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### THTR 591.04: ST - Graduate Properties Management

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# Properties Management

## School of Theatre & Dance

Course #: THTR 591.04 -ST  
Term: Fall 2017  
Credits: 2  
Time: F 1:00-1:50 (and other times as arranged-such as weekly lab & lesson times, production meetings and properties showings for the production team.)  
Final Time: Thursday Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, 1:10-3:10 pm  
Room: PARTV 140 (Scene Shop)  
Instructor: Professor: Sarah Fulford  
Office: PARTV 040  
Office Hours: M - W 9:30am - 11:00am  
Email: sarah.fulford@umontana.edu

Additional  
Instructors: Brian Gregoire, Jason McDaniel & Mike Monsos  
Text: None

Materials Needed: Tape measure, safety glasses, other tools as production needs require.

### Course Description:

The design of this course provides students with the necessary skills and training to serve as a properties manager for a theatrical production. Students will develop prop lists for one or more shows in the semester and then provide props for the production. In the class, students will outline their process, receive training and guidance for the acquisition and/or construction of each prop, and will work with the faculty and other students to discover the most effective and efficient ways to provide properties.

Additionally, throughout the semester specific props related skill building projects will be demonstrated and assigned by the instructor.

### Course Outcomes:

- Students will learn how to develop properties lists.
- They will learn how to work with all the members of the production team including the designers, directors and cast, and the appropriate means of communicating, collaborating and providing properties that are effective, useful, historically correct and appropriate to the show's concept and direction.

- Students will learn the acquisition process for properties. This includes, purchasing, constructing, finding, borrowing, and pulling from stock.
- In addition, students will learn the best method and the correct process for adapting and building properties.

#### Grading:

Students are graded on a number of aspects including:

- Effectiveness and quality of properties supplied
- Communication skills with production team
- Adhering to schedules and timelines
- Adherence to established budgets and school policies
- Completion of properties assignment including strike
- Increased skills in properties construction
- Safe and appropriate use of tools, equipment
- Ability to work collaboratively as well as independently

#### Attendance policy:

Attendance is extremely important; students will attend all classes. ***Only one unexcused absence is allowed***, each absence after that will result in the lowering of the grade by a half letter. An unexcused absence is defined by failing to notify the instructor PRIOR to missing a class. Properties are due on or before date according to the production schedule. ***Late properties are not tolerated in the professional world, and are not tolerated in this educational environment for the same reasons. Productions have a firm timeline and all must adhere.***

#### General responsibilities of the properties manager:

- *Read job description in the Theatre & Dance Handbook*
- Attend design meetings
- Attend all production meetings
- Create properties list based on needs of script, director and scenic designer
- Supply all rehearsal props and make appropriate arraignments with the stage managers to make those props available for rehearsal.
- Gather all props by either: pulling from stock, purchasing, borrowing, or constructing
- Organize properties for each scheduled prop showings
- Prepare for and organize properties backstage and onstage
- Organize and maintain properties storage carts
- Train properties run crew
- Restock consumables, breakables and any other props that need replacement during the show's run

- After each work day, make sure all tools and equipment are properly stored
- Maintain clean and organized prop storage areas throughout the build and run
- Return all borrowed props *immediately* after the show closes
- With props crew, strike all props *immediately* after show closes

## SCHEDULE

The class schedule will consider the process as established by the School of Theatre & Dance which is:

- **Before First Production/Design Meeting** - Acquire script from department and read
- **First or Second Production/Design Meeting** -Make a list of all props mentioned in script, noting how, why and where used.
- **Before First Read Through** -Meet with the director to refine props list and generate rehearsal props list.
- **Before Final Design Meeting** - Meet with the scenic designer to refine list and to discuss set dressing, furniture and design concept
- **On Going as Needed** - Provide rehearsal props and furniture as needed
- **Begin as soon as designs are approved by director and technical supervisors** - Acquire props by purchase, construction, borrowing or pulling from stock (Note: pulled properties CAN NOT be altered in any way without prior approval from the Faculty and/or Production Manager)
- **As Props are Generated** - Organize props for prop showings as scheduled
- **By First Dress** - Organize props on prop carts and tables
- **Tech Week** - Attend technical rehearsals and train run crew
- **Run of show** - Maintain props (if necessary) during run
- **Closing Night** -Strike all props, returning borrowed properties immediately
- **Closing Night/Week After Closing** - Clean and organize prop storage

Each class will consist of the students and faculty working together to make the plans for properties acquisition for the week and for meeting the deadlines of the production. In addition, class time will be used for students and faculty to develop construction skills and methods for the creation of properties. Skill training may include: carpentry, painting, welding, electrical, 3-D printing, foam, molding, casting, etc.

Students will have guidance and instruction, but independent work outside of the classroom is crucial for success in this course.

Additional projects and techniques relevant to props development will be demonstrated and assigned over the course of the semester. Topic that will be endeavored to be covered this semester include:

**Brian's Topics:**

- Construction methods & materials
- Glues & adhesives
- Paint & Finishes
- Safety & PPE's
- Metal work and welding
- Performance proofing/design & logistics

**Jason's Topics:**

- Purchasing
- Schedule & Time lines
- Excel
- Props lists & run sheets

**Sarah's Topics:**

- Basic industrial sewing machine use.
- Basic upholstery techniques.
- Fabric distressing.
- Basic vat dying.
- Fabric painting & stenciling
- Other soft goods development as needed

**Graduate Assignments:**

Graduate students will be asked to take on one or more large scale builds that will serve the production. Students will be asked to have ownership of these projects.

Undergraduate students will be assigned to work under the Grads as need. Graduate students will plan projects, organized the work and supervise their undergraduate peers. Ideally, these projects will also be an opportunity for graduate students to work on projects that present unique opportunity for discipline cross over and problem solving.

**Class Expectations:**

Students work is required to be complete and turned in on the dates specified by the instructor as dictated by the needs of the production schedule. Additional projects and their due dates will be announced in class as well as posted on Moodle. All work must be turned on no later then 5pm of the day it is due. No late work will be accepted.

This is a lab based class where a lot of information is going to be covered very quickly. Consequently, your presence and participation in class is mandatory for your success. All students are expected to be in class on time. A great deal of helpful information beyond what is stated in the syllabus will be communicated by the instructor /instructors throughout the course. If you are not present to hear that information, you are missing

out on an opportunity to learn something that could be beneficial to your long term career.

Please if you are absent due to illness, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. If you are absent due to illness, it is your responsibility to ask your classmates what was covered that day. Students are expected to be responsible for their own education. Any effort made to make up for missed work must be made by the student in their own time.

There will be no extra credit for this class.

**Instructor Expectations of Conduct:**

Under no circumstances will language or conduct that is racially offensive, homophobic or body shaming be permitted in this class. If any of this behavior is observed, you will immediately be asked to leave by the instructor.

Please respect the time and expertise of your instructor(s). Please conduct yourself in a respectful and professional manner. If you fail to do so you will be asked to leave by the instructor

Please respect the work of your fellow students. If you are in anyway actively disturbing other students and getting in the way of their education you will be asked to leave by the instructor.

**Conversation & Productively**

As a lab class there will be opportunities to talk while working on projects. Students are expected to be proactive about their work and self-monitoring of their time. Please be aware of the volume and content of your conversations and if you are distracting your self and/or your peers. The instructor reserves the right to ask student to either work quietly or change the topic of conversation in order to facilitate a productive working environment.

**Hygiene/Personal Care/Dress Code**

The scene shop at UM is a professional work place and consequently the expectations of conduct follow those of the industry. Please avoid wearing perfume or other strong scents. Please come to the shop appropriately dressed and bathed, just as you would to a job. This includes wearing clean clothes and shoes, wearing deodorant, brushing your teeth and regularly bathing.

If the instructor observes a persistent issue, the individual will be contacted privately.

If you have a cough or running nose please wash your hand regularly. Many of the tools used in the shop are for common use on a daily basis and a cold spreads quickly in this space. If the instructor observes a problem that puts other peoples health at risk you may be asked to either leave or take appropriate cautionary measures.

Please wear clothing that you can work in comfortably and appropriately. You may be asked to work on the floor, climb on the table, climb ladders etc. and clothing worn to class should accommodate accordingly. If you fail to dress accordingly you might be asked to go home and change. Please wear close toed shoes.

### **Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code**

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student\\_conduct.php](http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance *Student Handbook*. The *Handbook* is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/umarts/theatredance/About/handbook.php>.

There is inherent risk involved in many Theatre & Dance classes as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class, shop time, or rehearsal with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in class/shop/rehearsal/performance do so at their own risk.

Due to safety considerations, at **no** point during a student's time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student **without my consent**. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area will negatively affect a student's grade.

### **Students with Special Needs**

*Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://life.umt.edu/dss/>.*