

Performing Arts Organizations

O'Neill School, Spring 2025

Professor: Dr. Ursula Kuhar (she/her)
Course #: SPEA-A450/AADM-Y508
Class Time: M/W, 11:10am-12:25pm
Room: SPEA 163
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Course Description, Objectives, and Outcomes

In this seminar, students gain an understanding of the various aspects of managing performing arts organizations. Topics covered include artistic programming, capacity building and personnel management; artist management and contracts; artist visas and immigration; ethics; audience development and marketing; strategic planning; facilities management and sustainability; labor relations and collective bargaining; current issues and events; and education. Students will: obtain a working vernacular of the various performing arts disciplines, understand nuances and niche theories and practices in the performing arts management field, analyze and synthesize major concepts and trends, and exercise real-world activities in anticipation of entering the sector.

A performing arts administrator is expected to be professional, prepared, and punctual (including but not limited to deadlines and attendance). Essential qualities of excellence in management include time, money, and project management, creativity, inquisitiveness and intellectual curiosity, attentiveness to detail, and diplomacy. As a student arts administrator, success in the classroom depends on your ability to learn and apply these skills during the course.

Required Readings and Materials

Stein, Tobie and Jessica Bathurst. *Performing Arts Management: A Handbook of Professional Practices*, 2nd edition. New York: Allworth Press, 2022.

All non-textbook readings and resources are posted on Canvas and noted with a (C) on the course outline of topics and schedule.

Class Conduct and Expectations

In order for our class discussions to be meaningful and productive, it is essential that we treat one another with respect. This includes recognizing that each person in this class is bringing with them unique life experiences and academic training; demonstrating self-awareness and a willingness to listen; and engaging in constructive critiques.

Laptops and tablets are permitted during class for eTexts, notetaking, group/in-class work, etc. purposes only. All smartphones must be turned off/placed on “Do Not Disturb” and stored in your bag by the time class starts.

Assessment and Evaluation

Professionalism (15% of grade): I want each of you to think about classroom meetings for this course as though they are meetings scheduled by your future boss at an arts organization. As such, I expect you to attend *all* meetings of the course and to do *all* the required reading, assignments, and preparatory work before the class in which it will be discussed. Part of being a successful professional is being able to

communicate your ideas effectively in meetings: it is expected you will be expected to speak and lead in class discussions regularly, and to present your work as well (merely showing up for class and “active listening” will not earn you an A grade in professionalism for this class).

Event Reviews (30% of grade; two at 15% each): Students will be required to partake in two contrasting, in-person, performing arts experiences through the semester. These reviews require documentation of attendance (screenshot, ticket stub, program, etc.). Qualifying arts events include concerts (all varieties), operas, plays, musicals, arts festivals, cabaret/comedy shows, recitals, dance showcases, and more (there is also a resource list on where to find events on Canvas, and when in doubt, *use your best judgement*). Additionally, I know many of you are artists in your own right—please send a message to the class via Canvas about your shows, exhibitions, etc. Being an artist, active patron, and good colleague all contribute to your success as a professional. On assigned days, an **electronic copy** (.doc or .pdf **only**) of your review, a 4-5 page, typed, double-spaced paper (12-point, Times New Roman font, 1” margins, last name and page number at the header of every page), along with some form of documentation from the event attended will be due **at 11:59pm ET and must be submitted in full on Canvas. No other form of submission will be accepted.**

When writing, focus on the following aspects:

- Event title, place, time, artists involved.
- Description/synopsis of contents (piece(s) performed, items displayed, venue, etc.).
- Did you enjoy the art? Did it not interest you? Why or why not? *Channel your inner critic.*
- Scope of event: observations on program contents, presentation, marketing, audience demographics/target audience, organization of the event, issues that are related to class discussions and topics.
- Links to class readings and discussions.
- What would you do differently if you were the manager of the organization, event, etc.?

Helpful hints for writing reviews:

- **PLEASE FOLLOW ALL DIRECTIONS.**
- The event needs to be a full event, not just an excerpt.
- You cannot review an event you are participating in, performing in, or working. You cannot recycle an event review from another class.
- Additionally, you **cannot** submit a review for an event you attended **prior** to the beginning of this course. You **cannot** review a movie/tv series/comedy special or a sporting event.
- Take notes at your event, or immediately thereafter. It is easier to recall information that way when the time comes to write.
- Use good grammar, formatting, and style: no contractions, complete sentences, be cohesive, avoid “get/got” and prepositions at the end of sentences, etc. *How* you say something is just as important as *what* you are saying.
- A template for assignments is available on Canvas for you to follow.
- Numbers ten and under are spelled out. Over ten, Arabic symbols can be used.
- Major works (works of art, operas, plays, etc.) are italicized (ex. Mahler’s *Symphony No. 3 in d minor*). Songs, movements of a symphony, etc. are in quotation marks (ex. “Greedy” by Tate McRae).

Critical Book Review (20% of grade): You will review a book on the field of performing arts management. A list will be provided for you to choose from (you cannot review a book you have previously reviewed in another class). This review should be approx. 2000 words in length and is akin to a

book review from a scholarly, peer-reviewed publication. An essential feature of a good book review is the reviewer's ability to write concisely so that a comprehensive evaluation of the book can be obtained from a brief reading. So, *do not write more, write more concisely*—find creative ways to communicate your critical evaluation of the book in a short essay. The point of a scholarly book review is not to summarize the content of the book, but to situate the merit of the book and to evaluate critically the author's purpose, thesis, contentions, and methods of analysis. The bulk of the review will be an evaluation of how convincing the author's presentation of their thesis was, and a commentary on the book's contribution to one's understanding of important issues in performing arts management.

Among the features you will want to include in a strong review are:

- A discussion of the author's main contentions.
- An explanation of the type of sources the historian utilized, and the methods the author employs in choosing and organizing those sources.
- An assessment of the strong points or shortcomings of the book.
- How does this book change the way one should think about performing arts management?

More information and details will be provided in class and on Canvas.

TED Talk (35% of grade): Your final assignment for this course will be giving/recording a TED style talk. Additional details will be given later in the semester in class and on Canvas.

Attendance/Absences

A reminder: professionalism is 15% of your grade, so it is worthwhile for you to come to class each day!

Classes are mandatory, and class starts promptly at 11:10am. If you arrive after 11:10am, your tardy arrival will be marked as an unexcused absence. You have **one allotted, unexcused absence** for this class. Unexcused absences thereafter could affect your progress and grade in this course. Additionally, if you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate.

Expectations and parameters for this course exist to keep you on track and to pace your workload, but life happens and none of us need additional undue stress. I am happy to work with you, in a timely fashion, to ensure your success in this course and beyond. Please reach out to me if you need assistance or help in anyway at any time.

Deadlines, late work, incompletes, etc.

All assignments submitted after due dates receive a 5% deduction for each day/part of a day late. Please note that I cannot guarantee feedback on late work. O'Neill policy is that incomplete grades can only be considered if most of the course work has been completed (75% at least) and a student is physically unable to complete the remainder.

Additionally, there are **no extensions on the final project and I will not accept work after the last day of class.**

Regrade requests

Re-grade requests must be made via email within three days of when the assignment is returned. These will be honored if points were tallied incorrectly or if your answer is correct but was marked wrong. Papers and exams will not be re-graded to alter the number of points deducted for a wrong or incomplete answer.

Accommodations

Indiana University has official policies regarding students with disabilities and the observance of religious holidays. This course will operate within these IU policies. To ensure accurate application of these policies and the provision of appropriate accommodations, students should bring these issues to the attention of the instructor *as soon as possible* and at least seven days before any accommodation might be necessary.

Academic dishonesty

O'Neill faculty do not tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty. If you have not done so, you should read the IUB *Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct*, which can be accessed at <http://www.iu.edu/~code/code/index.shtml> so you will be sure to understand what these terms mean and what penalties can be issued for academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty can result in a grade of F for the class (an F for academic dishonesty cannot be removed from the transcript). Significant violations of the Code can result in expulsion from the University.

Using AI (such as ChatGPT) to assist in completing assignments in this class is prohibited. If you do use AI, you will be committing plagiarism* and will be subject to penalties in this class and sanctions by Indiana University.

** Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work, including the work of other students, as one's own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered "common knowledge" may differ from course to course. <https://studentcode.iu.edu/responsibilities/academic-misconduct.html>.*

Office Hours/Contact Information

Office hours are for **YOU**! I want you to succeed (both in and beyond this class). If you have questions, would like to further discuss readings/assignments, or just want to talk about the arts, career goals, etc., please feel free to stop by.

- **When:** [By appointment via Calendly](#). If the times available don't work with your schedule, please email me and we'll coordinate.
- **Where:** A Zoom link will be sent to you after your appointment is scheduled.

Additionally, I only read and reply to emails during regular business hours. Please give me one full business day to respond to your email, but don't be afraid to follow up after that!

Writing Tutorial Services (WTS)

For free help at any phase of the writing process—from brainstorming to polishing the final draft—call Writing Tutorial Services (WTS) at 812-855-6738 for an appointment or visit their website: <https://wts.indiana.edu/>. They're a wonderful resource for IU students.

Resources

Doing well is not necessarily about working harder, it is about working smarter. Under the "Resources" tab on Canvas you will find tools to assist you on your academic and personal journey at IU. I highly recommend you familiarize yourself with these tools for this class and beyond.

Go consume some art

While on your vocational journey into arts administration, many of you will still practice artistic mediums. Anytime you have a show, exhibition, etc., please send a message on Canvas to everyone in class so we can attend.

A note on self-care

Nothing is more important than taking good care of yourself! I expect you to give your best effort in class, but I will also work to be flexible and accommodating (and I hope you will be patient with me as well!).

Your physical and mental health is always a priority. Please stay in communication with me so that we can work together to find solutions to any issues that may arise this semester.

GRADING SCALE

A+: 97.5 and higher	A: 92.5-97.4	A-: 90.0-92.4
B+: 87.5-89.9	B: 82.5-87.4	B-: 80.0-82.4
C+: 77.5-79.9	C: 72.5-77.4	C-: 70.0-72.4
D+: 67.5-69.9	D: 62.5-67.4	D-: 60.0-62.4
F: 59.9 and below		

SPEA-A450/AADM-Y508 Course Agenda

The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule as deemed necessary. Some subjects may prove to be more challenging than others; thus, flexibility throughout the course will allow us to respond to areas that need additional clarification.

Note: All course readings marked with (C) can be found on Canvas.

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW

M/January 13: Introduction to course

- Review course syllabus (C) and Canvas site

W/January 15: Crash-course review

- Conte/Langly: *Theatre Management* excerpt (C)
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WEEK 2: INTRODUCTION

M/January 20: NO CLASS—MLK DAY

W/January 22:

- Guest speaker: Mark Volpe, former CEO of the Boston Symphony Orchestra
-

WEEK 3: ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS/STRUCTURE; STRATEGY

M/January 27:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 1-3
- REVIEW/BROWSE discipline specific PowerPoints (C)

W/January 29:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 1-3
-

WEEK 4: ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

M/February 3:

- Kaiser: *Strategic Planning*, ch. 5 (C)

W/February 5:

- Kaiser: *Strategic Planning*, ch. 5 (C)

F/February 7: EVENT REVIEW #1 DUE AT 11:59PM ET

WEEK 5: LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS/ETHICS

M/February 10:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 3, 5
- TBA

W/February 12:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 3, 5
 - TBA
-

WEEK 6: COMMERCIAL THEATRE/BROADWAY

M/February 17:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 4, 10
- TBA

W/February 19:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 4, 10
 - TBA
-

WEEK 7: ARTIST MANAGEMENT/CONTRACTS

M/February 24:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 9

W/February 26:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 9
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WEEK 8: LABOR RELATIONS

M/March 3:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 9

W/March 5:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 9

F/March 7: EVENT REVIEW #2 DUE AT 11:59PM ET

WEEK 9: CSO RESIDENCY

M/March 10: NO CLASS

W/March 12:

- *Guest speakers: Panel with Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra administration (Location TBA)*

WEEK 10: SPRING BREAK

M/March 17: NO CLASS

W/March 19: NO CLASS

WEEK 11: LABOR RELATIONS

M/March 24:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 9
- TBA

W/March 26:

- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 9
-

WEEK 12: GUEST SERVICES

M/March 31:

- NAMP: *Box Office Magic (C)*
- TBA

W/April 2:

- NAMP: *Box Office Magic (C)*
- TBA

F/April 4: CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW DUE AT 11:59PM ET

WEEK 13: SUSTAINABILITY/FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

M/April 7:

- Rossol: *OSHA Rules and Scenic Arts (C)*
- Stein/Bathurst: ch. 11
- *AES* excerpt (C)

W/April 9:

- Rossol: *OSHA Rules and Scenic Arts (C)*
 - Stein/Bathurst: ch. 11
 - *AES* excerpt (C)
 - TBA
-

WEEK 14: ENGAGEMENT/EDUCATION

M/April 14:

- Stein/Bathurst: Ch. 7-8
- TBA

W/April 16:

- Stein/Bathurst: Ch. 7-8

WEEK 15: CURRENT EVENTS

M/April 21:

- Borwick: “Winds of Change” (C)
- Kreidler: *Leverage Lost: The Non-Profit Arts in a Post-Ford Era* (C)
- TBA

W/April 23:

- Borwick: “Winds of Change” (C)
- Kreidler: *Leverage Lost: The Non-Profit Arts in a Post-Ford Era* (C)
- TBA

WEEK 16: CATCH UP/FUTURE OF THE FIELD

M/April 28:

- TBA

W/April 30:

- TBA

F/May 2: FINAL TED TALK PROJECT DUE AT 11:59PM ET
