

Art and Craft: Contemporary Directing Pedagogy
in Colleges and Universities in the United States

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore current pedagogical approaches of undergraduate directing curricula in selected U.S. institutions of higher learning. Building on the work of Clifford Hamar and Anne Fliotsos, the thesis builds a foundation for further study of contemporary directing pedagogy.

Fourteen course syllabi were collected voluntarily from members of The Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) and served as the primary source material. They were interpreted and analyzed qualitatively for components that identified the methods and philosophies of the instructor and/or institution. From these syllabi, the researcher found 11 “skill categories” which cover all potential skills and bodies of information that, according to the data, a director should master. The categories are: (1) Script and Performance Analysis; (2) Directorial Techniques and Methods; (3) Production Practices; (4) Role and History of the Director; (5) Actor Training; (6) Technical Knowledge; (7) Personal Growth, Expression, and Vision; (8) Collaboration; (9) Communication; (10) Directorial Criticism; and (11) Storytelling. The categories fall on a spectrum ranging from practical based “knowledges” to skills based in individual resources and artistry, termed “abilities.”

Once these categories were established, the researcher examined two case study institutions: State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) and University of New Hampshire (UNH). The researcher collected public information concerning the guiding philosophies, financial profile, and curricula for both

universities. From this data, combined with the 11 categories, the researcher found that the “personality” of the institution was reflected in the pedagogical approach of their respective directing courses. In the case of UB, a research-oriented institution had a production-focused directing course. UNH, with its Liberal Arts philosophy that promotes personal exploration, had a directing course that emphasized the artistic resources of the individual.

Most importantly, this work creates a foundation from which future studies can be built. Broader and deeper analysis at a national level can now be approached with a framework of evaluation and analysis, leading ever closer to an understanding of the art and craft of directing.

To Brianna, who focuses my mind and fills my belly.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		Page
1	INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
	Research Question.....	4
	Literature Review.....	5
	Art versus Craft.....	5
	Definition of the “Director”.....	6
	The Director’s Tasks.....	10
	Knowledge and Ability.....	14
	Directing Textbooks.....	17
	A Brief History of Directing in Higher Education.....	20
	The Discourse of Directing Education Today.....	22
	Research Design.....	26
	Significance.....	28
	Outline of the Study.....	29
2	THE SYLLABI.....	31
	Knowledges.....	32
	Script and Performance Analysis.....	32
	Directorial Techniques and Methods.....	33
	Production Practices.....	34
	The Role and History of the Director.....	34
	Actor Training.....	35

CHAPTER	Page
Technical Knowledge.....	36
Abilities.....	37
Personal Growth, Expression, and Vision.....	37
Collaboration.....	38
Communication.....	38
Directorial Criticism.....	39
Storytelling.....	40
Case Study 1: State University of New York at Buffalo..	42
The Institution.....	42
The Department.....	43
The Course.....	45
Case Study 2: University of New Hampshire.....	48
The Institution.....	48
The Department.....	49
The Course.....	51
3 LOOKING TOWARD FUTURE STUDY.....	55
Summary.....	55
Interpretation of Findings.....	58
Limitations.....	62
Suggestions for Future Research.....	63
REFERENCES.....	66

APPENDIX

A SAMPLE SYLLABI FROM CASE STUDY INSTITUTIONS...70

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

On a late winter night in Wisconsin, I stood on a short ladder with a utility knife in my teeth and an aerosol can of adhesive in my hand, putting the final touches on the surface of a ten-foot tall puppet: the Pillowman, built for the play of the same name by Martin McDonagh. It hung on a chain winch in the center of a frigid scene shop at Lawrence University. I was the director of the winter main stage production of *The Pillowman* and it was the night of our final tech rehearsal.

The stage manager found me in the shop, having been looking for me for several minutes, to verify the start time for tonight's run. I told her 7:30 as the worried technical director and a short actress in all black clothes and a yellow construction harness entered from the basement. I got down from the ladder, and after a brief conversation about safety and personal comfort, I was called to the stage to answer the costume designer's question about brown versus black shoes. While standing on stage, the lighting designers asked me to verify a cue, then one of my actors pulled me aside. He was terribly concerned about a specific moment in the script in which he is feeling one thing, though I was telling him another. We talked through it as we made our way down to the dressing room to meet the rest of the cast. As we left the theatre, Kyle, the operator of the giant Pillowman puppet, was sprinting toward us with a look of utter concern.

"There's a man in the dressing room," he said, out of breath. After a moment of confusion I understood his meaning. Kyle and the other actor waited while I hurried down the stairs. Halfway down the concrete stairwell I met several other cast members who verified that a strange and incoherent man had

wandered into the dressing room. They called campus security as I continued to the dressing room. The stench of liquor hit me as I opened the door. Standing, or rather leaning, before me was a disheveled young man dressed in a long, green coat and reeking of alcohol.

“Hello, can I help you?” I asked, for lack of better words. The man looked at me with unfocused eyes and slurred a phrase that ended in the word “church.” Making the assessment that he wasn’t dangerous, or if dangerous, safely uncoordinated, I pointed him to a couch and asked him to take a seat. It took him a moment, but eventually he staggered over to the worn yellow couch. One thick silence later, Kyle entered from another door followed by two campus security officers, who promptly led the young man out and to the church homeless shelter located next door to the theatre. After a brief rallying of the troops, we began the final rehearsal.

When I look back on this night, with its odd occurrence, I cannot help but marvel at the idea of the director. Artistic chaos swirls around you, yet you are more than an artist yourself. Your hands are scratched by nails and stained with paint, but you are more than a craftsman. The responsibilities extend beyond the stage, as evidenced by my encounter with this young man. It is a position of leadership, a position of trust, and requires an individual to possess a level of self-awareness, self-sacrifice, discipline, and skill that is difficult to express, much less teach. Herein lies the impetus for my study.

The director has become a central role in the production practices of Western theatre, yet there seems to be little consensus among scholars and

practitioners as to what a director is, what he is supposed to do, and how he should do it. Anne Fliotsos, in *Teaching Theatre Today: Pedagogical Views of Theatre in Higher Education*, describes the director as an enigma, who must “learn about all areas of theatre in order to synthesize the elements of the production into an aesthetic whole. Both a craftsman and an artist, the director coordinates the artistic and managerial functions of theatrical productions” (65). As the discipline of theatre and performance grows and changes, so changes the role and definition of the director – a role arguably absent from theatre 200 years ago. Depending on whom you ask, a director is expected to be a dynamic leader, a confidant, a visionary, an aesthetic choreographer, an analyst of text, a historian, or some combination of each and more. As a future theatre educator, I ask how such a disparate and personal set of skills is taught and/or cultivated in an institution of higher education.

Directing courses entered higher education in the early 20th century, not long after George Pierce Baker notably instituted Workshop 47 at Harvard, one of the first university-level playwriting classes. Fliotsos makes it clear the number of institutions offering directing courses, as well as the variety of materials and methodologies used, experienced a steady rise over the last century. Across the United States today, undergraduate theatre majors are very often required to take at least one course in directing. Usually given generic titles such as “Fundamentals of Directing” or “Directing I,” these courses vary wildly between institutions, reflecting the individual preferences of the instructor as well as the local culture of the department, college, or university. The question of what

happens in the contemporary undergraduate directing classroom – what is taught, how it’s taught, and why – is one that has yet to be deeply explored. After I began sifting through the available literature, it became clear that very little has been written on the subject of directing pedagogy compared to the related fields of acting or theatre history. In her essay “The Pedagogy of Directing 1920-1990,” Fliotsos articulates the need for further research in this area: “Although this study has provided some descriptive information about the history of directing pedagogy, much remains to be done” (Fliotsos 79).

Research Question

For my thesis, it is my goal to research the current state of introductory directing courses in selected undergraduate institutions in the United States. Thus the broad question guiding this study is: What is the current state of the art and craft of undergraduate directing pedagogy in selected U.S. institutions of higher learning? Moving beyond the material details of what, specifically, is being taught by whom, to whom, where, and how, it is my goal to ascertain the benefits and potential implications of contemporary pedagogical practices. The process that emerges from this question is twofold. First, I must establish a sample of undergraduate directing curricula as they exist today. Second, once a clear understanding of these curricula has been reached, I will explore what these findings might say about the institutions of origin and the greater world around them.

Literature Review

An exploration of the current state of undergraduate directing pedagogy requires a review of literature concerning the art and craft of directing. There exist a large number of “how-to” guides to stage directing, many of which are commonly used in undergraduate classrooms. Little is written, however, on the actual *teaching* of directing, and there is little accord within the literature as to what should be taught. To gain a greater understanding of the position of my study, I have surveyed a selection of literature written about directing, looking for the answers to such simple questions as: what is a director, what does a director do, and what does a director need to know? What follows is a synopsis of my review of the literature pertaining to my study.

Art versus Craft

In my survey of directing literature, I have found that many authors agree that the role of a director, and therefore the teaching of directing, is inherently difficult to define. The texts I reviewed, almost without fail, make some attempt to limit their definition to a few powerful words or phrases, which are often surrounded by qualifying statements about the complexity and individualism of directing. The “big-picture” definitions of directing happen early in the texts, tucked away by the author in prefaces and introductions. The broad philosophical ideas are mentioned briefly before the authors proceed to the prescriptive guides that make up the bulk of their texts. While some seem hesitant to make any concrete statements about their philosophy of directing, these statements are

made, and from them it is possible to better understand the discourse around directing.

As mentioned above, is it generally agreed that directing is complex, multi-faceted, personal, and variable: no two directors ever direct in the same manner, and each individual is different in each new situation. What is consistent in the discourse is a constant interplay between directing as *art* versus directing as *craft*. While all the texts recognize the need for a director to be both an artist and a craftsman, it varies to what degree is thought necessary. Some texts favor a technical approach in which the director builds a production as one would a house; others view the director as an artist-leader, guiding fellow artists in a cooperative creative experience. I will attempt to follow the balance of *art* and *craft* as I report the details of my review. I proceed by first responding to the three questions mentioned above – *what is a director, what does he do, and what does he need to know*. I will then discuss the use and influence of directing textbooks, and finally the place of directing in higher education.

Definition of the “Director”

From my sample of literature, I have found that definitions of “The Director” fall into three major categories: craftsman, interpreter, and artist. These categories are not rigid in their boundaries, however, and in many texts the approaches overlap and intermix. Francis Hodge’s textbook, *Play Directing: Analysis, Communication, and Style*, now in its 7th edition, has long been the preeminent text of the craftsman approach to directing. Hodge writes that the director is “a leader...of multiple craftsmen, all with individual skills” (1). He

considers the director to be a “master craftsman in theatre” as well as “the dedicated communicator-leader of all those who work with this art form” (Hodge 4). Jonathan Cole echoes Hodge’s idea of the director as leader of craftspeople in his article “Liberatory Pedagogy and Activated Directing: Restructuring the College Rehearsal Room.” Cole calls the director a “leader who uses power constructively, to help his or her collaborators practice...theatre” (192). One author evoked the image of Peter Quince from Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* guiding the rude mechanicals in the crafting of a play. Peithman and Offen, in *The Stage Directions’ Guide to Directing*, define the director in poetic terms: “Directors are the unseen presence in stage productions, yet their influence is everywhere to be seen and heard. Like the captain of a ship, the director is always on watch to make sure the vessel reaches its destination” (vii). They too, consider the director to be an organizing craftsperson who “must juggle expediency with artistic purpose, production issues with human psychology” (Peithman and Offen viii).

Charles Marowitz, in *Prospero’s Staff*, considers the director to be not a passive organizer but an active interpreter. In the extreme he writes, “The director is a self-obsessed colonizer who wishes to materialize power through harnessing and shaping the powers of others” (xvi). While Marowitz’s description highlights the more aggressive nature of directorial leadership, he later gives a more detailed definition of the director-interpreter:

...he is the modern director: a man who insists on reading his own thoughts into those traditionally associated with the author whose work he is communicating. [...] In other words, creative process is

what confirms or transforms a writer's meaning, and the director is, quite literally, the master of creative process. (Marowitz 4)

Central to Marowitz's conceptualization of the director is the task of active interpretation. It is not enough, according to Marowitz, to simply "put on the play;" the director must open up the text and interpret a meaning, rather than display something inherent. He writes: "A director who...chains himself to unwavering fidelity to the author and pursues his work in selfless devotion to the 'meaning of the text,' is unknowingly abdicating a director's responsibility" (Marowitz 4). Marowitz's director-interpreter is a step down the path from director as craftsman, to director as artist. While still based in a practical, Hodge-like method, Marowitz gives greater credence to the artistic potential of a director's role. Granted, Hodge and those like him (notably Alexander Dean and Lawrence Carra) certainly do acknowledge the necessity for artistic skill in a director, it is, however, considered secondary to practical knowledge.

Many texts consider the director first and foremost to be an artist. Anne Fliotsos, in "Curricula in Question: Directing Textbooks and Shifting Paradigms," writes of the turn away from Hodge's methods: "...directing was an art to be experimented with and reflected upon, rather than a craft to be mastered in assembly line fashion" (60). Stephen Unwin, in *So You Want To Be a Theatre Director?*, writes about the director as an artist: "Becoming a theatre director requires more than simply acquiring a set of skills. Directing is an art form in its own right, and you need to accept that you're becoming that most complex and obsessive of human beings: an artist" (6). Kirk and Bellas echo Unwin's

sentiment in their book *The Art of Directing*, writing that “Directors are sculptors who sculpt in tidal sands; they are artists who sketch with vanishing ink” (xv).

Harold Clurman, in *On Directing*, places an immense amount of power in the artistry of a director. He writes, “Every director makes his own ‘law,’ depending ... on his own temperaments [and] artistic inclination” (Clurman x). For these and other authors, what is necessary to a director is something artistic and intangible that allows him to simultaneously lead and create. Hugh Morrison expresses the artistic challenge of the director in *Directing in the Theatre*:

The director of today is credited with the talents of a creative artist, and with being no mere organizer of actors and scenery but someone who puts the play through an imaginative process. The object of this creative project goes far beyond arrangement of resources. It is to give the play a life on the stage that the written text cannot possess: to enhance its virtues, disguise its faults and limitations, and to help a company of actors to clothe it with meaning and feeling, which exist only as an idea till expressed by the performers. (Morrison 1)

Kirk and Bellas write of similar artistic qualities of a director and further suggest that these are intensely personal and subjective abilities:

...a director, like all artists, must ultimately be a believer rather than a knower. The director-artist cultivates the creative state of ‘I don’t know.’ [...] She trusts herself and her knowledge of craft, but ultimately she needs faith to take that leap in the dark in pursuit of truth and art. (Kirk & Bellas 193)

For Kirk and Bellas, the identity of the director is dependent on the individual.

Directing is a personal journey of an always-developing artist; this view lies at the opposite end of the spectrum from the prescriptive approach of Hodge.

The Director's Tasks

In the classification of the director there is interplay between the emphases on art versus craft, vision versus skill, with varying results and approaches. All the texts I surveyed make it clear that the basic task of the director is to lead a group toward a completed production. But within that initial charge there is room for a multiplicity of approaches to the job of directing. The literature about the director's task is closely related to that of the previous section. It is at times difficult to distinguish when an author is writing about what a director *is*, versus what a director is supposed to *do*. The first thing many of these texts admit is that the director's tasks, like their definitions, are far reaching, specific to each situation, and inherently complex. Peithman and Offen write:

...there are many facets to the directorial role, and these are further complicated by the different personalities of each director – not to mention the personalities of the actors, designers, and even of the plays themselves. Clearly, there can be no one way to deal with all this and, in fact, most directors find they use a variety of approaches, depending on the situation, the play, the cast, the crew.
(2)

Despite Peithman and Offen's assertion that no one approach is correct and that directors may use any number of them at any given time, several authors have made attempts to succinctly capture the director's task, job, or function. Dean and Carra, in their often-printed book, *Fundamentals of Play Directing*, refer to two basic functions of the director. The first, *directing*, deals with "the entire process from interpretation, concept, preliminaries, rehearsal, and all other aspects of production," while the second, *staging*, refers to "the specific application of the fundamentals of play directing that involves the managing of actors on stage to

communicate visually the directorial interpretation of the play” (Dean & Carra 17). Dean and Carra’s practical approach is very much like that of Hodge’s, and so it is fitting that they see the director’s task primarily in the rehearsal hall. Morrison, too, gives only two roles for the director: “the interpreter of the play and the trainer and guide of the actors” (6). In his assignment, Morrison moves the director’s attention away from the whole production to the specific tasks of interpretation and training. Jonathan Cole’s concept of the director’s job combines the staging aspect of Dean and Carra with Morrison’s specificity. Cole sees the director as having the roles of “visual arranger, literary analyst, or actor coach” (191).

While Cole seems to capture much of what a director might need to do, there are nonetheless a variety of opinions within the discourse. I have found that what is written about the director’s job (task, role, responsibility, etc.) can be placed into four categories. It is the responsibility of a director: *to ensure a complete production, to honor the playwright, to meaningfully interpret, and to effectively communicate*. Kirk and Bellas write that the primary challenge for any director is “to present human beings in action before an audience” (xvi). This approach relates to the most basic function of the director as production organizer. It minimizes the creative role of the director, emphasizing instead his/her ability to make order out of chaos. Hodge writes, “The goal is always synthesis, and by working together under the director-coordinator, these craftsmen will find it” (1).

Moving beyond the most basic business function of the director (to make a production), many feel that the director’s duty is to the playwright. Stanley Glenn,

in *A Director Prepares*, states "...the task of the contemporary director is to collaborate with actors, designers, and technicians toward the most meaningful theatrical expression of a playwright's manuscript" (14). Other authors agree with Glenn; Dean and Carra write: "The director's talent lies in enhancing or magnifying [the playwright's] vision by illuminating hitherto undiscovered resources, thus giving us a refreshing perspective on the work" (13). Morrison similarly writes that it is the director's responsibility to "interpret the play according to the dramatist's intentions" (10). Within the act of interpretation, there is variation of approach. Glenn, Dean and Carra, and Morrison all put primacy on the playwright's work, establishing a hierarchy in which the director is a secondary partner to the text. Other authors place the director's act of interpretation on equal grounds with the text itself, suggesting that it is through the director's work that the text is given meaning. Marowitz writes that theatrical creation happens through the confrontation of text and vision:

The modern director, then, is not simply a person who imposes order upon artistic subordinates in order to express a writer's meaning, but someone who challenges the assumptions of a work of art and uses *mise-en-scene* actively to pit his or her beliefs against those of the play. Without that confrontation, that sense of challenge, true direction cannot take place, for unless the author's work is engaged on an intellectual level equal to its own, the play is merely transplanted from one medium to another. (Marowitz 6)

George Black, in *Contemporary Stage Directing*, agrees that a director "begins with a response upon confronting the playwright's work. When a director give[s] form to impulses resulting from that confrontation, he or she creates a production" (15).

In the role of meaningful interpreter, the director's vision is given even more weight. Instead of the director's interpretation existing below or equal to the text, interpretation is placed above it. Black writes that each director will create a unique work, based in the text, but resultant from "hundreds of decisions based on interpretations and formed in terms of imagination and craft" (Black 14). From this perspective it is the director's task to give life to a text through his point of view. Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy write in *Directors on Directing* of the desires of the early Western directors: "They [Antoine, Stanislavsky, Appia, Craig, Reinhardt, Meyerhold, and Copeau] insisted that if theatre was to retrieve its unique, primitive, communal power, a director would have to impose a point of view that would integrate play, production, and spectators" (4). It is up to the director to interpret the play in the most meaningful way possible. Dean and Carra write, "Their role as interpretive artists is to convey to the audience every segment and quality of a play in its fullest dramatic value" (13) – a value determined by a director through his work.

The final category surrounds a director's ability to communicate. Hodge feels that it is the primary task of the director to communicate his vision, ideas, and advice to the artists and craftspeople who then transfer it to the stage: "...the director is a talker, a verbal imagist, *for his primary work is communication* – not directly to the audience but to *actors and designers* who then transmit his ideas and pressures to the audience" (Hodge 3). While other authors cite other tasks as more crucial, assuming the task of communication to be a given, Hodge sees communication as the entire job:

The director's job, then, is to be a communicator of the highest order...Because the transfer of his ideas must be made through the minds and feelings of others, the challenge for a director lies in his talent for touching the magic wellsprings in others with what he so vividly imagines and feels himself. (Hodge 3)

All other tasks of the director are considered meaningless without clear communication. Hodge links the artistic vision of the director with the practical, craft-oriented skills of communication.

Knowledge and Ability

The literature suggests that a director requires a balance of vision and skill. Some authors minimize the director's vision in favor of production skill; others laud the director's artistic merit. Beyond brief mentions of the definition and job of a director, much of the literature is primarily concerned with communicating what a director needs to know in order to direct well. Both Hodge and Dean and Carra give broad descriptions of what a director needs to know.

Hodge writes of "four drives" that guide the director:

...a *vision* of the play that can dominate all the aspects of production from acting to staging; a *comprehensive knowledge* of the dynamics of plays – their rises and falls, their louds and softs, their slow beats and their fast ones; *skills in communication* that can help actors and designers give their most creative attentions to the play; and a very *strong desire to entertain* audiences... (2)

Hodge's four drives cover a wide-ranging and vague skill set. Despite the far-reaching drives, for the majority of his textbook he supports a rigidly practical set of knowledge: "...the learning director must become intensively aware of the structure of plays, the prevailing theories and the training processes of acting, the physical use of the stage, and the visual capabilities of design" (3). Dean and

Carra, too, support a mastery of the practical, and describe the skill and knowledge set of a director like that of a doctor:

...before the young doctors can learn to diagnose a case, they must learn the medical facts concerning the normal condition of a healthy person, even though in actual diagnosis under different existing conditions they may radically deviate from what they have learned. So it is with play directing... (Dean & Carra 15)

Dean and Carra see the practical “facts” of production to be the foundation on which art is built. There is consensus within the literature that there exists a set of skills that a young director must master, but little agreement as to which ones. The literature on desired directing skills falls into two areas: *knowledge* and *ability*.

By knowledge I mean the set of skills, techniques, and literature a director should be well versed in. This includes acting styles, theatre history, dramatic literature, and design. Peithman and Offen write, “An effective director needs study or experience in acting, stagecraft, lighting, costuming, make up, theatre history, dance and stage movement, and psychology” (2), all of the practical elements of theatre production. Others are more specific. Dean and Carra write, “The director should be trained and experienced in the entire process of acting... Acting and directing are one,” and “A director certainly needs to know dramatic construction and playwriting, past and present, along with possessing a working knowledge of the culture, manners, theatrical conventions, and period influences of the times.” (17). While familiarity with design, production, historical, and literary elements of theatre are included in a list of director skills,

they are learned to help the director better guide the actor, considered by many to be his/her primary charge. Morrison writes:

Understanding of the process and technique of the actor, emotional, physical, and intellectual; skill in the voice and speech, and the technique of applied movement, and a knowledge of how these skills apply to actors... gives the director something to offer the actor as positive, constructive help. (9)

William Ball, in *A Sense of Direction*, agrees that a director must know how to provide the proper catalysts for an actor: "...and the director, by helping the actor find the [on] switch, gives the actor the one thing he wants – the power to bring light into a darkened room" (7). The skills listed above, the *knowledge* of a director, are tangible skill sets for which one can receive training. University-level classes are frequently taught in each of these areas and make up the foundation for a degree in drama or theatre. The second set, *ability*, contains the far more intangible qualities of a director.

Many of the authors agree that the process of becoming a director involves discovering a set of personal resources that, quite simply, cannot be taught. Instead, these *abilities* are either innate qualities pre-existent in the individual, or nurtured skills developed through guided practice. Whichever is the case, several abilities are coveted above others. Clurman says simply that a director "must inspire confidence" (14). Peithman and Offen recommend that "Aside from training, good instincts, intelligence, and organization, a director must be able to create an artistic vision of the play and then communicate that vision effectively to cast and production staff" (3). Morrison agrees that a strong artistic vision is necessary: "The key to a satisfactory result...seems to be an ability to maintain

the vision of what the end product is going to be..." (5). Morrison continues, however, that a director must be ever evolving to the task at hand, suggesting that "risks must be taken and new skills and approaches learned throughout a career of directing" (8). In addition to vision and adaptability, Dean and Carra consider a good director to be decisive: "Directors cannot remain neutral to matters of interpretation, they must know exactly what to do and how to control it..." (18). Hodge, too, values decisiveness and strong leadership. He writes that the director, like a tactician or strategist, must "perceive; he must evaluate; he must make a diagnosis; and he must devise remedies" (Hodge 3). The *abilities* of a director are more intangible than their *skills*, and thus are more difficult to define, describe, and teach.

Directing Textbooks

Many texts offer methods and philosophies to guide young directors in their endeavors. These textbooks, many of which are cited above, change with the times, reflecting shifting attitudes about art, technique, and business. Because of this, textbooks serve as the main source for the few studies conducted on the subject of directing pedagogy. In the balance between art and craft, innate and learned, elusive and concrete, textbooks find a bittersweet place in education. Morrison writes, "Many good books exist which explain the arts and skills of acting, directing, and the technical crafts of the theatre: they are a vitally useful aid to the director, as a manual is to a mechanic, but in no way a substitute for practical experience" (1). Morrison touches on a fundamental element found in most directing textbooks: that a director must master his *craft*, the nuts and bolts

of physical and psychological directing, before he can control the *art* of directing. Though this may be a central idea to most directing textbooks, the understanding of what constitutes art versus craft, how one goes about mastering art or craft, and to what end, all shift with the changing times.

Fliotsos tracks the developments of directing textbooks, and suggests several large movements in their history. As hers is the only major compilation of its kind, the majority of the following historical narrative is taken from her writings on the subject – notably her 1997 dissertation, several articles, and her book of essays. The first directing texts appear in the United States in the early 20th century, and those published “before World War II were few, and were targeted toward future community theatre directors and prospective teachers who might direct school plays” (Fliotsos, “Curricula in Question” 57). These texts dealt primarily with the logistics of staging and were often published as “production” guides, rather than “direction” ones. With the growth of college theatre programs in the 1940s, new texts emerged that reflected increased inclusion of directorial artistry. Fliotsos writes of Alexander Dean’s work at Yale and the books published out of his teaching:

Unlike earlier authors, Dean provided more than a ‘how-to’ approach to directing; he included a section on art and aesthetics, the history of directing, limited theoretical discussion, photographs of productions labeled with staging techniques, and exercises for directors and actors. (“Curricula in Question” 58)

While Dean (of Dean & Carra) allowed more freedom for the director, that freedom is locked in a prescriptive system of rules and methodology. Dean felt that the purpose of his book was to “discuss and present disciplines that can give

beginning directors a base for operation in any form of theatre without limiting their own creative contributions” (Dean & Carra 15). Dean’s goal of “freeing” the director is contained, however, in the realm of realism. He writes: “The following pages, therefore, are concerned with facts that we shall call absolute, that is, true under normal conditions and under a given point of reference of a realistic play performed on a proscenium stage” (Dean & Carra 15).

In the 1950s and 1960s, there is an emergence of directing texts focused on the works of master (usually European) directors (Fliotsos, “Curricula in Question” 59). These texts placed a far greater emphasis on the intangible abilities of a director, not the “paint-by-numbers” approach of earlier texts. Notably, Fliotsos cites Cole and Chinoy’s *Directors on Directing* (first published as *Directing the Play* in 1953) as indicative of a movement toward the study of master directors:

Cole and Chinoy were more concerned with exploring the director’s vision, philosophy, and aesthetics, areas neglected by earlier textbooks; their books evoke a sophistication more in keeping with the study of professional artistry world-wide. (“Curricula in Question” 59)

A collection of essays from famous directors from the mid-1800s to the present, Cole and Chinoy’s book suggests a pedagogical approach in which the art of directing can be learned by example. There are, too, numerous stand-alone trade books written as artistic manifestos by master directors. Peter Brook’s *The Empty Space*, for example, is a short but packed treatise on contemporary theatre, outlining his philosophical and aesthetic understanding of the art of making theatre. Thirty years later, Anne Bogart’s *A Director Prepares* records her

personal experiences as a director, giving advice about the difficulties in the rehearsal process. Both texts, though separated by several decades, reflect the impetus for directors to share their personal journeys and the desire for practitioners and students to read about them.

By the end of the 20th century, textbooks reflected acceptance of a pluralist approach to directing. Fliotsos writes, “Directing textbooks of the late twentieth century moved on a trajectory toward cultural and artistic pluralism” (“Curricula in Question” 61). Confronted with the question of “Which way is best?” many suggest that a multiplicity of approaches is necessary to facilitate the unique nature of contemporary theatrical creation.

A Brief History of Directing in Higher Education

The development of directing in higher education closely parallels that of directing textbooks, as one likely influenced the other through shifting artistic paradigms. And, as the development of directing textbooks was authoritatively compiled by Fliotsos, so too is the detailed history of director education in colleges and universities. She gives the most complete narrative in her 1997 dissertation, “Teaching the Unteachable: Directing Pedagogy in Colleges and Universities of the United States, 1920 to 1990,” which builds largely on the previous work of Clifford Hamar, who dealt with the entrance of theatre courses in higher education at the turn of the 20th century (Fliotsos abstract).

Citing Hamar’s work, Fliotsos writes, “Theatre arts first appeared in the formal academic curricula in the first decade of the [20th] century, at first through courses in playwriting, then in acting, directing, and design” (56). George Pierce

Baker, a Harvard professor of the time, is often credited with introducing theatre into higher education, but Fliotsos rejects the acknowledgment:

Baker was not first, however. Charles H. Patterson, Lucius A. Sherman, and Thomas Dickenson all gave attention to either playwriting or the staging of plays in courses from 1900 through 1902. [...] By the 1920s, a number of schools offered courses in theatre, including courses in directing and play production. (18)

As indicated in the review of textbooks, these early classes were “intended for the director of community theatre and school productions” (Fliotsos 59). In later decades, innovators such as Alexander Dean at Yale, pushed the education of a director toward the meaningful making of art through rules and techniques. Fliotsos writes of a “surge in publications” in the 1950s about directing that “corresponds to the growth of M.F.A. programs...and reflected an increasing interest in directing as a subject of specialization both in academic institutions and within the field itself” (Fliotsos 60).

New ideas concerning how to direct raised questions as to the purpose of director education in institutions of higher learning. Fliotsos describes mid-century theatre education as being at a crossroads, “For on the one hand, the arts were considered to be a component of a Liberal Arts curriculum, whilst on the other, an argument for vocational training gained momentum” (Fliotsos 56). Ultimately, directing education shifted “away from the former goal of early theatre as a liberal art to a trend towards professional training in theatre” (Fliotsos 56), which Fliotsos considered the attitude toward director education through the 1970s until today.

The Discourse of Directing Education Today

There are a greater number of sources concerning the teaching of directing today compared to the number written about its history. Most of this literature is written in the style of “how-to” for students, rather than critical discourse about *what* is taught and *why*. There is some literature written about the current state of directing education but, like most other aspects of directing literature, there is little agreement. Jonathan Cole writes that there is a “general lack of codes and structures of teaching directing” and, perhaps worse, there is an inherent “difficulty of communicating pedagogically the function of the director” (191). This difficulty, he suggests, originates in “the ambiguity concerning an agreed-upon body of knowledge that the director is supposed to master” (Cole 191), as mentioned in an earlier section of my review. Anna Shapiro agrees in her article, “The Discipline of Directing:” “Currently, the courses...include a very specific explanation of the goals of each assignment while offering very little recommendation in how those goals need to be accomplished” (Shapiro 126). This lack of consensus leads to a shallow approach to directing, in which introductory directing students are exposed to the breadth of a director’s role, but not the deep learning required to perform it:

...by addressing such diverse aspects of directing in one semester of study, professors sacrifice deep learning for a survey approach to directing. The sheer variety of viable approaches and the uncertainty about the best pedagogical methods echoes Berkeley’s theoretical history of the US theatre curriculum as pedagogy at odds with itself. (Flitsos 62)

From the discourse surrounding teaching directing today, I have identified several areas of importance: the influence of the director-teacher and his use of multiple approaches, the use (or not) of textbooks, the role of practical experience, and the emphasis on individualism and self-discovery.

Many authors cite the immense influence an individual instructor can have on the productiveness and effectiveness of a directing classroom. Many feel that directing is an intensely personal process, and thus those that teach it are heavily influenced by their own experiences:

The director in higher education generally develops a personal directing style based on a mixture of his/her studies and understanding of the available literature, selected (and often sporadic) coursework at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and, most importantly, applied practice in the theatre itself. (Cole 191)

Despite its subjective nature, Cole believes that the director-teacher must “adapt the procedures learned to fit the specifics of the educational rehearsal hall—applying, softening, or reconstructing exercises and principles to fit the particular context in which the artistic endeavor is taking place” (Cole 193). The ability of a director-teacher to adapt to multiple scenarios allows him to use multiple approaches to cater his classroom to the needs of individual students. This adaptability takes into consideration not only the transmission of directing craft, but also the cultivation of young artists. Shapiro writes:

I believe it is the role of a teacher, especially a teacher of artists, to create an environment that encourages students to investigate, develop, and articulate their own points of view. Certainly a successful directing teacher creates opportunities for students to develop a comprehensive understanding of the sequence of events in rehearsal, the craft of the actor, the visual vocabulary that

includes the theatrical impact of images, and text analysis, but they also have to have in place a system designed to support the internal process of becoming a *thinker*. (124)

Cole also places importance on the instructor's ability to create a contained and safe cultural "microcosm" within the classroom. Citing pedagogical theorists bell hooks and Paulo Freire, he writes, "if one can teach individuals to think critically and act effectively within the classroom...these skills will carry over into the individual's life in the world outside the classroom" (Cole 194).

With so much emphasis placed on the abilities of a single instructor to adapt at will, it is worth considering the benefit of textbook use in a directing classroom. Fliotsos values textbooks for their ability to capture a moment in shifting philosophies of directing pedagogy: "The books chosen for classes provide some of the most concrete historical evidence available about pedagogy, for the act of teaching is as ephemeral as the act of performance" (57). She considers them necessary to support "a new framework for viewing the history of directing pedagogy" (Fliotsos abstract). However, in a pedagogical paradigm in which mutability of approach (combined, of course, with significant mastery of directing) is favored above all else, directing textbooks fall short of their mark. As mentioned above, *communication* is considered a key skill for directors to possess. Yet, as Cole points out, many directing textbooks omit lessons on communicative strategies: "Many of the texts qualify their omission...by defining interpersonal dynamics and communication as abilities that are specific to each individual director, and likely impossible to teach" (194). He argues that because

of that impossibility, “directors must find and refine their own style of communicating with their collaborators and colleagues” (Cole 194).

In order to compensate for the supposed impossibility of teaching communicative strategies, some contemporary director-teachers gear their classrooms toward the simulation of practical experience. Clurman writes, “Most directors acquire their technique by having first worked in the theatre as actor, stage manager, scene designer, producer, or playwright” (x). The master/apprentice system was in place within the world of professional directing before its acceptance into higher education. As Fliotsos writes, “...director training has come full circle; we have taught courses through textbooks only to realize that the best option is not training in the classroom, but in the rehearsal hall of an accomplished director” (62). Cole writes that directing, unlike acting, doesn’t have established “theories or methods to guide us,” instead, it “offers few schools of thought about its nature, preparation, or technique. Most directors learn their art through practice, often serving as an assistant director before developing their own craft by trial and error” (191). Putting all other desired skills and abilities aside, Cole is adamant that in order to learn how to direct, “The director must *direct*” (Cole 196).

Another notable development in contemporary directing education is the emphasis placed on the growth of the individual student director as an *artist*. Fliotsos writes that with this new shift there was “no longer a sense of right or wrong approach in directing; instead, there was a movement toward developing an individual style,” and this “new orientation” was based on the primacy of

“student-centered learning” (Fliotsos 61). While considering directing primarily a craft, Hodge writes, “Learning directing, as with any craft, is a process of personal discovery – doing basic things over and over until they become second nature” (4). And despite the fact that Hodge’s textbook is perhaps the most widely used prescriptive text, he writes, “When you understand the whole, you can devise your own intimate and creative approach. This study of directing, then, is a format for piercing the process, not a rule book to be followed” (Hodge 2).

It is with this understanding of the current discourse surrounding directing education in colleges and universities as demonstrated through the literature that I proceed to examine more detailed examples of *what*, precisely, is being taught in undergraduate directing courses.

Research Design

The few previous studies into the history and theory of directing curricula have used a variety of sources. Clifford Hamar cited primarily university and college course catalogues, while Fliotsos used a combination of textbooks, conference presentation titles, and interviews with director-teachers (Fliotsos 66). While these studies have focused on the broad trends of directing education over the last century, my goal is to provide a snapshot of current pedagogical practices. In order to identify the pedagogical practices of contemporary undergraduate directing curricula, I have collected and examined a sample of course syllabi from U.S. institutions of higher learning. A syllabus is an ideal resource for understanding and evaluating the content and methods of a directing course.

Short and concise, syllabi give broad outlines of the instructors' overt goals for each course, as well as offering insights into their philosophies on directing.

I acknowledge the limitations of the syllabus as cultural artifact. As Dr. Jonathan Levy wrote to me, "A syllabus is no more a class than a menu is a meal" (Levy). His comment illuminates a large deficiency with my chosen material: there are a huge number of variables that affect the educational process that are not manifest in a syllabus – such as the instructor's "style" or the personal resources of the students. Despite this deficiency, reading a sample of syllabi as text and artifact helps to map the contours of the current state of directing pedagogy. A menu may not be a meal, but it tells you quantity, price, composition, style, etc. A syllabus accomplishes the same thing, revealing details about a course: content, learning goals, pace, rigor, student expectations, values, etc. Syllabi provide concrete, documented information that can be broken down and analyzed in a systematic way. To accompany the syllabi I have also included supplementary material that the course requires the students to cover (plays, textbooks, essays, etc.), as well as material from university or college theatre departments concerning educational values/goals for theatre majors in general, and directing courses specifically, much of which is available to the public online.

I have solicited a small sample of 14 syllabi through personal contact and professional networks such as the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) and the American Alliance for Theatre & Education (AATE). These syllabi were sent to me on a voluntary basis, which somewhat limits the scope of the data to those professionals who (a) participate actively in national

organizations, and (b) those who were willing submit their course syllabi. Nevertheless, the sample of syllabi does represent a fairly diverse range of small, large, public, private, liberal arts, and vocational institutions. As mentioned above, much of the supplementary material, both reading required from the syllabi and public information about the selected institutions, is quite easily accessible online and through university library systems.

In order to capture the current trends in directing education, Flitsos calls for a national survey of all college and university theatre programs similar to the Directory of American College Theatre completed in the 1960s and 1970s (79). Rather than attempt something of so grand a scale, I consider my work to be a pilot study, paving the way for a similar study of greater magnitude and breadth. I coded and categorized the data from the syllabi in order to identify patterns and anomalous phenomena. Once this was accomplished, I interpreted any patterns, commonalities, and anomalies in order to identify an assertion or proposition related to my inquiry. After establishing a framework for understanding the contents of the syllabi, I collected and analyzed data from two case-study institutions representative of my findings, showing the relationship between syllabi and the institutions of origin.

Significance

My study will contribute to the field of theatre and performance in a number of ways. First, the collection and codification of the directing syllabi will generate a pool of data currently absent in the discourse. Many have written of the lack of unified standards and methods to both doing and teaching directing.

By communicating and sharing my data and results with other scholars, practitioners, and educators, I can use my work to further an area of research that has been largely neglected by contemporary scholars. Second, my results will give educators a better idea of what their colleagues are doing. Fliotsos points out that there is little communication between teachers of directing. Because my data originates in a variety of academic settings, the results will perhaps draw minds closer together and promote productive conversations. Third, my results will give some indication of what greater ideas are being communicated through directing curricula. It is likely that each syllabus will show evidence of assumptions made about the nature and structure of theatre as praxis. Last, and perhaps most important, this study will break ground for later, larger-scale projects which could use the framework assembled here to complete a survey of national or international scope.

Outline of the Study

Chapter 1 has introduced the study, including a review of relevant literature, the general research question, my plan of research and analysis, and the greater significance of my study. In Chapter 2, I report my findings in two major sections. The first shows the findings solely from the collected syllabi, organized into eleven categories of learning goals. The second section extends the findings of the first section to an analysis of two case-study institutions, the State University of New York at Buffalo, and the University of New Hampshire. The purpose of the third and final chapter is to summarize the study, interpret my

findings as informed by contemporary discourse, discuss the limitation of the research design, and suggest possible directions for future research.

Chapter 2: The Syllabi

In my examination of the syllabi, I have been granted a unique and interesting view into the minds of working director-teachers across the country. Each syllabus is a succinct framing of an individual perspective on the purpose and place of directing in higher education, as informed by the character of the college or university. The syllabi I received are startlingly varied, ranging from unabashedly informal to coldly complex, from a brief two pages to a hefty dozen pages of ten-point font. Despite this variety, each syllabus provides pieces of data that reveal and reflect the philosophies and learning goals of the instructor, the theatre department, and the institution as a whole. In my analysis of the fourteen syllabi, I have isolated any and all pieces of data that reflect a specific learning objective for a student in a directing class.

The result of this analysis is eleven categories of skills and information that, according to the selection of syllabi, a contemporary student of directing need learn and develop. These categories are drawn from commonalities among the syllabi and represent the entire pool of collected data. Not every syllabus contains all eleven but, among the whole, each category can be identified more than once. Much like the broad areas of directing skills defined in my literature review, the eleven categories can be divided into two areas: (1) *knowledges* or the craft of directing, including formal techniques, historical information, and logistical savvy; and (2) *abilities* or the art of directing, which refers to the more personal and intangible skills like communication, leadership, and personal vision. What follows is an introduction to the categories and a description of their

place in the data pool. The list is arranged first into the areas of *knowledges* and *abilities*, and then by the frequency of their appearance among the syllabi.

Knowledges

Script and Performance Analysis

All but one of the syllabi includes script and performance analysis as a necessary skill for young directors to learn. Analysis refers to any dramaturgical, historical, psychological, or literary application or interpretation that a student applies to both textual (scripts, scores, etc.) and visual (performance, visual art, etc.) sources. In the introductory directing classroom at St. Lawrence University (SLU), students are expected to be able to “analyze scripts and productions from a ... dramaturgical perspective” (Gardinier Halstead sec. 3). The sentiment is echoed at Brigham Young University (BYU), where students must “demonstrate evaluative and interpretive skills by analyzing scenes, scripts, and both theatre and film performances” (Gunn sec. 3). Some syllabi were more specific about the process of dramatic analysis. The State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) expects its directing students to “develop the capacity to break down a script by analyzing its basic structure and components, such as given circumstances, language, characters, units, and core action” (Knopf sec. 3). Others, like those at Western Illinois University (WIU), adopt a wider scope of analytical application, guiding their directing students to “analyze text through its dramatic structure, characterization, and sociological and historical contexts” (Woods sec. 3). Regardless of small differences, virtually all of the syllabi consider analysis to be a fundamental skill in a director’s education.

Directorial Techniques and Methods

Like script and performance analysis, most of the syllabi contain some emphasis on the “process” of directing. Directing students at SLU are expected to “develop various technical skills in directing methods” (Gardinier Halstead sec. 3). Included in this category (techniques), are the prescriptive methods and rules one finds in a text like that of Dean and Carra or Hodge: the “nuts and bolts” process of building a meaningful picture on stage. The skills involved in creating blocking, composition, movement, and character are included in the “basic techniques and principles of directing” (Good sec. 1). Development of directorial techniques and methods generally involved a student becoming oriented with an “approach” or “system” of directing that can be applied to a variety of in-class and future situations. At the University of New Hampshire (UNH), directing students develop a “systematic approach that can be applied to any directorial project” (Kaye sec. 2). Beyond the need for basic, practical directing skills in a production setting, some instructors, such as Lewis Magruder of Miami University of Ohio (MUO) see these fundamental skills as a means for students to “prepare to direct (and, by extension, express themselves in a variety of contexts)” (*Fundamentals of Directing*, sec. 7). All but one syllabus contained some mention of the need for students to learn fundamental methods and techniques of directing.

While both technique and analysis are almost unanimous skills among the sample syllabi, the implementation and context of these *knowledges* vary greatly depending on the institution and instructor. By this I mean, the inclusion of

technique and analysis in a curricular structure does not necessarily mean that those skills are the driving focus of the class. As we will later see, two courses can have very different approaches to directing and still value similar skills.

Production Practices

Over half of the syllabi express the need for a directing student to have the necessary skills to carry a production from “page-to-stage,” that is, to understand the active role of the director in every step of the production and rehearsal process. Tim Good at Depauw University teaches his students how to “take a live performance from choosing the script through performance in the role of director” (sec. 1). Some courses take on this learning goal more intensely than others. At University of Pittsburgh (UP), Melanie Dreyer-Lude expects her introductory students to know simply “how to stage a scene” (sec. 3), executing a small-scale example of the director in a production role. Other approaches look to the large-scale practical applications of productions skills. Students at UB “gain an understanding of the process of directing and its practical demands, such as play selection, auditions, and casting” (Knopf sec. 3). Similarly, BYU emphasizes the production-oriented skills of “interpretation, analysis, composition/blocking, and pre-production work” in a practical context (Moss sec. 4). The skills involved in production emphasize a practical set of *knowledges* that shape and inform the more overt, craft-oriented job of the director.

The Role and History of the Director

Five of the syllabi state specifically that students should learn and understand the historical origins and emergence of the “director” as a part of the

professional theatre hierarchy, as well as the evolution of the contemporary director. At Arizona State University (ASU), introductory directing students are acquainted with “the historical emergence of the director’s role in theatre and explore the works and careers of contemporary directors” (Partlan sec. 3). David Kaye at UNH considers the director to be an artist above all, and so passes on to his students “an awareness of the historical evolution of the director as an artist” (sec. 1). While some approaches to teaching this information focus on historic individuals, others focus on the development of the role itself, placing the historic information in a context of “the stage director’s role in the creative process” (Gardinier Halstead sec. 3). Common to any approach is the idea that young directors can learn much from those who walked before them, as evidenced in essay compilations like Cole and Chinoy’s *Directors on Directing*. Although not considered as crucial as skills in analysis, technique, and production, a factual knowledge of the evolution of the director is prized in some pedagogical approaches.

Actor Training

The skills required for dramatic analysis, directing technique, and production practices can extend to a variety of stage mediums beyond that of the actor (design and composition of scenery, lights, sound, and costumes, publicity material, dramaturgical research, etc.). Tools and techniques for training and working with actors stand as a separate learning goal exhibited in several syllabi. Beyond the management of the production as a whole, some institutions, such as BYU, hope that their directing students will “develop a process for working with

actors to help them create characters, give believable performances and tell compelling stories” (Moss sec. 4).

There is variety within this learning goal. WIU, for instance, holds that the director is a leader who will “motivate and guide actors through the rehearsal/performance process” (Woods sec. 3). In contrast, Robert Knopf at UB sees the director in a collaborative role, and hopes to “improve [the student’s] ability to collaborate with actors in rehearsal, including work on actions and objectives, relationship and status...” (sec. 3). Working with an actor requires a director to be well versed with the common practices and techniques of actor training, and many institutions require an introductory acting course before a student can take introductory directing.

Technical Knowledge

Recommended only by two syllabi, knowledge of the workings and limitations of theatre technology is a skill useful for young directors working to bring their visions to reality. A technical understanding can provide a director with not only a common vocabulary to use with designers, but allows a director to incorporate technical elements into his overall construction of a theatre piece. While many schools rely on other required technology courses to supplement this area of director expertise, BYU weaves technology into the fundamental skills of dramatic storytelling, expecting their students to “demonstrate...how to use the physical production elements of set, costume, lights, and sound to effectively tell [a] story” (Gunn sec. 5).

Each of the six categories of *knowledges* points to a learnable body of information and technique that could be reasonably taught in a prescriptive, rule driven approach. There are rules to dramatic structure and interpretation, established techniques and methods to both directing and acting, formal production practices, canonical histories of the director, and countless guidelines for the use of technology. This does not mean, however, that these categories are without artistry and flexibility. While the above categories rely on external information learned by the students, director *abilities*, described below, rely on nurturing the personal resources of the individual student director.

Abilities

Personal Growth, Expression, and Vision

Thirteen of the collected syllabi make clear that a directing course needs to do more than just pass on factual information and technique. It must also encourage the development of the young director as an artist, cultivating personal skills and directorial style. Through the directing course, the student should grow as an artist and, perhaps more importantly, as a human being. Like most of the categories, there are varying degrees to which this goal is pursued. At UP, students are guided to simply “learn some of your strengths and weaknesses as a director” (Dreyer-Lude sec. 3). At SLU, the personal directorial skills are put within a context of production, as students “begin to develop a personal directorial process” (Gardinier Halstead sec. 3). Putting more emphasis on the artistic creation, William Partlan at ASU designs his course to “help students discover and begin to articulate their own directorial vision” (sec. 3). The

benefits of fostering personal growth in a directing course are justified at BYU by the hope that the artistic creation will be “informed by the Spirit of truth and...invite a deeper understanding of...the human condition” (Moss sec. 4). Whatever the ultimate purpose – better performances or personal enlightenment – the cultivation of personal skills and vision is considered by most sample syllabi to be a worthwhile endeavor. This attitude extends to the rest of the following categories, all of which exhibit a belief and investment in the individual’s ability to collaborate, communicate, criticize, and narrate.

Collaboration

Ten of the fourteen syllabi make specific mention of a director’s need to effectively collaborate with other artists and craftspeople. In its extreme, the idea of the director as a collaborator lies in contrast to those who view the director as a master designer who leads a production as one would steer a ship. The collaborative director “engages collaboratively, always working to value the flow of ideas among colleagues” (Magruder sec. 7). This pedagogical approach sees the director as an organizer of disparate minds, bringing together many individuals under his or her grand vision in “a working environment that fosters artistic growth and collaboration” (Kaye sec. 1). And while a prescriptive text offering advice on collaborative technique could be potentially useful, I maintain, as does the data, that collaboration is a personal skill learned experientially.

Communication

Like collaboration, several syllabi suggest that a director’s ability to communicate is fundamental to his overall success. Magruder at MUO plainly

states that his students, upon completion of his introductory directing class, should be able to “communicate with clarity” (sec. 7). Instructors at both UNH and SLU echo Magruder’s simple objective, expecting their students to “communicate... ideas with actors and designers” (Kaye sec. 1) and “communicate... effectively with... other artists” (Gardinier Halstead sec. 3). Communication is essential to an *abilities*-based approach to teaching directing. Without the clarity of effective communication, a director cannot express his artistic vision, nor lead a group of artists and craftspeople toward any sense of cohesion.

Directorial Criticism

Focusing on criticism and analysis of the directorial aesthetic, this category could easily be considered a variation of dramatic analysis. However, unlike analysis, which hopes to enlighten meaning from a text or other source, directorial criticism focuses on the honing of an individual’s skills to identify and process the directing choices of others in an effort to “expand and improve [their own] critical faculties” (Magruder sec. 7). As Jeannie Woods from WIU phrases it, she expects her students to “develop a critical and aesthetic sensibility about the art of directing” (sec. 3). Similarly, ASU students are to gain “a critical eye and vocabulary for evaluating directorial choices” (Partlan sec. 3). Developing a sense of personal aesthetic as well as recognizing the aesthetic of other directors are important pieces of the overall development of a young director as an artist. While the evaluation of other’s choices could certainly be put in terms of *knowledges* such as blocking, technique, and dramaturgical research, it remains an

act of artistic interpretation: a personal reading of a performance text that contributes to the cultivation of the student's *abilities*.

Storytelling

It is one thing for a director to build a cohesive scene with composition and blocking, movement and rhythm; but it is quite a different thing for a director to tell a story with those same techniques. Three syllabi include the development of a director's ability to tell a story as a necessary learning goal. Stemming from a director's vision, the ability to create a cohesive piece of art that tells a unified story is prized at these institutions. At BYU, students use more prescriptive methods to build a complete narrative, demonstrating "the ability to tell story through composition (pictures), blocking, movement, and sound" (Gunn sec. 4). UP takes a more abstract approach, teaching students "how to communicate the story...through image and metaphor" (Dreyer-Lude sec. 3). A director's ability to construct a story, as with the other abilities above, focuses on personal aesthetic and individualized artistry. Of course, this artistry is informed by a director's understanding of history, dramatic structure, directing and acting technique, etc., but this understanding is only given meaning in the artistic construction of a dramatic narrative.

Although I have divided the syllabi data into eleven distinct categories, I do not believe that they are isolated in their implementation in the classroom. One cannot teach the history of directing, for instance, without touching on directorial technique; or teach actor-training techniques without bettering communication skills. It is not the purpose of the specific categories to rigidly

separate pedagogical approaches by concrete definitions. Instead, the purpose is an analytical one, providing a research tool to assess both the content of an individual directing course as well as greater trends in a sample of the national pedagogical discourse. While some of these categories could have been combined under more general definitions, I feel that to do so would remove necessary flexibility found within this method of analysis. Each of the eleven categories can be – and are within the sample syllabi – combined and interwoven in unique ways, resulting in a plethora of seemingly valid pedagogical approaches.

The varied approaches found in the syllabi exist on a spectrum of general directorial philosophies. At one end of the spectrum are the educational approaches that favor *knowledges*, the more tangible “craft” skills and information a director acquires. At the opposite end are those approaches that favor a director’s *abilities*, the artistic resources of an individual. The intervening space between these extremes allows for a multiplicity of approaches to the teaching of directing. Even within my small sampling, I have found such a variety. As I have included in the category descriptions above the more general trends within my sample, I now move to the specific. What follows are case study examples at each end of the pedagogical spectrum: one syllabus that favors a more craft-based, practical approach, and a second that focuses more on individual artistic growth (See Appendix A). In order to better understand the reasoning and development of these approaches, I have included information about the institutions and specific academic departments in which these courses

are taught, as well as curricular requirements and biographical information about the course instructors.

Case Study 1: State University of New York at Buffalo

The Institution

I have selected the syllabus from the State University of New York at Buffalo, hereafter abbreviated to UB, as an example of a directing course that emphasizes director *knowledges*. The practical, production-oriented approach to directing is consistent with the general character of the institution and mission of the theatre department. The following information about UB is drawn from the “About UB: UB at a Glance” website. UB is a large school. It is, in fact, the “largest and most comprehensive campus in the 64-campus SUNY system.” The enrollment at UB in 2009 was approximately 20,000 undergraduates and 10,000 graduate students, and they employ around 2,400 staff (1,600 of which are full-time), giving them a student/faculty ratio of about 18:1. As of June 2009, UB had a respectable endowment of \$410.5 million. While maybe not the biggest, nor the most wealthy, UB fits the profile of a large, public, research-driven university. On “UB at a Glance,” they describe themselves as “a premier, research-intensive public university dedicated to academic excellence.” The commitment to research at UB has been nationally recognized, ranking “second among the country’s public research universities,” and spending more than \$348 million on new research every year, a number that nearly totals UB’s endowment.

The emphasis on research at UB comes with an expectation of production. Broadly, UB hopes that their “thinking, research, creative activity, and people

[will] positively impact and change the world,” and that the mission to change the world is distinguished by “a culture of resilient optimism, resourceful thinking, and pragmatic dreaming.” UB is committed to the idea of practical discovery for the betterment of humankind. There is an almost industrial character to the institution as they claim to seek “new cures, improved processes, stronger materials, faster computers...and thousands of other improvements to life that flow from a great university.” Rather than seeking knowledge for its own sake, UB is an institution seeking *applicable* knowledge with real-world implications.

The Department

In the midst of superconductors and experimental fibers, UB has an active theatre department. The Department of Theatre and Dance is contained within the UB College of Arts and Sciences and, according to “Academic Programs: Index,” the department offers “BA and BFA programs in which selected undergraduates study a broad range of technical, artistic, literary and historical aspects of theatre.” In addition to a general introduction to the discipline, theatre students at UB choose an “area of emphasis” on which to focus, including acting, design/technology, history/literature, playwriting, and directing (“Academic Programs: Index”). The 130 majors and minors currently enrolled in the theatre program can take advantage of opportunities for “Joint Majors, Special Majors, and Double Majors,” and are encouraged to combine their theatre degree with other disciplines such as “Art, Music, [or] English...” (“Academic Programs: Theatre”).

From the above description, the UB theatre program seems much like any other: offering multiple foci built on a general education of performance practices, history, etc. UB has, however, a distinct emphasis on production, both in the sense of creating a theatrical work of art, as well as UB's characteristic industrial nature. The academic goals of the theatre and dance department are aimed at productive theatre-makers: "With an outstanding faculty of working professionals and scholars, our department offers students the opportunity to combine practical, technical, and academic training with production experience" ("Theatre & Dance: Index"). Any skills, knowledge, or abilities a student picks up at UB are geared toward practical application, as "performance and production are an essential part of the training [they] offer," limiting their class sizes to "provide a cohesive and supportive studio environment" ("Academic Programs: Index"). In order to give their students every performance and production opportunity, UB also provides students with rehearsal workshop facilities and performance studios for developmental work, as well as maintaining an active affiliation with several professional theatres in the Northeast ("Academic Programs: Theatre").

The curriculum and major requirements for UB theatre majors also reflect the emphasis on production and performance. Before a UB student can become a theatre major, he must complete three courses: *Introduction to Theatre*, *Introduction to Technical Theatre*, and one class from his chosen area of focus ("Academic Programs: Theatre"). The requirements indicate that UB wants their students to have a solid, production-focused foundation of dramatic analysis, taught in *Introduction to Theatre*, and practical technical production practices

before following a more specific path. In fact, five out of the seven required courses for the major (excluding electives) can be classified as teaching *knowledges*, falling in the categories of dramatic literature and history, design principles, and technical skills (“Theatre Degrees & Policies”).

The Course

UB only requires students of the directing emphasis to take directing courses; directing at UB is not a general requirement. The department does offer, however, two directing courses, innocuously titled *Directing I* and *II* and, not surprisingly, the classes are geared toward production. In the catalogue description, *Directing I* is called “a practical course in directing” and has six learning goals, four of which are similar to categories of *knowledges*: “preparing a script for rehearsal [analysis]... using tempo/rhythm [technique], working with actors, [and] preparing and conducting rehearsal [production]” (“Theatre: Courses”). *Directing II* is a continuation of the “basic skills” of *Directing I*. In the UB course catalogue, students in the second-level directing class prepare material for production; explore space, speed, tempo, and rhythm of a production; and learn methods of casting, auditioning, rehearsing, and working with production, artistic, and administrative staff (“Theatre: Courses”). It is this syllabus, for *Directing II*, which I have selected as indicative of a production-oriented, *knowledge* approach.

The instructor of the course, Robert Knopf, has a body of professional experience that makes him an appropriate guide in a practical directing classroom. According to the department website, “Faculty & Staff: Robert Knopf,” as of

April 2010, Knopf is “Professor, Chair, and Producing Director of the Department of Theatre & Dance.” He has numerous professional directing credits, including work at Circle-in-the-Square Downtown and Cherry Lane Studio. In addition to directing professionally, Knopf has published several books on theatre and film, the most relevant to this study being his text on stage directing, *The Director as Collaborator* (Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, 2005). Knopf holds both an M.F.A. in Directing and a Ph.D in Dramaturgy (“Robert Knopf”). As seen in his faculty biography, Knopf’s experience and skill set seem appropriate for a practical theatre classroom.

Although Knopf considers his approach to emphasize the “collaborative,” the director’s ability to collaborate is set squarely in terms of effective and structured production practices, notably working with actors. In the *Directing II* syllabus he writes, “This class starts from the assumption that every script is open to a variety of interpretations, and therefore the director’s primary responsibility is to collaborate with an ensemble to achieve a specific vision for the production” (Knopf sec. 1). Because of this assumption, in addition to learning how to work collaboratively with actors, Knopf hopes to prepare his students to “direct ‘poor theatre’ productions; and to provide a basis...to director longer, more fully-produced works in the future” (sec. 1). Knopf sees the director as a dynamic leader, someone who uses collaborative techniques, among others, to achieve a unified production.

The later, more specific course learning goals (Knopf sec. 3) are emblematic of a *knowledge*-based approach. Knopf requires his students to master

dramatic *analysis*, developing “the capacity to break down a script by analyzing its basic structure and components.” Beyond analysis, students learn *methods* and *techniques* of directing, “acquir[ing] the skills and techniques necessary to shape the action of a script on stage” and “learn[ing] how to define and shape the core action of scenes and short plays through a variety of directing elements.”

Students are expected to improve their abilities to *work with actors* in a rehearsal setting, “including work on action and objectives, relationship and status, movement, and character arcs.” All of this information is understood from the practical standpoint of *production*, as students “gain an understanding of the process of directing and its practical demands, such as play selection, auditions, and casting.”

The production focus can be seen, too, in how the students and their work are evaluated. In *Directing II*, a full 70% of a student’s final grade is based on the analysis and production of an in-class performance (Knopf sec. 5). The remaining 30% is made up of class exercises and general participation. In keeping with the syllabi’s learning goals and the general philosophy of the course, Knopf evaluates his students more on their ability to *produce* theatrical work, and less on their growth as individual artists.

This is not to say that Knopf’s *Directing II* class doesn’t nurture artistic, *ability*-based skills. Of the seven clear learning goal statements I identified in the syllabus, six could be described as production-oriented. The remaining statement includes developing a student’s skills in *communication* and *personal vision*:

“Students will develop their communication and presentation skills as the means

to achieve their visions” (Knopf sec. 1). Knopf’s syllabus, like many others in the sample, is not rigid in its acceptance of what a director should know, but rather tends to favor one kind of approach over another. At UB, students are in an environment that favors aggressive research and the innovative output of new product. This philosophy is maintained in the directing curriculum, where students are trained as true producers and craftspeople of theatre and performance.

Case Study 2: University of New Hampshire

The Institution

Of all the syllabi I reviewed, the one from the University of New Hampshire (UNH) proved to be the best example of a course that approached directing with an emphasis on a student’s personal growth and abilities. Much of the following information about UNH comes from the “About UNH” website. Located in Durham, New Hampshire, UNH describes itself as “a vibrant place...where undergraduate and graduate students engage in daily discovery and the intellectual excitement of doing research with their faculty mentors.” UNH is much smaller than UB – about half the size, in fact. With a 2009 student enrollment of just under 15,000 (including 2,000 graduate students) and an endowment value of \$180 million, UNH represents a larger but fairly typical Liberal Arts institution. Unlike UB, which highlights its wide national and international population, UNH draws 96% of its student body from U.S. states in New England. And while UB offers degrees in everything from architecture, medicine, engineering, and law, UNH has a much narrower focus: some of its

most popular programs being Liberal Arts, English, Psychology, and Communication.

There are a number of similarities between UNH and UB. Proportional to their endowment value, both institutions spend a significant amount of money on research. However, the larger endowment at UB, as mentioned above, means that UNH cannot match UB's overall spending. Despite the difference in student population, both schools maintain a similar student/faculty ratio: around 18.5:1 for UNH, which employs about 975 instructors. Despite statistical similarities (which are likely common among many institutions), UNH has a distinct Liberal Arts character that distinguishes it from UB. This character is most evidently manifest in the UNH College of Liberal Arts.

The Department

The Theatre and Dance department is part of the UNH College of Liberal Arts (CLA), and with “nearly 300 faculty and 4,600 students” the college accounts for nearly one third of the whole UNH campus (“CLA: Welcome”). The philosophy of the CLA emphasizes change and intellectual growth and is derived from a quote from A. Bartlett Giamatti, former president of Yale, who suggested that universities “change so that they may endure, endure with a sense of their purpose and dignity” (qtd. in “CLA: Welcome”). The CLA turns Giamatti's quote toward the students:

We thrive on the edges of existing knowledge, eager to explore and expand those edges with new inquiry. Most important, we seek to pass the knowledge and sense of discovery onto our students, those who will be there and new worlds emerge. (“CLA: Welcome”)

Unlike UB and its emphasis on production, UNH fosters a greater appreciation of the quest for knowledge itself and the individual benefits of exploratory inquiry.

The Theatre and Dance program offers a curriculum that cultivates individual abilities in an effort to prepare students for any number of career paths. They hope to guide and nurture personal artistic creation, regardless of whether or not a student chooses to pursue a career in theatre. According to the online “Theatre & Dance Brochure,” UNH Theatre and Dance offers a student “a conservatory experience with a solid Liberal Arts education.” Rather than prepare their students specifically for a career in theatre, dance, or film production, the program seeks to impart tools for a student to pursue his chosen vocation:

Whether you’re preparing for a career in the arts and entertainment industry, or your plan is to pursue a degree in law or business, your Theatre & Dance experience will train you to communicate, create, think on your feet, focus on your goals and discover your true potential. (“Brochure”)

UNH focuses on individuals’ abilities and their journey toward new discovery. In the above quote, communication and personal discovery – two categories of *abilities* – are emphasized over a mastery of technical skills and business savvy. In an effort to maximize individual creation and experience, UNH provides numerous studios, lecture halls, and practice rooms, allowing the department to support “countless student generated work[s]” (“Brochure”).

The Theatre curriculum at UNH is flexible in nature and consistent with the greater university’s mission of discovery and exploration. Seven major emphases are offered: General Theatre, Acting, Design and Theatre Technology, Musical Theatre, Secondary Education in Theatre, Youth Drama, and Youth

Drama in Special Education (“Brochure”). With three emphases concerning education and/or outreach, it is clear that UNH values the individual skills and abilities necessary for teaching and guiding others in artistic endeavors. There is no Directing major emphasis, nor is a student of any emphasis required to take directing. UNH offers two directing classes, however, as electives: *Directing* and *Directing II* (“Theatre & Dance”). I have selected the syllabus from David Kaye’s *Directing* course for this analysis.

The Course

An introductory directing student at UNH is expected to have foundational knowledge in performance practices, and two acting classes, *Acting I* and *II*, are prerequisites for *Directing*. According to the UNH online course catalogue page “Theatre & Dance,” in *Acting I*, a student learns primarily through “exercises, improvisation and theatre games,” all techniques that typically rely on an individual’s resources and emphasize exploration and discovery. *Acting II* builds on these skills, guiding a student to “achieve a higher level of truth, presence, and spontaneity on stage” (“Theatre & Dance”) and apply those abilities to a piece of text. This foundation in exploratory discovery is necessary for *Directing*, which is described in the catalogue as “a process oriented approach to the art of stage directing.”

Focusing on the artistry of directing, this course is designed to produce a director who is a “master storyteller,” crafting a narrative through “imagination, interpretation, communication, and style” (“Theatre & Dance”). The description of these three courses reflects a focus on *communication, personal growth and*

expression, and *storytelling*, all artistic and individual *abilities*. But, like the theatre curriculum at UB, it is not one sided. In *Directing II*, students are introduced to skills and information that align more closely with *knowledge* categories, including directing theory and history (“Theatre & Dance”). However, these *knowledges* are applied in terms of directorial communication with the goal of providing a director with more information that allows him to better communicate his vision. This application is clear in the details of the *Directing* syllabus.

David Kaye, the instructor of *Directing* and author of its syllabus, is the head of Acting and Directing at UNH, and has a wide-ranging set of skills and experiences that correspond appropriately to the tenets of a Liberal Arts education. Kaye holds an M.F.A. from the “professional theatre training program” at Brandeis University, and a brief list of Kaye’s theatrical production roles credited him as: a professional actor, director, and designer nationwide; an Artistic/Producing Director; a produced and published playwright; an author of several articles; a presenter and workshop leader at the national and international level; and an active leader in the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (“David Kaye”). With his extensive and varied background in theatre and film, Kaye serves as an example, for his students, of the multiple paths an individual can take with a theatre education, fulfilling the broad mission of UNH and the CLA.

Kaye considers the director to be an “artistic leader,” and as such, his course is consistent with an approach to directing that emphasizes and nurtures a

student's artistic abilities. Above all, *Directing* is a course about growth as an artist and personal expression; students should "gain insight into [their] creative and imagistic capabilities," develop "imagination and style," and "sharpen [their] analytical and problem solving skills" (sec. 1). Communication and collaboration also play important roles in Kaye's course, as he expects students to develop ways to "communicate ideas with actors and designers" and "create a working environment that fosters artistic growth and collaboration" (sec. 1). Kaye assigns no non-fiction texts or textbooks in his *Directing* class, though some – Hodge's guide, notably – are recommended as suggested reading in the syllabus bibliography. Kaye instead assigns five pieces of dramatic text, the greatest number among the sample syllabi, further suggesting a focus on understanding artistic creation rather than mastering a more rigid set of methods and techniques (sec. 2).

In the evaluation of the students, Kaye puts much less emphasis on the production of in-class work, and more on quizzes, tests, and homework. Whereas Knopf's final grades at UB consisted of 70% script analysis and production, Kaye's is half that, with 35% of the final grade coming from scene work (Kaye sec. 5). In keeping with his emphasis on communication and collaboration, other students, through peer evaluation, grade 40% of that 35%. This leaves only 21% of a student's final grade as instructor-graded scene work. Kaye makes up for the majority of the grades through: tests (20%); homework, projects, and quizzes (30%); and one production script (15%) (Kaye sec. 5). The use of quizzes and tests to evaluate an individual's progress is consistent with Kaye's emphasis on

personal growth and development. Rather than look at a final, polished performance, Kaye instead systematically evaluates his student's journey toward becoming directors.

Although Kaye orients his course to favor student *abilities*, he does not discount the importance of *knowledges*, and includes in his learning goals – albeit in a lesser capacity – history, analysis, and technique. Kaye recognizes the need for a young director to know the history of the director as an individual artist as well as the techniques that evolved simultaneously. He writes that his students should “gain an awareness of the historical evolution of the director as artist,” and “increase [their] knowledge of the theories and practices of...directors from around the worlds” (sec. 1). Not to leave his students without necessary tools, Kaye hopes to help his students “develop a systematic approach that can be utilized to analyze any play script...[and] be applied to any directorial process” (sec. 1). He acknowledges the need for directing students to understand more prescriptive skills and factual information, but in the larger scheme of Kaye's classroom, these are secondary to individual artistry and directorial vision.

Kaye seems to see the director's place in a production setting to be much like an instructor in a Liberal Arts institution: guiding and bringing together ideas, knowledge, and artists. Under the instructor's nurturing guidance rather than brazen leadership, UNH directing students are encouraged to push the boundaries of their art form and their imaginations. In the spirit of the institution's mission of new inquiry and dynamic exploration, the UNH directing curriculum represents an understanding of the director, first and foremost, as an artist.

Chapter 3: Looking toward Future Study

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the pedagogical approaches employed in directing courses in selected U.S. undergraduate institutions. It was my intent to create a pilot study, a first step in the larger process of discovering how the art and craft of directing are taught today. Contemporary sources reveal little consensus within the discourse about such broad questions as: What is a director? What is a director supposed to do? And, most crucial to this study: What is a director supposed to know? This study began the process of reconciling diverse opinions to gain a better understanding of the current state of director education in colleges and universities.

To understand the wide variety of approaches to and beliefs about directing, I surveyed a sample of directing texts published within the last 30 years. These texts showed a consistent interplay between the emphasis on either the *art* or the *craft* of directing, as well as revealing a number of other important definitions and categorizations. The literature on directing suggests that the director can be seen as a pure *craftsperson*, building a production like a ship; an *interpreter* who infuses the text of the play with his own style and flair; or as an *artist*, letting his individual vision guide the production toward an event of personal expression. Similarly, the differing opinions about the job of the director can be simplified into four broad tasks: to insure a complete production, to honor the playwright, to meaningfully interpret the material, and to effectively communicate both to fellow artists and craftspeople, but also to an audience. All

of the opinions from the texts concerning what a director should know – and therefore what should be taught – can be grouped into two broad categories: *knowledges*, referring to the set of skills, techniques, and literature a director should be well versed in, including acting styles, theatre history, dramatic literature, and design; and *abilities*, innate qualities pre-existent in the individual or nurtured skills developed through guided practice, such as leadership, communication, and artistic vision.

In order to apply these above categories to a body of data and to identify the ever-shifting pedagogical trends present in institutions of higher learning, I chose to analyze a sample of course syllabi from a variety of institutions.

Following in the footsteps of Clifford Hamar's dissertation about the emergence of university theatre in the early 20th century, and Anne Fliotsos' work on directing pedagogy from 1920-1990, I have picked up the third leg of the race, using the physical artifacts of directing curricula to determine what techniques, methods, and, philosophies are employed in contemporary directing classrooms.

Although a syllabus cannot necessarily give a complete picture of *how* directing is taught, it serves as a rich piece of data that, by its nature, clearly suggests *what* is taught.

After collecting a small sample of 14 syllabi (volunteered mostly by members of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education), I proceeded to identify key statements and phrases (codes) that typified the pedagogical approach within each syllabus. From the hundreds of individual codes, I developed an explanatory schema consisting of eleven categories of skills and information over

which a director should have mastery. Six of these categories are considered *knowledges*, having to do with tangible methods and facts: Script and Performance Analysis; Production Practices; Methods and Techniques; Actor Training; Role and History of the Director; and Proficiency in Technology. The other five categories are *abilities*, and rely on the personal resources of the individual student-director as an artist: Personal Growth, Expression, and Vision; Collaboration; Communication; Directorial Criticism; and Storytelling. Each syllabus reflected a different combination and emphasis of these eleven categories. Rather than two or three common combinations of approach (such as a "practical" approach based on *knowledges* or "artistic" one based on *abilities*), I suggest instead that any pedagogical approach to teaching directing, as found in a syllabus, falls somewhere on a spectrum between prescriptive *knowledges* on one end, and the exploration of individual *abilities* on the other.

I then selected two case-study institutions representative of each end of the pedagogical spectrum: State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) to represent a more *knowledge*-based approach; and the University of New Hampshire (UNH) to represent an *ability*-based one. To place the syllabi in context, I collected and analyzed material published by both universities and the corresponding departments, including course descriptions, mission statements, curricular requirements, and faculty biographies. From this analysis, I subsequently compared the educational philosophies of the institution and the content of the syllabi and found that, in the case of UB and UNH, the content of the directing

course, as understood on the pedagogical spectrum, corresponds to the broad educational goals of the institution.

For example, UB is a large, research-driven, public university that emphasizes innovation, new technology, and vigorous production of new materials and ideas. Keeping with this mission, the UB directing curriculum shows a focus on practical, production-oriented *knowledge*, training directors who can analyze performance and dramatic text, effectively lead a production team, and guide actors in a rehearsal context. UNH, in contrast, is a smaller, liberal arts university with a focus on academic discovery, student growth, and research geared toward exploration, rather than production. The pedagogical approach to directing at UNH upholds the tenets of the institution, cultivating the personal *abilities* of the individual directing student and focusing on communication, collaboration, and exploring ways to express artistic vision. Neither school adopts an approach exclusively practical or artistic. UB also cultivates artistic vision, and UNH insures that its students understand dramatic analysis, but these skills are placed in a context of the greater approach of each institution.

Interpretation of Findings

The original impetus for this study was the inherent mystery of the identity, role, and responsibilities of the director. A foundational part of modern theatre, dance, and film practices, the director is an enigma, appearing different in every situation and in every opinion. Focusing on the institutional training of young directors, I hoped to shed some light on the complex process of learning. If we can understand what a director is taught and why, we can more clearly

understand what a director is, and perhaps find better ways to educate. The findings of this study contribute to the directing pedagogical discourse in a number of ways, and although I do not feel that I can make sweeping conclusions about the current state of directing pedagogy in the U.S., the analysis of the syllabi collected provides enriching insights into the contemporary directing classroom.

First, to a large extent, the findings reinforce the ideas, conclusions, and categories expressed in the literature review. Central to the texts surveyed was the constant interplay between directing as art and directing as craft. Rather than prove or disprove any individual author or philosophy, the entire schema used to explain the body of directing texts is reflected in the findings of this study. I found that all reviewed directing texts have elements within them that favor either artistic *abilities*, or practical *knowledges*, with varying ratios. The analysis of the syllabi and two case-study institutions reaffirmed this generalization, showing that different educational approaches include emphasis on both *abilities* and *knowledges*, but that each approach varies in how much focus is placed on one or the other. The results of this study, like the literature review, reflect the numerous permutations of pedagogical approaches to directing that result from attempts to balance the teaching of art and craft.

The similarities between the texts of the literature review and the data found in the syllabi suggest a relationship between the two bodies of data. It is true that some instructors based their coursework on a previously written text, which would mean that the syllabi reflect the literature. However, many

instructors follow no text, or even use a self-authored text based in their classroom experience, which would seem to suggest that the syllabi do not reflect the body of literature. There is no simple answer to this “chicken and egg” conundrum, but I see the process as circular and adaptive: the body of literature grows from practicing artists and instructors, whose texts are read by other practitioners who use and modify methodology in their classroom and rehearsal halls, eventually writing their own text, and so on. Regardless of “which came first,” it is clear that the two bodies of directorial data are interconnected, and a study of a much grander scale would be necessary to identify the pattern of influence.

Second, this study and its findings lay important groundwork for future studies in the area of undergraduate directing pedagogy. Although small, the collection of syllabi from across the U.S. is a crucial first step in amassing a larger database of directing course materials. Such a comprehensive collection of data would not only increase the opportunity for scholarship, but also allow instructors to see and understand what their colleagues are teaching, helping to remedy the lack of pan-institution communication expressed by Fliotsos. This study also helps to justify the merit of such further work on the topic of directing pedagogy, demonstrating the lack of a cohesive vision of what should be taught in a directing classroom and how. As a pilot study, the framework and method created for this project has a wealth of potential application not only specific to directing pedagogy, but also adaptable for other disciplines.

Third, the eleven categories drawn from the syllabi provide a strong foundation for the future analysis of other syllabi and supplemental course materials. Any number of syllabi could be evaluated based on the eleven categories, easily dividing up a compact piece of data into constituent coded parts. While eleven categories may seem like too many to reasonably manage, the categories allow a necessary flexibility to account for the multiplicity of pedagogical approaches found in contemporary curricula – general enough to account for all the skills and information taught, yet specific enough to identify emergent trends. Beyond the specific eleven categories, the distinction between *abilities* and *knowledges* allows for quick identification of the guiding tenets of an individual syllabus or institution. While it is not a simple dichotomy of black/white, or *ability/knowledge*, the distinction can be made between emphases on one general approach versus another. This helps to determine a syllabus’ particular “shade of gray,” that is, where it falls on the pedagogical approach spectrum between *ability* and *knowledge*. With this basic framework in place, further study could accommodate any number of syllabi, providing a larger pool of workable data, and allowing more far-reaching conclusions to be drawn concerning the current state of directing pedagogy.

Finally, this study encourages the exploration of artistic training in general, emphasizing the identification of emergent trends in education, the evaluation of instructor practices, and the use of syllabi as valuable data. With hundreds, maybe thousands of undergraduate theatre programs in the U.S., the lack of research concerning the pedagogical practices of these institutions is

unbelievable. Increased scholarship on, for example: acting practices, technology curricula, methods of dramatic analysis, and, of course, director education, would help to create new lines of communication between instructors and their students. Beyond the discipline of theatre, the debate about whether to focus on practical craft-oriented techniques or to nurture individual artistic expression is doubtlessly present in numerous other disciplines. Though a small step, I maintain that this study is a step in the right direction: toward pedagogical interconnectivity and a better understanding of how we make and teach art.

Limitations

Like any thesis or dissertation, this study and its conclusions carry a number of obvious limitations. Perhaps the most important limitation to consider is the relatively small sample size of collected syllabi. All of the above analysis was completed using fourteen syllabi from various institutions across the U.S. Such a small number can hardly give rise to broad, overarching conclusions about the whole extant body of data concerning directing pedagogy. A greater sample size would likely produce more comprehensive and far-reaching results. Similarly, the syllabi were volunteered mostly by members of ATHE, a group that does not involve all active directing instructors. Because of this limited source of information, the overall scope of the study was also limited: most of the syllabi came from individual instructors who were (a) active in ATHE, and (b) willing to volunteer their course material freely. These commonalities between instructors could potentially skew the data, failing to incorporate the work of those instructors who do not participate in ATHE.

Besides recognizing the limitation placed on the study by the availability of data, it is important to note how my methods of collection, selection, and analysis affected the results. First, the data represent a decidedly U.S. American perspective on directing pedagogy. By including only institutions from within the United States, I have excluded countless other approaches to the practice of directing and the pedagogical methods of director education. Also, within that delimited area of U.S. institutions of higher learning, the emphasis of director education is often placed on normative practices of text-based, proscenium theatre. In this regard, my sample reflects a small part of what is a potentially greater whole. Second, the choice to use only syllabi as the initial unit of data necessarily meant the exclusion of other, possibly enriching bodies of knowledge. The inclusion of personal interviews with practicing directors or instructors of directing, for instance, could have radically altered the results of this study.

Lastly, as is the case in qualitative inquiry, the process of coding the syllabus data and organizing them into a cohesive explanatory schema was a subjective process. The criteria I applied to evaluate the data was based on my personal reading of the information, and so different criteria applied to the same data may have produced different results. This subjectivity is perhaps most evident in my interpretation of each instructor's intentional learning goals found within their syllabi.

Suggestions for Future Research

As a pilot study, the most meritorious aspect of this work is its impetus for expansion. Although a larger and more comprehensive sample of syllabi, the

inclusion of alternative sources, and the application of different criteria may have produced different results, this study still stands as an important first step toward generating future study. Any shortcoming in the scope or amount of data utilized should be looked to as opportunities for further exploration. Future research based specifically on this study would include a far greater number of sample syllabi from a wider variety of institutions, widening the scope and accounting for educational methods absent above.

Using the methods found above with a greater sample size could result in the production of important conclusions concerning what is being taught in directing classrooms, including how and why. In addition to more syllabi, future work in this area could include alternative bodies of knowledge: instructor interviews, student work, past syllabi, etc. With more samples of a greater variety, future scholarship could compare how the philosophies of an institution affect the content of a directing course, differences between types of institutions, the relationship between published directing texts and course content, the effects of mainstream theatre on course content, and so on.

It is my hope that this work continues through the creation of a large-scale survey of undergraduate theatre curricula across the nation. Such a project would result in a comprehensive picture of theatre pedagogy in the U.S. and allow practitioners, professors, and students to understand the shifting pedagogical trends. More importantly, a national survey would create an open dialogue between master teachers, tilling the soils of innovation and furthering not only the

methods of teaching theatre, but possibly re-envisioning the practice of theatre
itself.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE SYLLABI FROM CASE STUDY INSTITUTIONS

DATA COLLECTED JANUARY–MAY 2010

DIRECTING II

Professor Robert Knopf

Office: Alumni Arena 285

Phone: 645-6898 x1334

Office hours: W 3-4 pm and by appointment

rknopf@buffalo.edu

Fall 2008

Alumni 190

TR 3-4:20 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class starts from the assumption that every script is open to a variety of interpretations, and therefore the director's primary responsibility is to collaborate with an ensemble to achieve a specific vision for the production. Students will learn how to **define and shape the core action** of scenes and short plays through a variety of directing elements. During the semester, we will integrate the use of textual and visceral directing elements. Students will develop their communication and presentation skills as the means to achieve their visions. The ultimate goals are to further your understanding of the role of the director in contemporary theater; to develop your ability to collaborate with an ensemble; to prepare you to direct "poor theatre" productions; and to provide a basis for you to direct longer, more fully-produced work in the future.

PREREQUISITES

Directing I, or permission of instructor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop the capacity to break down a script by analyzing its basic structure and components, such as given circumstances, language, characters, units, and core action.
- To acquire the skills and techniques necessary to shape the action of a script on stage, including work on tempo, rhythm, movement, blocking, composition, picturization, groundplans, and stage configurations.
- To improve your ability to collaborate with actors in rehearsal, including work on actions and objectives, relationship and status, movement, and character arcs.
- To gain an understanding of the process of directing and its practical demands, such as play selection, auditions, and casting.

COURSE TEXTS (available at the bookstore)

Robert Knopf, The Director as Collaborator

Harold Pinter, Betrayal and Old Times (in Pinter: Collected Works 4)

One-act play anthologies (on reserve at the library; list attached on last page)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Directing exercises** [20%]:
 - Unit breakdown
 - Actions/objectives and core action
 - Groundplan
 - Core action statement & pitch
 - Character analysis/collage
 - Sound collage
2. **Script analysis and midterm performance** of a scene from Pinter's Betrayal or Old Times, acted and co-directed by a class partner and you. [30%]
3. **Script analysis and final performance** of a ten- to fifteen-minute one-act modern play with a two-person cast from outside of the class. [40%]
4. **Class Participation** [10%] should be consistent, constructive, and respectful of everyone's opinion. You will be graded on the quality of your participation as well as your regular engagement with the work and your fellow student directors.
5. Attendance at three (3) **University at Buffalo Productions**:
 - **TWELFTH NIGHT**, Drama, Drama Theatre
Preview Wednesday, October 15 at 8 p.m.
Thursday, October 16 - Saturday, October 18 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, October 19 at 2 p.m.
 - **ON THE TOWN**, Musical, Black Box Theatre
Wednesday, October 22 - Saturday, October 25 at 8 p.m.
Saturday, October 25 at 2 p.m. and Sunday, October 26 at 2 p.m.
 - **POOR THEATER SHOW**, Drama, Katherine Cornell Theatre
Friday, November 21 and Saturday, November 22 at 8 p.m.
Saturday, November 22 and Sunday, November 23 at 2 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

This is a laboratory course and therefore requires your attendance at **every class**. Most of the learning takes place in the classroom and rehearsal. Much of the work is experiential, and therefore there is no easy way to make up for a missed class. If you miss a class, please ask a classmate for their notes. I will excuse

absences only for dire emergencies or seriously observed religious holidays. For an absence to be considered “excused,” you must notify me **by e-mail prior to the class meeting**. Each unexcused absence will result in a reduction of your overall grade for the course of 1/3. More than four absences, excused or unexcused, may result in an “F” for the course.

DISABILITY SERVICES

As a professor, it is often difficult to know how to best advise a student with a learning or physical disability. Please be aware that the Office of Disability Services (on-line at <http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/ods/>) is available to assist you. You must register with that office in order to receive accommodation for physical and learning disabilities. If you have any diagnosed disability (physical, learning, or psychological) that will make it difficult for you to carry out the course work as outlined or requires accommodations such as note takers, readers, or extended time on exams or assignments, please advise me during the first two weeks of class so we may investigate reasonable accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

In order to enhance UB’s academic culture and promote awareness of academic integrity issues, all students are reminded of the importance of academic honesty. Please refer to the University’s Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy in the Undergraduate Catalog.

INCOMPLETE GRADING POLICY

The University’s undergraduate Incomplete Policy in the Undergraduate Catalog governs the assignment of incomplete grades in this course. Unfortunately, however, the completion of this course’s performance requirements, by necessity, must be done on the due dates listed above. Should this become impossible, please see me as soon as possible.

DEPARTMENT DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Training and study in theatre and dance occasionally involve material that can be personally disturbing, even offensive. This includes issues of gender, race, sexuality, religion, and various moral concerns. Trust is an essential aspect of all learning environments. If you experience any problems with these issues during the course, please speak to me about them.

COURSE TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE: Readings are due on Tuesdays; exercises on Thursdays

Week of	Topic	Reading and exercises due
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8/25	What is directing? Action, collaboration, play selection	Read Introduction and Ch. I: Collaboration and Leadership Assign directing scene partners Lock in Performance dates
9/1	Script analysis: Core action, units of action	Read <u>Betrayal</u> , Ch. II: Core Action; Ch. IV: "Structure" and "Shifts and Key Moments"
9/8	Working with actors: Actions & objectives Relationship and status Rehearsal techniques	Read Ch. III: Rehearsal Collaboration; Ch. IV: "Actions/Objectives" and "Relationship and Status" <i>Unit breakdown due</i>
9/15	Tempo & Rhythm	Read Ch. IV: "Tempo and Rhythm" <i>Final project proposals due</i>
9/22	Groundplans	Read Ch. IV: "Groundplan" <i>Actions/objectives and core action due</i>
9/29	Visual Composition In-class rehearsals: midterm scenes	Read Ch. IV: "Visual composition" and pp 96-100 <i>Groundplan due</i>
10/6	Midterm scene presentations	<i>Scene script analysis due</i> <i>One-act approval due</i>
10/13	Script analysis: Language, character analysis	Read Ch. IV: "Language" and "Character" <i>Core action statement & pitch due</i> Organize auditions
10/20	Auditions and Casting	Read Ch. VII: Auditions & Casting Hold auditions and cast plays <u>Character analysis/collage due</u>
10/27	Sound & Mood	Read Ch. IV: "Sound and Mood" <i>One-act script analysis due</i> One-act rehearsals begin Organize performance schedule
11/3	Movement & gesture	Read Ch. IV: "Movement" and "Gesture" <i>Sound collage due</i>
11/10	Design Collaborations	Read Ch. V: Design Collaborations and Ch. VI "Design Timetable"
11/17	Environment and Style	Read Ch. IV: "Environment" and "Style"

11/24	Tech & Dress rehearsals: Preparation and goals <u>No class on 11/27: Thanksgiving</u>	
12/3	One-act performances: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	<i>Meetings with professor on Friday</i>

ONE-ACT PLAY COLLECTIONS (on reserve at UG Library, TH402)

HB Playwrights Short Play Festival 1997: The Motel Plays, 2002
HB Playwrights Short Play Festival 1998: The Museum Plays, 2002
HB Playwrights Short Play Festival 1999: The Airport Plays, 2002
HB Playwrights Short Play Festival 2000: The Funeral Plays, 2002
Heaven and Hell (on earth): A Comic Anthology, 2002
Unwrap Your Candy: An Evening of One-Act Plays, 2002
25 in 10: Twenty-Five Ten-Minute Plays, 2002
Eight Tens @ Eight Festival: Thirty 10-Minute Plays, Santa Cruz Festivals I-VI, 2001
Thirty 10-Minute Plays for 4, 5, and 6 Actors, ATL National Ten-Minute Plays, 2001
Thirty Ten-Minute Plays for 2 Actors, ATL National Ten-Minute Plays, 2001
Thirty Ten-Minute Plays for Three Actors, ATL National Ten-Minute Plays, 2001
Ten-Minute Plays: Volume 5, ATL National Ten-Minute Plays, 2000
3 More by E.S.T. '98, 1999
Ten-Minute Plays: Volume 4, ATL National Ten-Minute Plays, 1998
Take Ten: New 10-Minute Plays, 1997
3 by E.S.T.: Three One-Oct Plays Presented by Ensemble Studio Theatre, 1997
Act One '95: The Complete Plays, 1996
Showtime's Act One Festival of One-Act Plays, 1994
Ten-Minute Plays: Volume 3 from Actors Theatre of Louisville, 1995
20/20: Twenty One-Act Plays from Twenty Years of the Humana Festival, 1995
All in the Timing: Six One-Act Comedies, by David Ives, 1994
EST Marathon: One-Act Plays, 1994
Telling Tales: New One-Act Plays, 1993
More Ten-Minute Plays from Actors Theatre of Louisville, 1992
25 10-Minute Plays from Actors Theatre of Louisville, 1989
Best One-Act Plays, 1985
Short Pieces from the New Dramatists, 1985
Marathon / The Ensemble Studio Theatre, 1984
Pirandello's One-Act Plays, 1970
Collected Shorter Plays of Samuel Beckett, 1984
The Saint Plays, by Erik Ehn, 2000

THDA 741.01
Directing I

Professor David Kaye
Office Hours: Available by appointment Tuesday through Friday.
Office: PCAC M-313
Telephone: 862-0667
djk@unh.edu

For Appointments: There is a sign up sheet on my door with all my available times. You must sign up for an appointment at least twenty four hours prior.

Course Objective: The director is the master designer of a production. This course is designed to give an individual the necessary skills to assume this role as the artistic leader. We will undertake a step-by-step process that will include in depth play analysis, methods of communication with actors and designers, and the development of imagination and style. Upon successful completion of this course, you will have:

1. Developed a systematic approach that can be applied to any directorial project.
2. Developed a systematic approach that can be utilized to analyze any play script
3. Developed techniques to communicate your ideas with actors and designers
4. Gained insight into your creative and imagistic capabilities.
5. Sharpened your analytical and problem solving skills
6. Learned to create a working environment that fosters artistic growth and collaboration.
7. Gained an awareness of the historical evolution of the director as artist.
8. Increased your knowledge of the theories and practices of some of the most influential directors from around the world.

Required Reading: (available at the Durham Book Exchange)
ALWAYS BRING ALL YOUR SCRIPTS TO CLASS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

PLAY	Read by
➤ <i>Waiting for Lefty</i>	1/28
➤ <i>The Glass Menagerie</i>	1/30
➤ <i>Hedda Gabler</i>	2/11
➤ <i>The Heidi Chronicles</i>	2/17
➤ <i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	2/18

Course Requirements:

- Two written tests
- One diagnostic criticism
- One Production script

- Scene work presentations
- Other various homework assignments
- Quizzes on reading assignments
- Attendance at four theatrical productions. (All on campus)
- Final Exam practicum: ten minute one act play

Required Attendance

- *Medea*
- *The Boy Who Stood Still*
- *Shoulders*
- *Fame*

Grade Distribution:

Home work, project work and quizzes	30%
Major scene work	25%
Two major tests	20%
One production script	15%
Final scene presentation (final exam)	10%

Project work will be graded on a point system devised to evaluate all the content areas incorporated in that assignment.

The major scene presented in class will be graded by both the instructor and the students. The students collective evaluation will be worth 40% of the overall grade. The Instructors evaluation will be worth 60% of the overall grade.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance (both mentally and physically) is extremely important to the success of this class. If one person is missing, it has a great deal of impact on the rest of the members. If a student fails to attend a class on the day an assigned project is to be presented, the student will receive a zero for that assignment. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Two absences are allowed. Use them wisely. NO extra absences are granted. Each class missed after the second absence will lower the student's final grade by one half a grade.

Two late arrivals to class equal one absence.

Seven absences will constitute an automatic failing grade for this course.

Other Policies:

Homework is to be handed in at the beginning of class on the day that it is due, whether or not the student is present for the class. Grades on homework submitted late will be reduced ten points after the start of each class period thereafter.

Written work, unless specified, should be typed, double space, 12pt Times font, with 1" margins. Work submitted four classes late will not be accepted.

**The \$20.00 Performance Fee covers admission to two university productions. Once a voucher has been handed out and initialed by an authorized Theatre and Dance faculty member, there will be no replacement for lost or stolen vouchers. There will be no exceptions. Students must still reserve seats for all productions.

Class Schedule

Week 1: Jan 20, 22

Discussion on the concept of "The Director"

The Director: Historical Perspective

Homework due next class: *Waiting for Lefty* read for class on Thursday

Homework due Thursday , 1/29: Be prepared to direct the narrative play. You will have no more than 20 minutes of class time to direct the piece. Keep in mind the discussions on STORY TELLING!

Homework due Tues Feb 3: *Glass Menagerie* assignment: Using the scene when Tom returns home drunk after the huge fight with Amanda and focusing on ALL the aspects of story telling we discussed in class, tell the story of this scene, USING YOUR OWN WORDS, in *exquisite* detail. Begin at the top of the scene and end with Tom entering the apartment. (Tell the story as if you were narrating it, just as we did with the "Lefty" scene in class). Then the tell the same story, but in only one paragraph of no more than 4 sentences. Last- Tell the story one last time, but in only one sentence.

Week 2: Jan 29

The Director as Storyteller

First four narrative scenes are presented

Week 3: Feb 3 and Specially scheduled class

Telling a story using actors

Foundation of the Play script: Given Circumstances and Dialogue

The Hard Core of the Play script: Dramatic Action and Character

Homework due Tuesday 2/10: Have *Hedda Gabbler* read.

9th Scene must be rehearsed out of class and presented on the special class day.

Week 4:, Feb 10, 12

Foundation of the Play script: Given Circumstances and Dialogue

The Hard Core of the Play script: Dramatic Action and Character

Homework due Thursday, 2/12: Simple Scene Dramatic Action Exercise

Homework due Tuesday, 2/17: Have *The Heidi Chronicles* read

Week 5: Feb 17, 19

The Hard Core of the Play script: Dramatic Action and Character

The Derivatives of Dramatic Action: Ideas, Style, Tempos, Moods.

Homework due Tues 2/24: *Glass Menagerie* dramatic action exercise.

Homework due Thurs 2/26: Have *Tea and Sympathy* Read.
See *The Boy Who Stood Still* this week

Week 6: Feb 24, 26

Introduction to Composition and Movement

Ground plans

The Production Script

Midterm Review on Thursday (Midterm next Tuesday)

Scene Assignments

Homework due: Thursday 3/5: Freeze-frame/Movement Exercise

Homework due the day YOUR scene is presented in class: A full production script.

Required content:

- Complete EXTENSIVE research of the given circumstances and ALL ENVIRONMENTS.
- History of the play and playwright as it related to better understanding the play.
- Dramatic actions labeled for your scene.
- Character analysis for all characters in your scene.
- One sentence story statement for YOUR SCENE.
- Mood/Tempo descriptions for your scene (Metaphors and Adjectives)
- A style statement for your scene/play
- A **to scale** (1/4") ground plan for your scene designed to take place in the Hennessy
- A Costume pallet for your scene.
- Art abstractions for your scene
- Music abstractions for your scene.

Production scripts must be turned in a three ring binder.

Poor presentation will affect your grade.

Week 7: March 3, 5

Midterm Exam: Tuesday 3/3

Composition and Movement

Ground plans

Week 8: March 10, AND SPECIALY SCHEDULED CLASS

Composition and Movement

Ground plans

Homework due Tuesday, March 24 (First day back from break):

Part 1: Create a ground plan for your simple scene. The Ground plan must be complete with walls and doors, and must have five legit acting areas. This must be drawn in 1/4" scale, for the Hennessy stage. Label all your set pieces. (KEEP IN MIND ALL THE FUNCTIONS OF THE GROUND PLAN!)

Part 2: Write out (you will hand this in) Who is the central character of this story and why.

Part 3: Stage your simple scene on paper. REMEMBER: TELL A CLEAR STORY!!!

Part 4: MAKE A **COPY** OF YOUR LABELED, STAGED SCENE, WITH CENTRAL CHARACTER STATEMENT AND YOUR GROUND PLAN TO HAND IN ON TUESDAY! (EVERYONE'S GP IS DUE ON TUESDAY!!)

Part 4: Direct the scene in class. (You will have approximately one hour).

BEGIN YOUR SEARCH FOR A 10-MINUTE PLAY OR SCENE FOR YOUR FINAL: YOU MUST HAND A COPY IN TO ME BY THURSDAY APRIL, 9. The play or scene must RUN no longer than 10 minutes. The piece should be, essentially, realistic.

Week 9: March 24, 26 (PLEASE NOTE, CLASS ON TUESDAY MAY NEED TO BE SPECIALLY SCHEDULED)

The Director at Work

Week 11: March 31, April 2

The Director at work

Week 12: April 7, 9

Audition Process

Rehearsal Scheduling

A COPY OF YOUR 10 MINUTE PLAY MUST BE TURNED IN THIS THURSDAY, APRIL 9

Homework due Tuesday, April 14: Create a detailed rehearsal schedule for *Hedda Gabler*. First break the play into French Scenes, and then include to the minute rehearsal times for everything through the end of phase 2 (the staging of the play). You can be a LITTLE more general for the other phases, but still keep a sharp eye on how much time you have and what you must achieve on any given day. (Example: 10/5/09: work detail on Scenes 2a-2f). The schedule should begin with the first day of rehearsal and end with first tech. Rehearsals are 4 hours each, six days per week. You have a total of 5 weeks of rehearsal, INCLUDING tech week. The play opens on a Wednesday night. (So you may count back 5 weeks from that Wednesday to get your start date).

Week 12: April 14, 16

Scenes presented in class

See *Shoulders*

Week 13: April 21, 23 EXTENDED CLASS

Scenes presented in class

Audition week for ten-minute plays: Open call Auditions: Monday, April 20, 6:30-10pm

Call backs Tuesday and Wednesday April 21, 22. **We will meet Thursday, April 23 at 8am in M316 to cast the plays. MAKE SURE YOU CLEAR THIS TIME.**

Week 14: April 28, 30

The Director/Designer relationship

Week 15: May 5, 7

Directing and Criticism

Final Exam May 7

Homework due for your tech rehearsal: Music for your Ten minute plays. Have at least two minutes of intro music and at least one minute of outro music. Also have any other internal sound cues on the CD. Have all sound cues in the correct order. **CLEARLY MARK YOUR CD's.** Give a copy of your CD to your sound op and also have a backup copy for yourself.

Homework due Thursday May 7: A ¼" scale ground plan for your scene as set on the Hennessy stage. Include **EXACTLY** how the walls are to be set up as well as the door unit (if you are using it). **DO NOT GUESS AT THIS. SET THIS UP ON STAGE USING THE WALLS AND THEN CREATE YOUR DRAWING.** Clearly label the set pieces. On the back of the ground plan, please write if the play is more comic or dramatic and please include the running time.

Homework due on Thursday, May 7: Bring in a copy of your play for the person assigned for your diagnostic criticism.

Homework due NO LATER THAN THURSDAY MAY 7 at 1pm: E-MAIL me your program copy. (djk@unh.edu). Set this up to take 1/4 of a page in "portrait" format. Include the title of the play, the playwright, Director, Actors and Light Designer. You may add a note, thanks, etc. if you wish, but you may not take up more than 1/4 of a page.

Home work due on the official exam day/postmortem: Diagnostic Criticism (BRING TWO COPIES)

Week 16: May 9, 10, 12, 13

Production Week

May 9, 10: Directors will have 60 minutes of Tech Time, Starting at 9am.

May 12: Group 1 1-5:30 pm: Dress. **Directors are called at 1pm** . Actors at 1:30pm. , 7pm Performance

May 13: Group 1 1-5:30 pm: Dress. **Directors are called at 1pm** . Actors at 1:30pm. , 7pm Performance

10-minute play feedback session (Class Final): The class will meet during the common exam time on Wednesday, May 20 at from 9am to 12:30pm. Diagnostic Criticisms due at that time. **TWO COPPIES: ONE FOR ME AND ONE FOR THE DIRECTOR.**

Bibliography/Suggested reading List

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Clureman, Harold. *On Directing*, New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1972.

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Franck, Frederick. *The Zen of Seeing*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1973

Mamet, David. *Writing In Restaurants*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1986

Herrigel, Eugen. *Zen In the Art Of Archery* New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1971

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Peter Benjamin Welch grew up on a hobby farm in central Wisconsin. He attended Lawrence University, a small, liberal arts institution in Appleton, WI, where he received a broad education, exploring a wide range of subjects including: Political Science, Classical Warfare, Satire, and Mythology. In June 2009, Peter earned a B.A. in Theatre, graduating with honors both in course, and for his adaptation of Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*. He entered the M.A. in Theatre program at Arizona State University in the fall of 2009. Peter is a member of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education and a teacher of Fine Arts at Mesa Preparatory Academy. He resides in Arizona with his wife Brianna.