

Design Process

This is the typical agenda for each of the design meetings and early production meetings for the production process at the University of Memphis. Please refer to the production calendars for the dates of these meetings for each of the productions.

Design meeting #1

Group meeting of primary designers, the director & the production manager. SM or AD's are not required to attend unless requested by their supervisor. This is not a brainstorming session; it is rather a presentation of initial impressions and ideas.

- Production Manager should share the over all schedule for the production and the design meeting agenda. The production manager will also present the budget for the project as a whole.
- Director or Production Mgr. presents the rationale of the season selection committee.
- Director presents his/her concept.
- Designers share their ideas and interpretations of the script.
- The team should identify the key ideas that need be communicated to the audience.
- Designers should schedule individual meetings to take place prior to next group meeting.

Design meeting #2

Director and Designers share any changes in concept and progress made since first meeting.

- Designers present **inspirational** (color, mood, metaphor etc.) & **practical** (style, period, place, etc.) research images to the group—PPT preferred.
- Director should share thoughts/reactions to research presented and provide guidance.
- Designers should schedule individual meetings to take place prior to next group meeting.

Design meeting #3

Team will check in with progress report with any adjustments, concerns, and updates from smaller group meetings that have occurred since the last meeting.

- Designs should be solidifying. Designs should now be moving from research to examples. (See Below)
- Annotated props list should begin. (SM, Scenic Des, Director)
- Technical director will share solutions or concerns.

Expected Design Docs:

- Scenic: Rough Ground Plan & Elevations (sketches or bash model), Color & Texture research/samples.
- Costumes: Sketches, color samples/swatches, collage or on-line ideas board (solidification of silhouette)
- Lighting: Color/texture research to indicate mood, time of day, sense of isolation, etc.
- Sound: Cue list (not final) Music or ambient samples (solidification of style/orchestration)

Design meeting #4 Design Conception

The outcome of this meeting should be a fully conceived production that provides all designers with a plan that will lead to preliminary design packages that can be estimated and approved by each area.

- Designers should present solidified design ideas that will be “approved” by the director.
- Shop Heads (especially the TD & Costume Manager) should be present to share solutions or concerns. Special costs should be identified at this time. (custom gobos, effects, unique

materials, etc.)

- Director should clarify any needed changes so that the design team can begin the documentation process.

Expected Design Docs:

- Scenic: Ground Plan & Elevations (May be hand drawn or in model form), Final Color & Texture samples. (not as completed elevations)
- Costumes: Sketches, Key Character renderings, swatches.
- Lighting: Distilled image research, possibly light renderings
- Sound: Cue List (Final) Music and sound-scape chosen (not cue ready)

Design Prelims/TD Review

Approximately one week after design conception, scenic design and costume design preliminary packages are due. This gives areas heads time to assess the feasibility of the production and prepare an estimate. Areas heads should work with designers to create solutions that will meet calendar deadlines. Each area's estimate should account for time, labor and cost.

- Scenic Designs should provide at minimum a ground plan, section and composite front elevation. An accurate model may serve as a substitute for a section. Research documents for props should be included as well as sample color.
- Costume Designs should include preliminary sketches, or "roughs"; pertinent research and background materials; scene breakdown; preliminary piece inventory; and a preliminary budget breakdown.
- Lighting Designer should have a preliminary cue list
- Sound Designer should have a preliminary cue list, and prepare any materials needed for rehearsals.

During this period, usually 1 week, changes to the designs may happen in order to accommodate a shop's ability to execute the design. These changes should be agreed upon before estimates are sent to the production manager.

Estimates Due

Estimates for each design area are typically due the Friday prior to the second production meeting. This allows the production manager to review the estimates and discuss them with the artistic director if needed. It also allows the Production Manager to prepare for the production meeting. All estimates should account for time, labor and cost.

Design Documents Due

Generally scenic and costume designers will have a much earlier due date for final documents than the lighting and sound areas. On an occasion when projection is being used, dates for storyboards will be established at the 1st design meeting. Please refer to your area head for required documentation.

Production Meeting #1

This meeting will ideally be scheduled one week prior to the build start date for scenery and costumes. The design team and area heads will present designs and estimates to the production team. The production manager will guide negotiations if estimates exceed the available budget. Area heads will update progress and report any adjustments or concerns.

- All contact info to the Stage Manager.
- Director should identify design priorities.

- Stage manager and director should make requests for any special items needed for rehearsals.
- Designers and the director should schedule the design presentations to the cast.

Production Meetings

Weekly production meetings are scheduled as a means of communication. At each meeting the area heads will present their shop's progress and identify any issues that need to be resolved. Priorities and deadlines should be discussed and updated. Any individual meetings needed to solve complications should be scheduled before the meeting adjourns. These should not be design meetings. Either the Stage Manager or the Production Manager will coordinate production meetings.