Eastern Illinois University

THA33612-001 - Theatre Production Topics II - Stage Props

Tues. & Thurs. / 9:30am – 12:00pm / Doudna Fine Arts Center 1011 – Scene Shop Fall 2013

Instructor: Christopher Gadomski

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Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Wed. 11:00am – 1:00pm

Telephone: 581-3219

Text: The Theater Props Handbook by Thurston James

Prerequisites: THA2211 Stagecraft

Extra Costs: Depending on the project you may need to make outside purchases of extra

materials to create the best possible project. While we will have hot glue guns available for you to use, you may want to purchase your own LOW TEMP hot glue gun and a package of glue sticks to ensure you have it/them for use whenever you have need of them. Additionally you will be required to procure an old piece

of furniture for one of the final projects.

Class Description: An introduction to the world of props that will give all the basics for becoming a competent and excellent prop master and artisan.

Course Goals: By the end of the course you will have gained the following:

- 1- The ability to analyze a script and find what props are needed for a play.
- 2- The ability to locate props for a production through buying, renting, and borrowing.
- 3- The ability to use creative problem solving skills to modify and/or fabricate props both from existing items or from scratch.

Grade Breakdown:

Prop Crew	300 points
Project #1 – Script Analysis/Prop List	100 points
Project #2 – Shopping Project	100 points
Project #3 – Repurposing Project	100 points
Project #4 – Paper Project	150 points
Project #5 – Food	150 points
Project #6 – Weaponry	150 points
Project #7 – Genre	150 points
Project #8 – Body Molding	150 points
Project #9 – Movie Prop	150 points
Project #10 – Furniture Restoration	250 points
Project #11 – SKULL SKILL	250 points
TOTAL POINTS	2000 points

Classroom Etiquette:

- A. Please be respectful of everyone (both myself and your neighbors). Being respectful means:
 - a. You need to be quiet so everyone can hear.
 - b. You need to wait for someone to finish talking before you take your turn to speak.
 - c. You don't laugh at or mock someone because you believe their opinion to be dumb.
- B. Be open minded to new and/or different ideas and concepts
- C. Turn off cellphones or leave them someplace else. See me beforehand if you **NEED** to have your phone on for a valid reason.
- D. Absolutely NO texting in class. See point "C" above.
- E. Try. Put forth your best effort in this class regardless of your skill level.

Conduct of the Course:

1. Attendance - Attendance in this class is expected. As there are only 30 class periods this semester you will be permitted two (2) unexcused absences without penalty. Unexcused absences on days when projects are due will result in a zero for that project and cannot be made up unless I have been given prior notification. Absences for Approved University events and serious illnesses are excused. Students more than fifteen (15) minutes late will be considered absent. Students ten (10) minutes late will be considered tardy. Two (2) tardies will count as one (1) unexcused absence.

Students <u>will lose</u> 20 points from final grade average <u>per absence</u> over the allotted number.

- 2. **Project Assignments** Each project is due completed in full by the date specified on the syllabus. Projects are expected to be done to the best of your ability and will be presented to the rest of the class on the due date.
- 3. Prop Crew Assignment You are required to work on one play this semester as a prop artisan. What this means is that you will choose from one of the three fall plays, either *I Don't Have To Show You No Stinking Badges!*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, or the *Student Directed One Acts*. As a prop artisan you will be required to put in 10 hours building, painting, sewing, and/or preparing props for a production. You will <u>NOT</u> be required to act as running crew for the production. This assignment is strictly in prop preparation for the production.

Each artisan crew will consist of no more than 4 artisans.

- **4. Academic Accommodation** If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at 581-6583.
- **5.** Cell Phones As noted earlier, please turn off all phone and electronic devices during this class as a courtesy to your fellow students and myself. This of course includes texting. Students caught texting will lose credit for that class period. Also, headphones and MP3 players are not allowed unless circumstances and myself allow it.
- **6. Reading** Reading is due the day it appears on the syllabus.
- 7. **Desire2Learn** All assignments and grades can be viewed online at Desire2Learn.

This web address should take you there: https://www.eiu.edu/eiuonline/

If you still have trouble you can call the EIU Help Desk at 581-HELP (581-4357)

Assignments:

Project #1 - Script Analysis/Prop List

- Choose and read a play from *THE BEDFORD INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE*. Analyze the script for all possible needed props.
- Create a comprehensive props list that contains:
 - o Name of prop
 - o Character using the prop
 - Description of prop
 - Quantity of that prop needed
 - o Page number where prop first appears in play
 - o Act number where prop is used
 - o Scene Number where prop is used

Project #2 - Shopping Project

- Using your props list from Project #1 go prop shopping.
- For the only time in your theatrical career you'll have an unlimited budget.
- Go to Walmart, Antique Stores, Flea Markets, Second Hand Stores, etc... and "shop" your show. Only two props can be found online, all others must be shopped in the real world.
- Take photos of props and get prices.
- Put together a presentation showing the prop, the price, and where you can find it.

Project #3 - Repurposing

- Find an existing object and modify it in some way (i.e. alterations, redecorated)

Project #4 - Paper

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Money
- Books
- Scrolls
- Maps
- Historic Documents
- Checks
- Other

Project #5 - Food

- Non-Edible prop food stuffs only

Project #6 - Weaponry

- Firearms (modern and antiques)
- Missile Weapons (bows & arrows, crossbows & bolts, etc...)
- Blades (knives, axes, swords)
- Pole Arms (lances, pole axes, spears, etc...)
- Chain Weapons (flails, kusari gama, manriki gusari, etc...)
- Other

Project #7 - Genre Project

- Pick a genre and create a prop in that style
 - o Steampunk
 - Dieselpunk
 - Cyberpunk
 - o Post-Apocalyptic
 - Fantasy
 - o Sci-Fi
 - o Ray Gun Gothic
 - o Rockabilly
 - Other genres/sub-genres must be approved by instructor

Project #8 - Body Molding

- Faces and/or hands and wrists.
- Class will also work on casting the head for the Spring semester production of *MacBeth*

Project #9 - Movie Prop

- Any type of prop found in a film
- Must have research photos

Project #10 – <u>Furniture Restoration</u>

- Acquire an old, beat up piece of furniture and refinish and/or upholster it.
- Old furniture can usually be fairly easily found around a college town OR you might be able to refurnish an old piece that the Theatre Department has in storage.

Project #11 - SKULL SKILL Project

- SKULL SKILL assignment will be handed out on the first day of class and you will have the **ENTIRE** semester to work on it. Project #11 will be due on the day of the Final.