	C- = 70 – 72%	F = 0 – 59%
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Class Portfolio:

- All students are required to create, maintain and submit a class portfolio by the date of the scheduled final examination (12/14/18).
- Specific requirements regarding the content of the portfolio will be given by the instructor in advance of the due date.
- Students will be graded on the organization, content and final presentation upon submission.
- It is critical that all students ensure the safe keeping of their portfolios. Each student takes full responsibility for his/her material. Lost or stolen material will not extend the date of submission and could have an adverse effect on your final grade.
- Grading for the portfolio will be treated and assigned the same as all projects.

Projects:

- All projects are individually assigned unless otherwise specified.
- All projects are subject to the need for additional work to be completed outside of the normally scheduled class time.
- All projects being completed in the shop outside of normal class time must have the approval/supervision of department faculty and/or staff in advance.
- Time used on class projects does NOT count toward any other classes you are currently enrolled for. This includes, but is not limited to, TA-1300, TA-1310, TA-1320 and TA-3000.
- It is the students responsibility to ensure that all projects are properly documented for submission in your class portfolio

Attendance & Participation:

- *Grades for attendance will be assigned as follows:*

A = no missed classes	B- = 3 missed classes	D = 6 missed classes
A- = 1 missed class	C = 4 missed classes	D- = 7 missed classes
B = 2 missed classes	C- = 5 missed classes	F = 8+ missed classes

- Roll will be taken at the **top of class**. Latecomers will be marked LATE. Every TWO LATES MAKES AN ABSENCE.
- A doctor's note will be REQUIRED to excuse a missed class, no exceptions.
- No cell phones are permitted in class.
- Some classes require group work and class collaboration. All students are expected to participate in theater hands-on activities and group projects.

Additional Requirements:

- As leaders, technicians, master craftsmen and role-models within the theatre department, all students enrolled in advanced stagecraft will be asked, and are **required** to, actively participate in the following:
  - Assist with the construction, load-in, strike and various tasks related to **all** department shows and workshops as assigned by the professor. (including non-class days)
  - Successfully complete the safety certification for all tools within the scene shop.
  - Attend a performance for each department show within the semester (as patrons).
  - Take initiative to care for and help maintain department facilities and equipment.

**Course Outline:**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Week</u>	<u>Synopsis</u>
F – 8/24	1	<i>Class Introduction &amp; Goals, Discuss Dropbox &amp; Trello</i>
F – 8/24	1	Project 1: Establish Dropbox and Trello Accounts for TA-4540. Acquire required materials (including PPE). <b>Construction Begins (Invisibles)</b>

F – 8/31	2	Stock Scenery 101: Reviewing basic materials and methods of construction for stock scenic elements. Assist with “Invisibles.”
F – 8/31	2	DUE: Project 1 Project 2: Create a const. drawing & cut list for a stock scenic element.
F – 9/7	3	Stock Scenery 101: (Continued)
F – 9/7	3	DUE: Project 2 Project 3: Construct a stock scenic element to given specifications.
F – 9/14	4	Stock Scenery 101: (Continued)
F – 9/14	4	Continue Project 3
F – 9/21	5	Progressive Woodworking Techniques: Joints, Miters, Kerfs, Etc.
F – 9/21	5	Project 4: Execute Selected Techniques with Precision DUE: Project 3
<b>F – 9/28</b>	6	Progressive Woodworking Techniques (Continued)
<b>F – 9/28</b>	6	<b>Begin Load-In for “Invisibles”</b> Project 5: Select and improve upon a scenic convention. DUE: Project 4
<b>F – 10/5</b>	7	Progressive Woodworking Techniques (Continued)
<b>F – 10/5</b>	7	<b>Prepare for Technical Rehearsals on “Invisibles.”</b> Continue Project 5 and review/practice for midterm exam
<b>F – 10/12</b>	8	<b>MIDTERM EXAMINATION/PROJECT</b> Metal Mania: When and how to use metal for the purpose of scenery.
<b>F – 10/12</b>	8	Project 6: Design and create a “dangerous toy.” DUE: Project 5
F – 10/19	9	Metal Mania: Cutting, Welding, Grinding and Treating metal.
F – 10/19	9	Continue Project 6 <b>Prepare for Strike on “Invisibles” (Mandatory attendance on 10/20)</b>
F – 10/26	10	Metal Mania: Differences when using metal for structural purposes vs. decorative purposes.
F – 10/26	10	Project 7: Construct a theatrical convention utilizing steel. DUE: Project 6
<b>F – 11/2</b>	11	Knowledge in Action: Production Work (Antigone)
<b>F – 11/2</b>	11	<b>DUE: Cont. Load-In and prepare for technical rehearsals on “Antigone.”</b>
F – 11/9	12	Metal Mania: Structural vs. Decorative (Continued)
F – 11/9	12	Project 8: Design & construct a piece of furniture marrying metal to wood. DUE: Project 7; Present up to date portfolio for peer review.
<b>F – 11/16</b>	13	Smoke & Mirrors: The purpose and implementation of foams and plastics into scenery.
<b>F – 11/16</b>	13	Continue Project 8 <b>Prepare for Strike on “Antigone” (Mandatory attendance on 11/17)</b>
<b>F – 11/23</b>	14	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday – Campus Closed</b>
<b>F – 11/23</b>	14	Continue Project 8
F – 11/30	15	Smoke & Mirrors: Handling/Treating foams and plastics to achieve desired outcomes. (ex. adhesives, solvents, etc.)
F – 11/30	15	Project 9: Present Final Project (TBA) DUE: Project 8
<b>F – 12/7</b>	16	<b>Final Examination/Project: Use the class period to complete the final</b>

<b>F – 12/7</b>	16	<b><i>DUE: Final Examination/Project</i></b> <b><i>*Class Portfolio Due*</i></b>
<b>F – 12/14</b>	17	<b><i>Fall Semester Ends</i></b>

\*The Syllabus is a living document. Professor reserves the right to modify syllabus.

“Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it.” – Bertolt Brecht