

THA 290: STAGE MANAGEMENT

Stage Management Observation Paper

Show Choice due: Friday September 13 – Paper due: Monday December 9

THE ASSIGNMENT:

Attend a rehearsal, a tech rehearsal, and a performance of one of the three UWL Department of Theatre Arts productions this semester: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Church and State*, or *Middletown*.

You must attend all three events for the SAME show. If possible, choose a show on which you are not working. If this is not possible, choose a show where you are not a member of the stage management team.

Please note that in order to make a thorough observation, you should plan to arrive at least fifteen minutes BEFORE rehearsal begins so that you can observe setup and startup activities.

Address the questions below. While you will have the opportunity to observe the stage management team on several of these occasions, please refrain from asking direct questions about your observations.

THE QUESTIONS

1. Identify one potential challenge faced by the stage manager of this show and explain why you have chosen it. Describe how you expect this challenge to impact the production and how you would prepare for it if you were the SM.
2. Describe your observations about the setup and running of rehearsal. What is happening tonight? Are all members of the SM team supporting a single activity, or is the schedule set up for multiple things to take place? How does the SM team facilitate the work of the actors and director? How is your challenge being addressed during the rehearsal period?
3. Describe your observations about the introduction of the design elements during tech. What choices do you observe the stage manager making? How are problems solved? Have your opinions about the show's challenge changed? Why or why not? Is there a new challenge?
4. At the performance, consider: is the show what you expected? Has the challenge been resolved? Did it change?
5. How did your plan for addressing the show's challenge(s) compare with reality? As appropriate, discuss either the differences or the events/actions that made your plan a good one.

FORMAT & GRADING:

This analysis should be written as an essay, typed on a computer, and printed out to be submitted in class. Multiple pages should be stapled. Responses to the questions should be written in complete sentences (not bulleted lists of ideas) and should be proofread for spelling and grammatical errors. Please double-space your paper, use reasonable font size (11 or 12 point) and maintain one-inch margins.

Your work will be evaluated based on the thoroughness of your responses, the use of specific examples, and the spelling and grammatical content of the paper itself. There is no right answer to questions about which challenge to choose or how you would address those same issues.

See back for more!

DATES:

You will need to choose your show by **Friday September 13**, and submit your initial “problem” assessment by the date listed for your show. This is to ensure good planning and understanding of the assignment parameters.

Production Dates

	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>Church and State</i>	<i>Middletown*</i>
First Rehearsal	September 9	September 30	October 21
Tech	October 6-10	October 27-30	December 1-5
Performances	October 11-20	Oct 31-Nov 3	December 6-15
Submit Your Problem By	October 2	October 23	November 27

***BECAUSE THE MIDDLETOWN PERFORMANCES EXTEND BEYOND THE LAST DAY OF THE SEMESTER, YOU MUST SEE THE SHOW DURING THE FIRST WEEKEND OF PERFORMANCES**

Specific daily details of the rehearsal schedule can be found on the cast page for each individual show on the theatre online callboard: <http://websites.uwlax.edu/theatrerecallboard>. Once you have picked the rehearsal you’d like to attend, it is advisable to check with the stage manager of the show to make sure this isn’t a “closed” rehearsal for some reason. You will not need to check in advance to attend a tech rehearsal. You will need a ticket for the performance.

To reach the stage managers:

ROMEO AND JULIET- Megan Gunderson: (email address provided is removed from this sample)

CHURCH AND STATE- Sydney Smith: (email address provided is removed from this sample)

MIDDLETOWN- Hannah Steele: (email address provided is removed from this sample)

SUBMITTING THE PROBLEM:

On the appropriate date for your show, submit written answers to questions one and two of this paper. The answers should follow the same formatting guidelines presented above. Think of it as a first draft of that portion of the final paper. If you have a problem seeing a rehearsal in order to submit your problem by the assigned date, talk to me in advance so we can work something out. You can submit the problem either by handing me a printed copy, or by emailing it to me.

The reason you are submitting this draft is to get feedback! I will share my thoughts on your observations, and may be able to fill in some blanks if a part of the rehearsal was confusing or not as listed on the schedule.

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT THE FINAL PAPER:

Because the class day on which this assignment is due will be devoted to discussing this semester’s shows from the perspective of their stage managers, late papers will not be accepted.

Although you may not begin writing the paper until after you have seen a performance, be sure to take notes along the way so that you can use specific examples to thoroughly explain your observations and support your opinions.

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