

Course Syllabus

TAPS 133D: Set Design Practicum

Winter 2019

[T/Th 4:30 - 6:20](#)

Rm. 126 Memorial Auditorium

(WAYS certified)

Contact Information

Primary Instructor: Erik Flatmo

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Office: Memorial Auditorium, Rm. 238

Office Hours: T/Th, 1:00 to 4:00. Please email in advance to confirm.

Pronouns: he/him

Course Description

This course is intended for students who are in the process of designing scenery for a Stanford club or department production and seek guidance in developing and refining their design. It is also open to students who are considering set design projects in the future, or any student who would like to learn more about the practical aspects of set design in general. Each week students present their work on a current or future set design and receive feedback and suggestions from classmates and the instructor. Also, the instructor will create project oriented assignments adapted to the needs and timeline of each individual student and project. Topics include: visual research, sketching, simple drafting, and model making.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will:

1. Learn a step-by-step process for designing scenery that involves hands-on research, drawing and model-making.
2. Complete the necessary sketches, working drawings and models for a set design project that they are committed to outside of this course, or for a classroom project of their own choosing.
3. Discover a sounding board and group support for questions about set design practice and group collaboration.

Course Expectations

This class exists to provide mentorship and guidance to students who are designing scenery for productions on campus. It is also open to students who are not currently designing a production but think that they might in the future. Lastly, it is open to students who have no plans to design scenery on campus but would like to learn about the set design process in general.

This class is focused mostly on the practical matters of set design that a student designer might encounter. What kind of drawings do I need to make? What do I need to present at a meeting with a director? We will also be discussing design matters, but the goal is to focus on process in order to keep students on track for successful realized productions.

Students will be working on different projects and are expected to bring certain information to class such as design deadlines and a theater ground plan. Students who have not already initiated a set design project with a Stanford club or other organization can meet with me the first week of class to find a project to work on.

Credit Options and Corresponding Attendance and Work Expectations

Students attend twice weekly class sessions for a short demonstration by the instructor followed by “presentation updates” from each student on their work. Any remaining class time will be devoted to in-class work sessions with the instructor available for one-on-one meetings. Students may also use this time to visit the library, procure materials or other business directly related to their set design project. Permission may be granted to students to use class time to work on their projects (scenic painting at the Commissary, for example) as long as it is arranged in advance. Otherwise, attendance is expected.

Students are expected to put in 4 to 5 hours of work per week on their projects outside of class. Room 126 Memorial Hall and the Arts Gym are possible locations where students may complete studio work after class hours. For successful completion of the course, each student is expected to complete five assignments related to their set design project:

ASSIGNMENT	WEEKS
<i>Assignment 1 (Image Research Gallery)</i>	<i>1 & 2</i>
<i>Assignment 2 (Ground Plan)</i>	<i>3 & 4</i>
<i>Assignment 3 (Front Elevation or Sketch)</i>	<i>5 & 6</i>
<i>Assignment 4 (Model)</i>	<i>7 & 8</i>
<i>Assignment 5 (Paint Elev. Or Materials Research Board)</i>	<i>9 & 10</i>

Individual assignments are due at the end of each two-week period. They should be turned in directly to the instructor (hard copy) or on Canvas (digitally). Students should not email assignments. Additionally, each student will be expected to assemble all assignments into one final package for presentation at the end of the course which is to be considered the final project.

There may be a few short readings and videos assigned during the quarter. There are no written papers, exams or quizzes.

Students may enroll for 3 or 4 units. Students receiving 4 units will be expected to complete a full color set model, while students receiving 3 units may do a “white” or rough model.

An option to take this course CR/NC is available

Course Grade Calculation

The final course grade is composed of the five individual assignments:

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENTAGE OF COURSE GRADE
<i>Assignment 1 (Image Research Gallery)</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Assignment 2 (Ground Plan)</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Assignment 3 (Front Elevation or Sketch)</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Assignment 4 (Model)</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Assignment 5 (Paint Elev. Or Materials Research Board)</i>	<i>20%</i>
TOTAL	100%

The grade for each assignment will be determined as follows:

GRADING CATEGORIES FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS	PERCENTAGE OF LETTER GRADE
<i>Completion of Checklist Elements (specific to each assignment)</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Overall Development (Presentation of work at different stages of development within the time period.)</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Demonstration of Ability to Incorporate Feedback from Instructor & Other Students</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Overall Clarity and Strength of Work</i>	<i>25%</i>
TOTAL	100%

- Work that scores high in all four categories will receive a grade in the A range.
- Work that scores high in three of the four categories will receive a grade in the B range.
- Work that scores high in only two or fewer categories will receive a grade in the C range or lower.

These grading guidelines are intended to work in accordance with Stanford's general university grading system:

www.registrar.stanford.edu/students/definition-grades/general-university-grading-system

Readings, Materials, and Resources

ART SUPPLIES

Students should bring the following art supplies, available for purchase at the Stanford bookstore or any local art store, to class:

Sketch notebook
Non-mechanical pencil
Black foam core (one sheet, 15" x 30" x 3/16")
White glue
X-ACTO pen knife with replacement #11 blades
Architect's scale ruler (imperial, not metric)
Tracing paper, 12" roll, buff colored
Drafting dots or drafting tape
Storage pouch or container with your name on it

Each student should expect to spend roughly \$20 to \$25 during the course of the quarter on art supplies specific to their project.

Items may be stored in Rm. 126 Memorial Auditorium.

BOOKS

There are no required textbooks for this course. However, I do recommend two books for beginning set design students. These would be a useful purchase for students wishing to continue in the field:

Carter, Paul. *The Backstage Handbook: An Illustrated Almanac of Technical Information*. Louisville, Ky.: Broadway Press, 1994.

Rose, Rich. *Drafting Scenery for Theater, Film, and Television*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Betterway Books, 1990.

Woodbridge, Patricia. *Designer Drafting for the Entertainment World*. Waltham, MA: Focal Press, 2000.

I recommend looking at the following books in the library. Beginning set design students find them useful:

Aronson, Arnold. *American Set Design*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1985.

Smith, Ron. *American Set Design 2*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1991.

INSTAGRAM

All students should follow the instructor's professional Instagram account to become familiar with recent work in design for performance. It is updated weekly:

www.instagram.com/stagedesignsnapshot

Course Website on Canvas

Course website: www.canvas.stanford.edu/courses/95603

The instructor will use Canvas to post the syllabus, schedule, assignment checklists, examples of set design work and other materials. Students may use Canvas to submit assignments digitally, but hard copy work is gladly accepted as well.

Course Policies

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Assignments turned in after the due date will be deducted one third of a letter grade for that particular assignment. As with all assignments, they should be turned directly to the instructor or via Canvas, not email.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students who miss more than three excused absences will have their overall grade deducted by one third letter grade for each additional absence.

Administrative Deadlines for Students

March 1 (Fri, 5:00 p.m.) Course withdrawal deadline
March 1 (Fri, 5:00 p.m.) Change of grading basis deadline
March 26 (Tue, 11:59 p.m.) Grades reported

University Policies

THE HONOR CODE

It is expected that Stanford's Honor Code will be followed in all matters relating to this course. You are encouraged to meet and exchange ideas with your classmates while studying and working on homework assignments, but you are individually responsible for your own work and for understanding the material. You are not permitted to copy or otherwise reference another student's homework or computer code. If you have any questions regarding this policy, feel free to contact the professor.

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's Honor Code policy and must make proper use of citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research.

Course Schedule and Assignment / Assessment Deadlines

Week Number	Dates	Topics	Assignments
Week 1	Jan 8, 10	Image Research Gallery	Intro, Syllabus Review
Week 2	Jan 15, 17	Image Research Gallery	Assignment 1 (Image Research Gallery) due
Week 3	Jan 22, 24	Ground Plan (Hand-drawn)	
Week 4	Jan 29, 31	Ground Plan (CAD)	Assignment 2 (Ground Plan) due
Week 5	Feb 5, 7	Front Elevation or Perspective Sketch (Hand-drawn)	
Week 6	Feb 12, 14	Front Elevation or Perspective Sketch (SketchUp)	Assignment 3 (Sketch or Front Elevation) due
Week 7	Feb 19, 21	Model (Preliminary)	
Week 8	Feb 26, 28	Model (Finished)	Assignment 4 (Model) due
Week 9	Mar 5, 7	Paint Elevation (Floor)	
Week 10	Mar 12, 14	Paint Elevation (Walls/Vertical Surfaces)	Assignment 5 (Paint Elevation or Materials Research Board) due
Week 11	Dates	Online Course Evaluations Due	End-Quarter Period
Week 12	Dates		End-Quarter Exams