

Scene Design I TPA 5067

SPRING 2026

CREDIT HOURS: 3

University of Florida – College of Fine Arts, School of Theatre & Dance

Instructor: Mihai Ciupe

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Course Meets: Tuesdays, Thursdays, 2ND and 3TH period, room 218

Office Hours: Wednesday, 6TH - 7TH period or by appointment.

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Course Description: Study and practice of the scenic design process.

Developing scenic design techniques for theatre and dance.

Emphasizes script analysis for the scenic designer.

Prereq: TPA 4066; admission to MFA or consent of instructor.

OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of this class is to develop a thorough understanding of the design process and its functions within the theatre production as well as within any other form of life performance event.

We will focus on developing conceptual thinking, creativity, ability to recognize and solve practical problems in designing for a particular space, and the collaborative design process.

The class also prepares students to present and discuss their work, as they will do in a professional situation.

The class also begins to develop materials that the designer will use to establish and promote career opportunities.

Class time will be used also to identify strengths as well as areas for improvement in order to broaden and refine individual abilities.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES:

This course addresses the following program outcomes:

1. Giving the students background and developing skills necessary to design project work in the departmental curriculum.
2. Providing students with training and information required to complete design work in the practical production program.
3. Teaching students how to develop and apply research and creative skills during the design process as an essential component of assignments and production work.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand and use appropriate research for their design projects. 2.
- Organize and translate conceptual work into practical design applications.
3. Communicate ideas through sketches, renderings, 3D models and technical drawings.
4. Present their preliminary and finished work in a clear, professional manner.
5. Manage their time efficiently.

REQUIRED SOFTWARE AND MATERIALS:

-AutoCAD, SketchUp, Photoshop, Lumion, Concepts
-water color set, 14/17 water color paper, large mixing palette, paintbrushes: #0, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10 and a 1-1/2" to 2" regular paintbrush.

Add'l Course Fees: \$50.00

The final grade for the semester will be weighted as follows:

Project # 1	30 % (300 pt,)
Project # 2	30% (300 pt,)
Project # 3	30 % (300 pt,)
Class Participation	10 % (100 pt,)

Late work will be reduced by one letter grade per day.

NOTE: Any project for which **no work is submitted** will be deducted from the final grade at a rate of four times the assigned percentage value above, e.g., a project weighted as 10% of the grade will result in a deduction of 40% of the final grade, 15% at 60%, 20% at 80%.

It is not possible to pass this class without submitting work for each assignment.

ATTENDANCE AT PERFORMANCES:

Since production is the laboratory for all theatre courses, attendance at all main stage Department of Theatre and Dance productions is required of students

enrolled in classes with the following prefix designations: THE, TPA, TPP, ORI. Critiques of and/or responses to these productions may be required.

Attendance at all related events is encouraged. You should also attempt to see the following productions at the Phillips Center: *Camelot*, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, and Keigwin & Company.

DUE DATES:

Projects are due at the start of class and will be critique during the session. Failure to have a project ready on time reduces the effectiveness of the class meeting and it will affect its grading. If you foresee a need for extra time on a project, bring it to my attention and a possible extension will be considered. Students who do not gain approval for time extensions will have their projects graded as late and are subject to reduction of one letter grade for each session that is late. If a project is more than two sessions late without approval it will be regarded as a failure.

-Information about university-wide policies and resources can be found here:
<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Recommended Readings:

The Craft and Art of Scenic Design: Strategies, Concepts, and Resources
1st edition by Robert Klinggelhoefer ISBN-13: 978-1138937642.

Show Case: Developing, Maintaining, and Presenting a Design Tech Portfolio for Theatre and Allied Fields by Rafael Jaen, second edition, ISBN-13: 978-0240819266.

Week 1

Jan. 13

- discussing the syllabi.
- students will bring their own work portfolio and present their work in class. -
- assigning **Project #1:** Designing the space for **A DELICATE BALANCE**.
- Discussion about Project #3: professional webpage. Timeline and expectations.

Jan.15

- analyzing the script in class; concept ideas.
- visual composition and theatre design: line shape, color, volume, and texture.
- analyzing realized set design work from the perspective of visual composition.

Week II

Jan. 20 – 22

Mihai in Graduate Recruiting trip, URTA, Chicago

Week III

Jan.27

- class presentation and critique of: concept, rough sketches, visual research and rough ground plans.
- discussion about how to present your work in progress in a professional manner.
- What are the goals?
 - communication and collaboration within the design team.
 - communication and collaboration with the director.
 - communication and collaboration with the technical director (Rob Leech will be invited to class for collaboration and feedback).

Jan. 29

- Introduction to on campus available resources: Field trip to the FabLab. How to use the laser cutting machine.

Week IV

Feb. 3

- written concept due.**
- building a professional virtual portfolio: options and introduction for building a webpage.
- working on possible ground plans.

Feb. 5

- ground plan due.**
- how to use **SketchUp** together with **Enscape** to produce a more accurate color rendering.
- working in class on the final color rendering.
- discussion on color variations and how to use the computer to quickly achieve that.

Week V

Feb. 10

- model of the space (without the set) due.
- working in class on the final color rendering.
- discussion about the role of the color rendering as part of the final design package; analyzing color renderings produced in different types of media by professional set designers.

Feb. 12

- working in class on the model.

Week VI

Feb. 17

- Drafting package due.
- Studio work on **Project #1**.
- real and virtual 3D model: discussion.

Feb. 19

- Final color rendering due.
- working in class on the model.

Week VII

Feb. 24

- Project #1** due: class presentation and critique. (Technical Director invited).
- assigning **Project #2**: Designing the space for *HAMLET*.

Feb. 26

- analyzing the script from a set designer point of view.
- class discussions about the play; concept ideas.
- Discussion about the Set Designer Professional Portfolio. Examples and approaches.

Week VIII

Mar. 3

- Studio work on Project #2.
- Presentation of your progress on your professional webpage.

Mar. 5

- **written concept** due.

- class presentation and critique of rough sketches, visual research and rough ground plans.
- professional Resume: examples and discussions.

Week IX

Mar. 10

- work in progress: class presentation and critique.
- functions of the set: discussion in class.
- working on possible ground plans.

Mar. 12

- ground plan due.**
- storyboarding: a great tool of communication. Options on how to do it and why.

Week X

Mar. 17- 19

SPRING BREAK

Week XI

Mar. 24

- model of the space (without the set) due.**
- brief presentation of your progress on your professional webpage.
- working in class on the final color rendering.
- working in class on the story boards.

Mar. 26

- working in class on the final color rendering.
- working in class on the story boards.

Week XII

Mar. 31

- Drafting package due.**
- Studio work on Project #2.

Apr. 2

- working in class on the final color rendering and story boards.
- paint elevations: how to produce a professional paint elevation for the shop.

Week XIII

Apr. 7

- Final color rendering and storyboarding due.
- brief presentation of your progress on your professional webpage.

Apr. 9

- Studio work on Project #2.

Week XIV

Apr. 14

- painted elevations due.**
- Studio work on Project #2.

Apr. 16

- Studio work on Project #2.

Week XIV

Apr. 21

- Project #2 due: class presentation and critique. (Technical Director invited).**

Apr. 23

- Webpage due . Final presentation: Review and discussion of the entire class work produced over the semester.**

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Fall 2026

Project #1: designing the space for *A DELICATE BALANCE*

Venue: Black Box Theatre, School of Theatre and Dance

Points: 300

DUE DATE: Feb. 24

-visual research and written concept	due date: Feb. 3
-ground plan	due date: Feb. 5
-model of the theatre	due date: Feb. 10
-drafting package	due date: Feb. 17
-color rendering	due date: Feb. 19
-color virtual model	due date: Feb. 24

Project #2: designing the space for *HAMLET*

Venue : Constans Theatre, School of Theatre and Dance POINTS: 300

DUE DATE: Apr. 21

-written concept	due date: Mar. 5
-ground plan	due date: Mar. 12
-model of the venue space	due date: Mar. 24
-drafting package	due date: Mar. 31
-color rendering and story boarding	due date: Apr. 7
-painted elevations	due date: Apr. 14
-1/4"color model	due date: Apr. 21

Project # 3: Professional Webpage

Students will work independently and mostly outside of class for this project.

Progress will be presented periodically in class.

POINTS:300

DUE DATE: Apr. 23

PREPARING AND PRESENTING YOUR WORK:

Assignments should be prepared for presentation **prior to the beginning of class**. During presentations, you should be paying attention to your colleagues rather than setting up or completing your own work.

All work should be presented in a neat, organized manner, clearly and legibly labeled, including your name.