
Costume Construction TH 163



Instructor: Erin Carignan

Office: UCA 216

Text: 619.892.0605

Email: E.Carignan@colostate.edu

T/TR 8-9:40 AM

Costume Shop UCA 226

I. Course Description

Each participant will learn methods of construction used by theatrical costume shops to create costumes used in entertainment. They will gain practical hands-on experience sewing a range of hand and machine stitches, create garments by drafting, draping and using commercial patterns, and apply a variety of couture techniques used to create costumes and accessories for the entertainment industry.

II. Course Aims and Outcomes:

Aims

We all wear clothes. To that end, consider this class to be a life skills class. What you learn in this course will not only prepare you to work in a costume shop and give you a deeper understanding of costume construction, you will garner techniques and strategies to create your own garments and know how to mend your favorite clothes. Eventually this will save you tons of money and you could quite possibly become the envy of your friends with your unique threads!

Specific Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Be able to identify and perform basic hand and machine stitches and know when it is appropriate to use them by completing a variety of samples and class projects.

2. Be able to operate a sewing machine including the ability to thread a machine, wind a bobbin, start and stop sewing, know the basic parts on a machine, and more through practical use.
3. Be able to envision and complete the construction process of a garment from markings and instructions from a commercial garment pattern.
4. Have the ability to draft and create their own garment pattern.
5. Be able to take measurements of another person and be able to identify if a garment will fit that person.
6. Identify different fabrics and fibers, understanding properties as they relate to costume design.

CSU Theatre Program Learning Objectives

IMAGINATION & EXPRESSION

Cultivate and articulate a unique artistic vision, focus, and craft
Sharpen written, verbal, visual, embodied and intellectual analysis and expression of creative ideas

CONTEXT & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Understand "texts" within their "contexts," our place in history as contemporary artists, and the potential of art for social transformation

COLLABORATION & PROFESSIONALISM

Develop a holistic understanding of the theatre-making process through hands-on practice, telling compelling, relevant stories through the united labor of our expertise

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Solve abstract and material problems, draw on a variety of resources, strategies, and skills, and embrace creative risk-taking

III. Texts and Supplies

Texts

There are various sources I will use including video, readings, etc. If you would like to build your library with handy sources here are a few I strongly recommend. If there is a reading assignment it will be found on our Canvas class site.

Recommended Texts:

Vogue Sewing

Vogue Sewing. (2000). New York: Harper & Row.

The Costume Technician's Handbook

Ingham, Rosemary, and Liz Covey. *The Costume Technicians Handbook*, by Rosemary Ingham. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann , 2003.

The New Complete Guide to Sewing (A.K.A. the "Reader's Digest Book")

New Complete Guide to Sewing: Step-by-Step Techniques for Making Clothes and Home Accessories. Pleasantville, NY: Readers Digest Association, 2011.

Collect sewing books! It is great to have many sources to pull from when you do not understand how to do a technique.

I will recommend many more sources as the semester progresses.

Class Supplies

You will receive a small kit, please find a container with a handle, art box, or structured bag to house all of it in. Your course fee paid for much of your materials including your sewing kit, but it cannot pay for all therefore, I need you to supply some of your own materials for the last projects. You are welcome to use materials out of stock, with approval of myself or Becky, but most-likely there will not be enough or you will not find it suits your taste.

Required Supplies

- Trim or extra decorations/notions for your class projects
- 3 Yards of woven cotton or flannel fashion fabric, washed for commercial pattern project
- Fabric for your flat pattern project
- Sketchbook and pencils as needed
- Plastic sheet protectors for samples in binder

IV. Projects, Grading, and Attendance

Evaluation of preparation, research, and execution of class projects, coupled with attendance and participation, will be considered in assignment of the course grade. Grades are assigned on a traditional A through F scale using points to calculate percentages. Participation may look like this: show up, come prepared, focus your attention, give it your all, risk, play, experiment, reflect.

Projects

Assignment	Assignment description	Due date	Course Learning Objective
Sewing sampler	Students will create a Sampler demonstrating all hand machine stitches learned in class. Includes fasteners and zippers.	9/15/22	Identify and perform basic hand and machine stitches are; know when it is appropriate to use them.
Project I: Reusable Bag	Students will create a Reusable bag starting with a theatrical pattern.	9/27/22	Be able to operate a sewing machine including: threading a machine, winding a bobbin, stopping and starting, reversing, learn the basic parts on the sewing machine through practical use. Learn to use a basic theatrical pattern that includes seem allowance and to follow instructions to construct a project.
Project II: Commercial garment construction a.k.a. the pajama pant project.	To create a pair of pajama pants. These should be for you as we will ensure they fit on completion. They must be wearable, finished with hems, closures, seams, etc. You will be given a commercial pattern for this project but are required to purchase fabric of your choice.	10/20/22	Envision and complete the construction process of garment from markings and instructions specific to commercial patterns.
Project III: Create your own pattern! The tunic project.	To create and complete a finished garment From measurements. With basic instructions of how to create a tunic, you will design a garment, create the pattern, cut sew and finish your design.	11/15/22	Learn to take measurements and translate those into a garment pattern. Learn how to create a mock up, fit mock up, alter original pattern, to create a well fit garment.
Project IV: Choose Your Own Adventure!	Pattern from scratch, modify a commercial pattern, or up-cycle a pre-made garment/garments into something totally different.	12/15/22	Be able to create, construct, or modify a garment form start to finish.
Sewing machine test.	A practical and knowledge test on sewing machines.	Mid-semester	Be able to operate a sewing machine including: threading, winding a bobbin, start, stop, reverse, pivot a corner. Identify the parts of the machine.
Costume shop hours	Students will complete 4 hours in the costume shop.	October 13th-Oct 28th	Practical application of skills learned in class in a fully functioning shop.

Project	Points	% of Grade
Sampler I (Hand sewing)	30 (6 Samples 5 Points Each)	3%
Sampler II (Machine)	20 (4 Samples 5 Points Each)	2%
Sampler III (Seams)	55 (11 Samples at 5 each)	5%
Sampler IV (Special Techniques)	50 (5 Samples at 10 each)	5%
Sampler V (Fastners)	60 (3 hand sewn fasteners at 10pts each; 1 zipper at 20 pts; grommets and rivets 10)	6%
Note that even though each part of the sampler is pretty low in point value they add up to a collective 21% of your whole grade!		
Machine Quiz	40	4%
Project I	80	7%
Project II	160	15%
Project III	150	14%
Project IV (final)	200	18%
Shop hours	80	7%
Total	1090	

Grading

Grading Scale (pluses and minuses will be used):

A: 95-100, A-:90-94

B +:87-89, B: 83-86, B-:80-82

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: < 60

Attendance Policy

Theatre is a live, collaborative art form. It requires us all to be physically and mentally present, in the room together. Therefore, **you cannot pass this course if you are absent more than 5 times, regardless of your grades on assignments and performance in the class.** Attendance is expected at all scheduled class meetings, rehearsals, tech rehearsals, design meetings, committee meetings (as appropriate), and all-major department meetings. Please make every effort to be present. Map your calendar in the first week of the semester. If you have planned absences or conflicts, it is your responsibility to alert the appropriate instructor/director/stage manager IN ADVANCE in writing. **Please take the time to review our class schedule and tell me if any of these class project deadlines are going to be a conflict for you.** **Otherwise, you are signing off and agreeing to turn things in on time.** Follow CSU policy on University-sanctioned activities and religious or spiritual observances (excused absences): <https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/academic-standards/academic-policies/#attendance-regulations>. Report any unexcused absences to your instructor/director/stage manager as soon as possible, following CSU policy: <https://studentcasemanagement.colostate.edu/class-absences/>. Doctor's notes or funerary documentation must be submitted in writing for an absence to be considered excused. You are responsible for making up any work missed during your absence.

V. Tentative Course Schedule

(May change to accommodate guest presenters & student needs)

Class Schedule Fall 2022

WEEK/ DATE	TOPIC	LEARNING OUTCOME	ASSIGNMENT /ASSESSMENT DUE
Tue 8/23	Class Overview and Syllabus		
Thu 8/25	Handout supplies; Start on samplers and hand-stitching.	Running, Baste, Slip, Whip	
Tue 8/30	Work on hand- stitching and sampler	Catch, Back stitch, Prick Stitch	Running, Baste, Slip, Whip
Thu 9/1	Work on hand- stitching and sampler	Fasteners: Snaps, Buttons, Hooks and Bars, Review Stitches	Catch, Back stitch, Prick Stitch
Mon 9/5	Labor Day Monday		

Tue 9/6	Introduction to the sewing machine and sergers	Straight Stitch, Zig Zag, Circle, Square, Serge	Parts of the Machine worksheet; Fasteners: Snaps, Buttons, Hooks and Bars, Review Stitches
Thu 9/8	Machine sewing practice and sampler work	Top Stitch, Double Top Stitch, Dart, Curve	Straight Stitch, Zig Zag, Circle, Square, Serge
Tue 9/13	Machine sewing practice and sampler work	French Seam, Zippers, Machine Quiz	French Seam, Zippers
Thu 9/15	Finish up sampler, review at end of class	Rivets and grommets!	Sampler Due at End of Class
Tue 9/20	Project I: Reusable Shopping Bag		
Thu 9/22			
Tue 9/27	Finish up and present bag(s) to the group by end of class (9:30)		Project 1 Due
Thu 9/29	Project II Introduction & Commercial Patterns!	Taking measurements, reading a pattern envelope, estimating fabric and notions.	
The Wolves Opens Thursday 9/29			
Tue 10/4	Commercial Pattern Work	Reading and using a commercial pattern; pattern instructions, notches, choosing a line to cut; cut out pattern.	Bring pants fabric to class!
Thu 10/6	Commercial Pattern Work	Pinning, cutting, tracing.	
Tue 10/11	Commercial Pattern Work	Sewing stretch; pockets?	
Thu 10/13	Commercial Pattern Work	Finishing	

Tue 10/18	Commercial Pattern Work- LAST DAY		
Thu 10/20	Present commercial pattern project! Begin theatrical pattern project (Project III); spec sheets.	How to create a spec sheet for a design	Commercial Pattern Project II
Tue 10/25	Present spec sheet in class; Drafting patterns	Draft a pattern from measurements	Designs and spec sheets for drafting project
Thu 10/27	Drafting patterns		
Tue 11/1	Drafting patterns; create mockup	Create mockup, sew and fit, adjusting patterns.	
Thu 11/3	Drafting patterns; adjust pattern	Adjusting patterns form fitting.	
Spring Awakening Opens Friday 11/4			
Tue 11/8	Drafting patterns; cut new pattern out of final fabric		
Thu 11/10	Work on project III- LAST DAY	Finish up project III in class or for homework	
Tue 11/15	Present Project III in class; Introduction to Project IV		Project III
Thu 11/17	TBD		
Fall Break 11/19-11/27			
Tue 11/29	Present Project IV Spec Sheet and Design; work on project		You should have a pattern, garment to upcycle, or start drafting or draping a garment today.
Thu 12/1	Work on project IV. Come to class with questions!		

Tue 12/6	Work on project IV. Come to class with questions!		
Thu 12/8	LAST DAY to Work on project IV in class; you should be in the finishing stages.		
Fri 12/9	Design and Production Portfolio Day		
Thu 12/15	Final 9:40-11:40AM		Project IV Presentations

VI. Class Rules, Attendance, Costume Shop Policies, University Policies

Class Rules (most are life-rules, start practicing now).

1. **You must show up to succeed.** Note Woody Allen's formula- 90 % of the work is just showing up. You cannot pass the course if you are absent more than 5 times, regardless of your grades on assignments and performance attendance.
2. **You will be a success if...** You arrive on time, are prepared, curious, excited, engaged, and ready to collaborate!
3. **Cell phone policy:** there may be a need to research on technology at times, but if you are distracting yourself and others with technology I will consider you absent and ask you to leave. You may listen to music during **lab hours** but must have one ear free at all times and volume must be quiet enough so that it doesn't disrupt your fellow students or instructor.
4. **Communicate!** If you have a sick child, grandmother, or dog and are awaiting to be called away to go to the doctors, pull the plug, or help Fluffy cross over the rainbow bridge, talk to me BEFORE class and I can accommodate you.
5. **Turn in your work on time!** We all have cars that break down, bad hair days, traffic, weather, kids, pets, or even stayed up too late "studying" the night before. Unless there are extreme circumstances (being whisked away by a tornado and landing in Oz might qualify, but I would want to see your ruby slippers and a flying monkey to be sure) I will **decrease your project grade 10% each class period it is late.**

6. **R-E-S-P-E-C-T!** As an adult, you are responsible to maintain a positive behavior that is considerate of others. That means- be respectful. Respect others by recognizing their personal space and needs equal to your own. Do not leave your work area a mess when you leave, keep personal conversations to a minimum and at an acceptable noise level (quiet). Be respectful of me, your instructor. Pay attention to my instruction and lectures, after all, you or your parents are paying for me to tell you this stuff. In turn I will respect you and your right to ideas and opinions. However, if I feel you are disrupting class, I will ask you to leave.

Class Norms/Community Agreement

- Respect others by recognizing their personal space and needs equal to your own
- Pay attention to my instruction and lectures
- Clean up your workspace when finished working
- Everyone has the right to be heard
- Be respectful while still being critical
- Maintain confidentiality- what happens in Construction Class, stays in Construction Class...
- Have the humility to recognize that you do not know everything and that everyone can stand to improve
- Recognize that everyone will start from different bases of knowledge
- Come to class prepared

WHAT SHOULD WE ADD?

Costume Shop Policy

CSU's Costume Shop runs as both a classroom/lab and a center for the UCA's busy production schedule. As a result, time and resources must be shared and respected. The Costume Shop will be made available during class hours, as well as every Monday - Friday 8:00 - 12:00 and 1:00 - 5:00. In addition, we all need to make sure that we clean up after ourselves. Each person will be assigned a machine, and it is their responsibility to keep their machine area tidy and in good order. In addition to the

machine areas, in-progress projects must be placed in bins located under the worktables (also labeled), and worktables must be left free of any clutter.

Health and Safety

Please note that there are certain occupational hazards associated with working in a Costume Shop. These are including but not limited to various small scrapes and jabs with sharp objects, burns and various strains (especially on the hands). Throughout this course you will be taught the safe and proper way to limit your chances of injury. If you have any questions or issues that you would like to discuss, please feel free to speak with me privately after class.

In the interest of complying with OSHA regulations, closed toed shoes must be worn at all times when in the Costume Shop.

Student Resources



CSU provides many resources and support for students. Please scan this QR code to access these resources as well as other content related to taking courses at CSU.

Current Covid protocols- for CSU and current SMTD Covid protocols, please visit this link for the most up-to-date information: <https://smtd.colostate.edu/covid-19-policies/>

Disclaimer

As the instructor, I reserve the right to alter the syllabus and schedule as deemed necessary. Any alterations will be presented in a fair manner and should not affect your performance in this course.