

## Duke Ellington School of the Arts STAGE MANAGEMENT

Instructor: Ronald Lee Newman, OPERATIONS & LOGISTICS MANAGER  
Office: Tech Office {Stop in anytime!}  
Office Phone: 202-298-1777 Ext 2670 {main school number - 202-282-0123}  
Email: RonnieNext@aol.com or Rnewman@ellingtonarts.org  
Class Meets: M-T-TH Period 10

### **I. Course Description**

This is a course designed to prepare the student to perform the duties and responsibilities of a stage manager for live stage productions, and is inclusive of organization, delegation, scheduling, and personnel management. Through a working knowledge of stage management, the student shall understand theatre hierarchy and the importance of the stage manager in the professional and educational theatre.

### **II. Introduction and Expectations**

This course is a survey of stage management. Topics to be studied include stage management, professional unions, production management, and house management. Although this course is primarily an overview, it assumes the student has a professional interest in Arts management. This class may serve as preliminary formal training toward becoming an Arts manager in the future.

Readings for each week should be done in advance to the next class meeting. Students are expected to bring questions, insights and disagreements about the assigned readings to class for group discussions. Students will complete weekly activity assignments relevant to the topics studied, as well as a professional development project that may take the form of a research paper or creative inquiry. This course includes quizzes, test, a midterm and a final examination.

Exam dates are unchangeable and late assignments will not be accepted. Exceptions may be considered only with official verifiable documentation or special needs documentation from the office of the Principal/Dean of Students, Board of Education or a licensed physician. Any requests for learning disability special accommodations must be made during the first two weeks of class, and proper documentation is required.

#### **A Note on Being an Excellent Stage Manager**

As the stage manager, you are expected to be at every rehearsal and every performance. You are required to be there early to set up, and late to clean up. It must be in agreement with the director, and checked with Ronald Lee Newman, Operations Manager, if you cannot make every meeting. If there are a generous number of assistant stage managers available, it might be possible to arrange some time off. *Stage Manager*: Liaison among all departments of a production; responsible for scheduling, information exchange, and the smooth operation of all rehearsals; "calls" dress rehearsals and performances *Assistant Stage Manager*: Assists production stage manager; often assigned to specific responsibilities such as preparation of rehearsal rooms, prompting, and rehearsal props, etc.

#### **A Note on "Dressing for Success"**

Each student is required to wear professional business attire every Monday once a week through out the school year. Dressing for success is a crucial part of being a professional. If any student is unable to meet this requirement, please see the instructor immediately.

### A Note on Dissertations and Journaling

Each student is required to complete two papers over the course of the school year.

Paper #1, due on **Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010** with an outline due **Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010**, should focus on the birth of the Non-profit Theatre movement in America. **START YOUR RESEARCH NOW!!!** A minimum of 5 doubled spaced typed pages of text using font Times New Roman size 12. This does not include cover page, table of contents or bibliography pages. No graphics Please!

Paper #2 will be due on **Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010** with an outline due **Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010**; its focus should be relevant to the arts. While the student has autonomy over her/his topic for paper #2, the topic must first be presented to the instructor for approval. A minimum of 7 doubled spaced typed pages of text using font Times New Roman size 12. This does not include cover page, table of contents or bibliography pages. No graphics Please!

### Paper #1 and #2 should include:

Cover page with title center on page and students name, date, class and instructors name listed at the bottom right hand corner. {Without a page number}

## PAPER SAMPLING

{FOR ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR PAPER SEE THE INSTRUCTOR}

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TITLE</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Student Name January, 20, 2009 Internship Ronald Lee Newman</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No page number</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Table of Contents</p> <p>Title page..... Topic.....1 Topic.....2 Topic.....3 Topic.....4 Topic.....5 Topic.....6 Topic.....7 Bibliography.....8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No page number</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TITLE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Body of the paper begins here. This is page one of your paper.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Start your research now.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-1-</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Bibliography</p> <p>Mcgotti, Dapill. "Deep" <u>Water</u>. Johnson. New York: Pepp, 2004</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Last page of your paper</p>
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Additionally, you will be required to develop several press releases, program notes, and dramaturgy analysis and findings for use as marketing tools for Ellington sponsored events. You will be required to keep a Journal of your work as an arts manager. Focus on your best achievements and your mistakes. Evaluate what you would do differently to improve your skills. Do not use your Journal as a complaint box.

### WRITING RESOURCES:

Students should make every effort, and take every opportunity, to improve their writing skills. It is imperative that you take the time now, rather than later, to improve your grammar, usage, construction, etc. I recommend the following free resources.

- <http://webster.commnet.edu/grammar/index.htm>
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

**If you need assistance, see me IMMEDIATELY.**

**Subjects to be covered:**

What is a good stage manager?  
Pre-production - Getting ready for the long haul  
Reading a play for management  
Paperwork.... Paperwork..... Paperwork.....More Paperwork  
Working with designers, shops and crafts-persons  
Auditions, Rehearsals, Performance, Post production  
Plans and drawings, Organizational skills  
Computer programs that can help along the way  
Crowd control  
Equity rules and regulations  
Touring

**III. PLAGIARISM**

As a college student I was wrongly accused of plagiarism by a professor and suffered through several weeks of depression prior to my commencement day. Although, the charges were dismissed and the professor reprimanded, I'm still bothered by the accusations and have become very particular and careful with my writing and my assessment of my students writing.

Plagiarism violates the expectations of honesty among scholars and artists. There is no reason to plagiarize and I will not tolerate it. Any student found guilty of plagiarism will receive an "F" as the final grade for the course.

As you prepare your writing assignments, be careful of the internet and other resource materials as they may lead you astray. Allow your own thoughts to be expressed on paper, thus making for more interesting and compelling papers.

**If you need assistance see me IMMEDIATELY.**

**Please study the policy on PLAGIARISM in your community handbook.**

**IV. ATTENDANCE / LATENESS:**

Punctuality is a critical characteristic of a good stage manager. Being late for anything undermines effective stage management at the most fundamental level. Train yourself to be on time and prepared. **Arriving late for any regular class meeting will count as 1/2 of an absence.**

Unexcused absences and lateness for calls are certain to have a negative effect on your evaluations, and are the single easiest way to undermine your effectiveness as a stage manager. Severe or habitual problems of this nature (as judged by the instructor) will result in your dismissal from your assignment, and harsh penalties on your final grade.

My policy on attendance should be taken to be clear and unambiguous. To preempt complaint and to avoid confusion **DON'T BE LATE, DON'T BE ABSENT!!!**

Students missing a total of 20% of their classes or more will receive a grade of "F". This class meets a total of 180 times; therefore I expect to see you 180 times. The consequence for absences **could result in a grade of "F" and lead to expulsion from Ellington.** Exceptions to this policy will be so rare as to be considered non-existent.

Please study the policy on ATTENDANCE in your community handbook.

## V. EATING, CELL PHONES AND THINGS THAT MAKE NOISE

No Eating or Drinking  
Turn Cell Phones and IPODS Off Completely  
Turn Two-Ways and Pagers Off Completely  
Other Devices That Make Noise, Turn Them Off Completely

## VI. TEXTBOOKS/READING MATERIAL

Selections from various *Stage Management and Art Management* books, periodicals and other relevant resources will be provided to the student. Additionally, supplemental material provided by the instructor will also be studied, including union rulebook excerpts, management tools and other articles of interest. Students will be given script as a study text to be used as the subject of practical assignments.

**Please note:** The instructor reserves the right to require students to obtain a textbook following the first week of instruction. Prior to making such decree, the instructor will perform a financial assessment to determine if the cost fits within the students family budget.

Students with an advanced interest in theatre production are encouraged to start building a personal library of resources. See instructor for suggestions

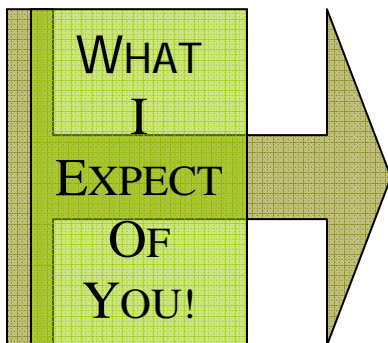
## VII. GRADING

Weekly assignments	10%
Quizzes and test	10%
Midterm examination	20%
Prompt book project	15%
Participation and attendance	10%
Final examination	15%
Professional development project	20%

Your written work will be graded by professional academic assessment of grammar, spelling, insight, originality and clarity of expression.

Your in-class participation work will be assessed by professional academic observation of your engagement with the material, your efforts to use critical analysis and problem-solving skills, and your cooperative interaction with colleagues during discussions.

**For additional explanation of grading policies, please consult your Community Handbook.**



My expectations are simple: Be the Best YOU. In turn I hope to help you obtain the master key to success; a success that can only be determined by you and where you are and where you would like to be. It is my belief, that the master key is the foundation for continued growth. Many people - to no avail - search their entire life for this master key, and many people have it stored within and never use it. I'm making no promises, nor am I claiming to have all the answers, I'm simply affirming my commitment to providing each of you an opportunity to be the best you can be without limitations or barriers!

*Ronald Lee Newman*

**- Subject to Change -**