

GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR A ST. MARY'S PROJECT

The TFMS faculty impresses upon students that the following are ONLY guidelines for a St. Mary's Project. We encourage students to propose projects that show maturity of vision by combining disciplines within theatre and beyond in order to conceive of performance and theatre studies in fresh, innovative ways.

A St. Mary's Project (SMP) is a two-semester, eight-credit independent, original course of study in theatre arts or in film and media. The project may be scholarly (e.g. a written thesis or research paper) or artistic (e.g. directing, acting, design, dance performance or choreography, playwriting, screenwriting, film/video making) in nature, but all projects must address some reciprocity between theory and praxis and should encompass an appropriate range of liberal arts disciplines. Projects must receive the prior approval of a faculty member in TFMS. All projects will lead to some form of public presentation. Students undertaking an SMP must submit a formal proposal that will fulfill the College and department guidelines for an SMP to their mentor no later than the eighth week of the semester preceding the academic year during which the work will begin. In other words, this deadline will occur during your junior year.

Please take special note: SMP proposals in directing for the main stage. For those proposing an SMP in directing for the main stage, final proposals are due for circulation to the entire department faculty on the first day of the first week of classes of the spring semester preceding the academic year during which the work will begin. Additionally, a student proposing an SMP in directing for the main stage must have secured a faculty mentor, or have been assigned one by the department chair, during the fall semester preceding submission of the final proposal. In other words, these deadlines will occur during your junior year.

PROCEDURES FOR A ST. MARY'S PROJECT

A. Students undertaking a St. Mary's Project must submit a formal proposal that will fulfill the College and department guidelines for an SMP to their mentor no later than the eighth week of the semester preceding the academic year during which the work will begin. In other words, this deadline will occur during your junior year. For those proposing an SMP in directing for the main stage, final proposals are due for circulation to the entire department faculty on the first day of the first week of classes of the spring semester preceding the academic year during which the work will begin. Additionally, a student proposing an SMP in directing for the main stage must have secured a faculty mentor, or have been assigned one by the department chair, during the fall semester preceding submission of the final proposal. In other words, these deadlines will occur during your junior year.

B. The department mentor is the faculty member of record for that SMP. This faculty member is ultimately responsible for evaluating the SMP.

C. Artistic St. Mary's Projects will be evaluated equally on the artistic accomplishments and on the ancillary written material: that is, on the production and on its scholarly component.

D. Costume, Lighting, Technical, and Scenic Design Project applicants may make suggestions in their detailed written proposal regarding the type of production they wish to design, and the department will try to accommodate such requests.

E. All scholarly St. Mary's projects or written components of creative SMPs must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style.

F. Archival Requirements: Refer to College guidelines.

ARTISTIC AND SCHOLARLY ST. MARY'S PROJECTS

A. The St. Mary's Project is intended to be an experience that challenges and demonstrates the senior's knowledge and/or skills in the following:

1. Substantial background in dramatic arts and liberal arts
2. Integration of this background in dramatic arts and liberal arts with that specialized information required to accomplish the project
3. Performance or presentation of the project
4. Evaluation and discussion of the process and outcome of the final project
5. Integration and communication of all of the above in written form
6. Intellectual, social, and personal responsibility for choices

B. St. Mary's Projects may be undertaken in the following project areas:

1. Historical and Theoretical Theses
2. Acting
3. Directing
4. Dance/Movement
5. Scenic Design
6. Costume Design
7. Lighting Design
8. Playwriting
9. Other

C. All TFMS SMPs must have a TFMS mentor.

REQUIREMENTS

1. *Historical and Theoretical Theses*

- a. Must entail a scholarly investigation of issues associated with dramaturgy, theatre history, dramatic theory or criticism, and/or performance studies.
- b. Must challenge and demonstrate the senior student's ability to prepare and realize a substantial work of scholarship. The student must be capable of:
 - 1) Focused research
 - 2) Cogent development of a thesis that argues a viable and original perspective on an issue associated with the discipline
 - 3) Analysis, discussion, and defense of conclusions reached in the process of this specialized research
- c. At the discretion of the student and faculty, the paper may be given a public reading. If appropriate, this reading may be accompanied by performance or media support.

2. *Acting Projects*

- a. Must demonstrate the student's ability to prepare and realize a performance from idea to strike, even though the majority of the student's effort will be spent on the theory and praxis of acting.
- b. Must be a cohesive theatrical work of 45-60 minutes.
- c. Must be envisioned as a performance showcase **or** as a principal role in a fully mounted main stage production.

3. *Directing Projects*

- a. Must demonstrate the student's ability to prepare and realize a production from idea to strike, even though the student's main focus will be spent on the theory and praxis of directing.

- b. Must be a cohesive theatrical work of 45-60 minutes.
- c. Must be envisioned as a performance showcase (e.g. a White Room production) **or** as a fully mounted main stage production.

Note: Students undertaking an SMP in directing *must stage-manage for the main stage before* they begin their projects.

4. Dance/Movement Projects

- a. Must demonstrate student's ability as a choreographer, performer, or both, to prepare and realize a program of original dance/movement work or works.
- b. Must be a cohesive dance/movement program of 30-40 minutes in length.
- c. Must be envisioned as a choreographic and performance showcase rather than an elaborated production.

5. Scenic or Costume Design Projects

- a. Must demonstrate the student's ability to manage the entire design and/or construction challenges for a major production.
- b. Must include research, conceptualization, preliminary drawings and draftings, colored renderings or a three-dimensional model. Designers are responsible for shopping, meeting with the production staff, and keeping the integrity of the design intact throughout its construction phase.
- c. Must demonstrate the student's ability to work within a strict budget.

Note: Students undertaking an SMP in scenic or costume design *must stage-manage for the main stage before* they begin their projects.

6. Lighting Design Projects

- a. Must demonstrate the student's ability to manage the entire design and lighting challenges for a major production.
- b. Must include research, written concept, all related paperwork, and a drafted and noted light plot. Designers are responsible for creating the appropriate lighting environment for the production.
- c. Must demonstrate the student's ability to work within a strict budget.
- d. Must include attendance at hang, focus, strike, and all technical and dress rehearsals.

Note: Students undertaking an SMP in lighting design *must stage-manage for the main stage before* they begin their projects.

7. Playwriting Projects

- a. Must demonstrate the student's ability to research and script a theatrical or performance work.
- b. Must demonstrate the student's understanding of the anticipated audience/performer relationship for the work.
- c. Must have a minimum of 30 minutes of playing time.

8. Screenwriting Projects

- a. Must demonstrate the student's ability to research, script, and storyboard a film, whether a documentary or fictional film.
- b. Must demonstrate the student's understanding of the anticipated audience for the film.

9. Film/Video Making Projects

- a. Must demonstrate the student's knowledge of film history and film practice and terminology.
- b. Should have a maximum of 30 minutes of running time.

Note: Students undertaking an SMP in film/video making must have previous short filmmaking experience.

OUTLINE OF MATERIALS TO BE INCLUDED IN AN ARTISTIC WRITTEN COMPONENT

Digital submissions of the following materials are preferred.

1. *Acting and Directing Projects:*

- a. A production history of the play, if appropriate
- b. A summary of criticism about the play, if appropriate
- c. A discussion of the student's view of the play compared to important historical views and/or criticism of the play
- d. A discussion of the features of the play that were to be developed and illuminated by the production approach
- e. A complete rehearsal and production schedule
- f. The prompt book with all notes, diagrams, blocking noted
- g. Production photos or slides
- h. A final essay that includes a detailed self-evaluation of the entire process. What worked? What did not work? What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? What did the audience tell you about your work? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to connect and integrate various elements of the production within the context of theatre history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

2. *Dance and/or Choreography:*

- a. A discussion of the themes and creative problems that were to be explored as well as the overall goals of the project
- b. A complete rehearsal and production schedule
- c. A rehearsal journal with all notes, diagrams, choreographic ideas/patterns, and progress noted
- d. Production photos and slides and/or video
- e. A final essay that includes a detailed self-evaluation of the entire process. What worked? What did not work? What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? What did the audience tell you about your work? How did you grow as a performer? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to connect and integrate various elements of the production within the context of theatre history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

3. *Scenic Design Projects:*

- a. A discussion of the features of the play that were to be developed and illuminated by the production approach
- b. A complete rehearsal and production schedule
- c. The following exhibits:
 - 1) Scale model or full color rendering
 - 2) Ground plan
 - 3) Front and/or rear elevations
 - 4) Platform schedule
 - 5) Appropriate working drawings
 - 6) Production photos or slides
 - 7) Budget breakdown
- d. A summary of the process by which the student combined his/her research and creative ideas with the desires of the director to reach a production style or concept. This may take the form of a diary, but should include more than a simple recounting of events. What is more important is the impact of the events on the process and a clear articulation of the final concept.

- e. Discussion of the construction process
- f. A final essay that includes a detailed evaluation and self-evaluation of the entire process. What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? What did the audience tell you about your work? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to connect and integrate various elements of the production within the context of theatre history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

4. *Costume Design Projects:*

- a. A discussion of the features of the play which were to be developed and illuminated by the production approach
- b. A complete production schedule
- c. The following exhibits:
 - 1) Color renderings for all characters
 - 2) Color swatches
 - 3) Costume plot and action chart
 - 4) Production photos or slides
 - 5) Budget breakdown
- d. A summary of the process by which the student combined his/her research and creative ideas with the desires of the director to reach a production style or concept. This may take the form of a diary, but should include more than a simple recounting of events. What is more important is the impact of the events on the process and a clear articulation of the final concept.
- e. Discussion of the construction process
- f. A final essay that includes a detailed evaluation and self-evaluation of the entire process. What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? What did the audience tell you about your work? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to connect and integrate various elements of the production within the context of theatre history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

5. *Lighting Design Projects:*

- a. A discussion of the features of the play which were to be developed and illuminated by the production approach
- b. A complete schedule for design, hang, focus, and production technical and dress rehearsals
- c. The following exhibits:
 - 1) Hook-up sheets
 - 2) Instrument schedules
 - 3) Magic sheets
 - 4) Production notebook with blocking notation and preliminary and realized cues
 - 5) Drafted and noted light-plot
 - 6) Production photos and slides
 - 7) Budget breakdown
- d. A Lighting Concept: A statement of how the lighting will function within the production and work to support the production style or concept. Examples of, and references to, the works of other designers, styles, and painters should be discussed fully as to their relevance to the style of this particular production.
- e. A final essay that includes a detailed evaluation and self-evaluation of the entire design process. What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? What did the audience tell you about your work? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to connect and integrate various elements of the production within the context of theatre history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

6. *Playwriting Projects:*

- a. Two bound hard-copies of the script
- b. Copies of all major drafts and revisions
- c. Distillation and evaluation of all supporting research
- d. An outline detailing the play's opening event, basic situation, characters, disturbance (inciting incident), dramatic question, conflicts, crises, obstacles, complications, climax, and resolution
- e. A final essay that includes a detailed evaluation and self-evaluation of the entire playwriting process. What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? If presented, what did the audience tell you about your work? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to situate the work within the context of theatre history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

7. *Screenwriting Projects:*

- a. Two bound hard-copies of the screenplay and the storyboard
- b. Copies of all major drafts and revisions of the screenplay and storyboard
- c. Distillation and evaluation of all supporting research
- d. A final essay that includes a detailed evaluation and self-evaluation of the entire screenwriting process. What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? If presented, what did the audience tell you about your work? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to situate the work within the context of film history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

8. *Film/Video Making Projects:*

- a. Two DVD copies of the finished film or video
- b. Two bound hard-copies of the shooting script, including call schedules, credit lists, etc., and the storyboard
- c. Copies of all major drafts and revisions of the screenplay and storyboard
- d. Distillation and evaluation of all supporting research
- e. A final essay that includes a detailed evaluation and self-evaluation of the entire film/video making process. What would you have changed? What did you try to change and could not? Why or why not? If presented, what did the audience tell you about your work? This essay should demonstrate the student's ability to situate the work within the context of film history and practice, as well as other appropriate social and cultural contexts. The question of personal and disciplinary value of the work must also be addressed.

APPLICATION FORM FOR A ST. MARY'S PROJECT

NAME _____
(please type)

DATE _____

Check one:

- _____ Historical and Theoretical Theses
- _____ Acting Project
- _____ Directing Project
- _____ Dance/Movement
- _____ Scenic Design
- _____ Costume Design
- _____ Lighting Design
- _____ Playwriting
- _____ Screenwriting
- _____ Film/Video Making
- _____ Other

Check one:

- _____ Have stage-managed
- _____ Have not stage-managed

1. Short title of project.
2. List the courses and practical experiences you have had that you feel have prepared you to accomplish this project.
3. An introduction of your project. Include a statement concerning the purpose of your project, and substantially address the specific goals, challenges, and problems of the material on which you are working (e.g. the play). What do you want to accomplish, and what is the significance of your task? (Even if you are at a preliminary stage in your thinking about the material on which you intend to work, you must address your particular views--personal, analytical--on the material.)
4. What will you do to achieve your goals? Provide an explanation of research or preparatory procedures to be employed, including process, methodology, and a timetable for completing this work.
5. List your sources and resources, including the location of or a plan to locate these materials.
6. Specifically, what are your strengths and/or weaknesses that will be addressed in this project?
7. If you are doing a group St. Mary's Project, list your collaborators and specify your role as well as the role of others who are involved in your project.
8. Attach a preliminary schedule for the completion of the project, presuming an ideal final presentation date. Please be as specific and as detailed as possible.
9. Itemize your proposed budget, and specify anticipated Shop and facilities support for building, rehearsing, and performing your project.