

**Highlands High School
Foundations of Technical Theatre
2016-2017 Course Syllabus**

Instructor: Jason Burgess
Email: jason.burgess@fortthomas.kyschools.us
Website: www.highlandstheatre.com

Phone/Extension: 859-815-2512
Grade(s) 9-12
**Dual Credit Available through
Western Kentucky University**

Description of Class:

Technical Theatre encompasses all the people, equipment, work and time that make an event happen. Without skilled techies behind the scenes of a concert, play or presentation, the audience cannot see, hear, understand or enjoy the performers properly.

Tech theatre covers stage sound, lighting, props, costumes, make-up, set design and event marketing. Extensive hands-on classroom access to lighting and sound equipment will provide students the opportunity to form the core group of technicians responsible for designing, planning, setting up and running a variety of events on the school's campus.

Please note that enrolling in this class requires periodic out-of-class and after-school attendance—you will be producing events and volunteering your time and skills as part of the event production crew.

Textbook:

- *Theatrical Design and Production: An Introduction to Scene Design and Construction, Lighting, Sound, Costume, and Makeup* (Hardcover) by J. Michael Gillette
- Various other texts as well
- **Scripts** are the property of either Highlands High School or Mr. Burgess. You will check out scripts for use and they must be turned back into the theatre library when you are finished. You will be charged \$10.00 for every unreturned or damaged script.

Standards

In this class, students will:

- Have an understanding of the general principles of the planning, preparation, and organization of the technical aspects of theatrical presentation.
- Be able to analyze a script and create a variety of support documents (*e.g.* lighting plot, sound plot, equipment schedule, scenic drawings) to supplement an event's design.
- Have an understanding of the fundamentals of specialized technology and theory as it applies to the theatre, including color, electricity, acoustics, and design theory.
- Have a technical understanding of stage lighting, set design and sound equipment.
- Be able to build set pieces such as a platform and stairs
- Understand the concepts of painting for the stage

Requirements

Students are expected to fulfill the following minimum requirements:

- Performance of all required reading and completion of all assessments, skill tests, projects, and other activities.
- Collection of resource materials in a resource book, organized in a binder or folder in such a way as to be easily accessible for reference.
- Collection of all designs and sketches in a portfolio are required.
- Regular attendance and participation in the classroom experience are integral to the course. It is assumed students will attend class and participate regularly in scheduled after school activities relating to the operations of both the Performing Arts Center and the Black Box.
- Assignments have a 10% grade penalty for each day late regardless of reason.
- In a course called Technical Theatre, it is assumed students will demonstrate interest in the techniques and practices involved in the current productions. This implies active involvement, and certainly attendance to performances.
- **View and evaluate two (2) live theatre events per semester.** Live theatre events do not include videos of any kind, films, or T.V. shows. **Each viewing/evaluation will equal one (1) major grade.** You will turn in a program and/or ticket stub along with a written critique about what the show was about and what technical aspects of the show you thought were great and what you thought did not work for the production. Both evaluations must be turned no later than one week prior to the end of each semester. These critiques must be typed and are graded for grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.
- **Production/crew/appreciation: all tech theatre students are required to complete a crew assignment to a main stage production for 2016-17 Highlands Theatre Season or to work a total of 30 hours outside of the classroom on performances (such as choir concerts, band/strings concerts, talents shows, etc). Also, you are to write a summary of the production you worked in regards to the technical aspects of the show.** Talk about what technical elements were involved, and what worked and what didn't work with the show. (Ex: Did the scene changes happen smoothly?)

Behavior and Classroom Expectations

- Be on time
- Be prepared
- Be respectful of teacher and peers
- Participate and stay on task
- Be safety conscious
- Leave distractions outside this classroom

Consequences for Behavior Problems

(Serious offenses result in immediate referral.)

1. One Verbal Warning
2. Private Detention
3. Parent Conference
4. Referral to Administrator

Grading Rubric

Students will be evaluated on class assignments and activities by and not limited to the following:

Participation, Willingness to try,	
Cooperation.....	40% (Evaluated daily by instructor)
Written Classwork/Homework.....	25% Notes, journal, plans, short answer tests
Projects & Tests.....	35% Exercises and performances presented for the class

Attendance

- Regular participation in class discussions and activities is paramount to success.
- Your learning will occur through doing, observing, and evaluating performances. Any day you miss hurts your learning and that of the class.

Make-up Work

Students are responsible for obtaining and completing all notes, classwork, homework, quizzes, and tests assigned on days of absences. Arrange with Mr. Burgess to make up quizzes or tests. You must complete missed assignments in the allotted time after your absence or you will receive a zero.

If for some reason you do not attend class on the day of a performance, be aware, you will be required to perform when you return to school, or receive a zero.

Materials:

- Three ring binder with pockets
- Pencil
- Architect's scale
- Exacto knife
- Closed-toed shoes
- Safety Glasses

Course Outline (in no particular order):

- Technical Production Staff
- Theatrical Design
- Parts of the Stage, Stage Direction,
- Stage Management
- Types of Theaters, Types of Sets
- Publicity
- Tools and Safety
- Properties: Design/Construction
- Scenery Construction
- Stage Make-up
- Theatrical Drafting
- Costumes: Wigs/Accessories
- Live Production: Attendance, etiquette & evaluation
- Lighting
- Scene Painting
- Sound

Classroom Rules

- ✓ *Cell phone policy:*

Consider my classroom a performance. Any theatrical performance asks the audience to please turn off all cell phones, pagers, blackberries or anything else that makes noise. I am asking the same thing of you. If I hear (remember vibrate still makes a noise), see, or even sense that you are using your phone to communicate via text message, voice communication, or email without my consent, then this is the sequence of action:

 - 1st offense* – I take your phone for the rest of the day, you can pick it up after school.
 - 2nd offense* – I take your phone for the rest of the day, you will be given an extra assignment that must be completed by the next day.
 - 3rd offense* – All of the above and I give your phone to Mr. Schneider and you must meet with him and accept the proper discipline to get your phone back.

- ✓ No bathroom breaks, errands, or anything outside of the classroom for the last 10 minutes of the class.

- ✓ Macbooks - Use of laptops during class for note-taking or web research related to the course can be helpful to learning. But if you are the kind of person who cannot resist the temptation to take a peek at email or other websites, you should just keep your laptop off and stowed away. If it looks to me like you are distracted, I will ask you to turn the screen around so that I and the rest of the class can see what you were looking at.

- ✓ Emails/Schoolology Messages
 - ✓ No replies after 10pm
 - ✓ No email assignments

- ✓ Office Hours - I am constantly here because of rehearsals and other events. I am extremely flexible and can meet before or after school. Just check with me on my availability.

- ✓ You must be in your seats (or if we are in the PAC, on stage) when the bell rings at the beginning of class. Use the bathroom during your class change. DO NOT bring your things into class, drop them off, and then go to the bathroom during the class change, which then results in you being late to my class. You are not in my class just because your stuff is. You are late. If you are late once, it is a warning. After that, you are with me after school for 15 minutes. It doesn't matter what you have going on after school. Respect my classroom and I will respect your activities and lives outside of it.

- ✓ Dress code – please be in dress code but also be in comfortable clothes to work in. We will be building, painting, and basically getting dirty. Please do not wear any clothes in which you would be devastated if they are ruined.

Parent Acknowledgement

Parents, please read this syllabus and the safety awareness contract on the next page with your child, then complete the next page and have the student return it to Mr. Burgess promptly.

Tech Theatre Course Syllabus and Safety Awareness Acknowledgement Form
(Syllabus and other information is available at www.highlandstheatre.com and at www.schoology.com)

Technical Theater Class Safety Awareness

Student

Date

Each student must assume responsibility for safety practices. We ask that he/she subscribe to the following safety pledge:

1. I will not work in the shop unless Mr. Burgess is present.
2. If I do not understand how to do something, I will ask someone who does.
3. I will never use a power tool when I am by myself.
4. I will not use equipment that I have not been properly trained to operate.
5. I will not operate equipment if safety features are disabled or removed.
6. I will report damaged or malfunctioning equipment to a shop supervisor immediately.
7. I will clean the Scene Shop and put away my tools at the end of each work day.
8. I will pay attention to what I am doing and not rush.
9. I will work with a partner when using ladders or scaffolding.
10. I will report all injuries and/or accidents to Mr. Burgess immediately.
11. I will not participate in any kind of horseplay while in the Scene Shop area.
12. Scene Shop Dress Code:
 - a) I will wear approved eye protection at all times.
 - b) I will wear hearing protection at the appropriate times.
 - c) I will wear substantial footwear (a shoe or boot which has an upper section made of leather or man-made leather covering the entire foot and sole of at least 1/4" thickness) at all times in the Scene Shop.
 - d) I will not wear ties, jewelry, or loose fitting clothes which could become entangled in power equipment.
 - e) I will keep my hair cut or worn in such a way that it will not be entangled in power equipment.
 - f) I will bring work clothes with me that can get dirty and stained.

I have carefully read these recommendations and I recognize that this is not an exhaustive list of safety practices. I agree to use good judgment and common sense to ensure my safety and the safety of others working with me in the Highlands High School theater and shop environments.

Student Signature

Date

I hereby give my consent to allow my son/daughter to operate all machines and equipment necessary to fulfill the requirements of this course.

Guardian Signature

Date

Students will be given proper instruction and correct safety procedures before being allowed to use any equipment. Parents are cordially invited to visit the Scene Shop and Theater to inspect equipment and to see the classroom in operation at the instructor's discretion.