

## Level 21 Design Process Meetings (Pre-Build)

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Dept. of Theatre

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### A Typical full semester overview of the Design Process

*\*Subject to change based on calendar events and director's availability*

Week 1	Initial Design Meeting
Week 2	Design Conference (Scene-by-Scene) option 1
Week 3	Design Conference (Scene-by-Scene) option 2
Week 4	
Week 5	Design Prelims #1 (The Napkin Meeting)
Week 6	
Week 7	Design Prelims #2
Week 8	
Week 9	Costing #1
Week 10	Costing #2 (Final Costing)
Week 11	Design Finals
Week 12	Pre-build/Shop Drafting
Week 13	Shop Drafting
Week 14	<i>*Usually, Fall or spring Break</i>
Week 15	Shop Drafting
Week 16	Shop Prep

#### Initial Design Meeting

This is the first officially scheduled meeting where the director and all design areas meet as a team. Since every director approaches a show in their own unique way, the shape of these sessions will be determined by the director. Designers should however be prepared to discuss the show in a broad dramaturgical way as it relates to the meaning of the work or the storytelling aspect of the show. While this is the first of many creative ideas' sessions with the director, designers may be asked to delve in deeper into their own areas of design. This is also a time to ask questions to the director directly or to the entire group. Remember that this is a preliminary core team meeting that is about the exchange of ideas between colleagues and should be approached as a collaborative working session.

**Attendees:** Director, Assistant Director, Scene Designer, Costume Designer, Lighting Designer, Sound Designer, Media Designer, Dramaturg, Choreographer, Music Director/Conductor

#### Design Conference / Scene by Scene Meeting

With all departments present, this is generally a longer working meeting led by the director and the scenic designer. This meeting is when the entire team works through the show scene by scene, accounting for location, time of day, season, all planned scenic elements, costume looks, specialty props, media images, lighting concepts, sound approaches, etc. All design areas working together must take into consideration how transitions might work based on how the director envisions the show being staged. Other critical elements that affect use of stage space should also be discussed, including band placement, use of a lift, tracking scenery, automation,

etc. By the end of the meeting the team should have created a “Design Scene-by-Scene Sheet” for all scenes, while also identifying problems of the play that may still need to be solved.

**Attendees:** *Producer (LTI), Director, Assistant Director, Music Director (as needed), Choreographer (as needed), Fight Director (as needed), Scene Designer, Costume Designer, Lighting Designer, Sound Designer, Media Designer, Props Master, Production Management, Advisors.*

### **Design Prelims #1 (aka The Napkin Meeting)**

The Prelims #1 Meeting is an opportunity to have each designer engage all collaborators with the concepts they have been pursuing and for production management to gain a general sense of the approach of the show. This is not a formal presentation, but is a working meeting, where we would like to see multiple ideas (at least two or three) that designers are considering. This is a time to share what you have, wherever you are in the process, so the director and design team can start to synthesize ideas and make choices that will ultimately lead to the designs you will pursue. All designers should be prepared to present ideas, concepts and approaches via sketches, models, audio files, material samples, etc. Even a rough sketch (i.e., drawn on a napkin) will help everyone understand your ideas.

**Attendees:** *Producer (LTI), Director, Assistant Director, Music Director (as needed), Choreographer (as needed), Fight Director (as needed), Scene Designer, Costume Designer, Lighting Designer, Sound Designer, Media Designer, Props Master (if needed), Production Management, Advisors.*

### **Design Prelims #2**

The second Design Prelims Meeting is the time when all the designers present their preliminary design for other members of the production team, including the department and shop heads. During this slightly more formal presentation, designers will deliver sketches, 3-D models, drawings, ground plans, elevations, sound files, and any other materials relevant to the preliminary design. The goal of this meeting is to communicate the design to the shops with enough visual detail so that they may begin or continue the budgeting/costing process. Emotional and historical research is only necessary if it is relevant to how the shop will construct and realize your design.

At minimum, the designers must present the following:

#### Scenic Designer

- Ground plan w/ masking
- Centerline Section(s)
- Front Elevation
- 3D White Model with furniture and figures
- 3D drafting and/or sketches
- Initial Props Packet *\*may be presented by props designer/artisan*

#### Costume Designer

- Initial Costume sketches
- Initial Costume Plot
- Initial Hair and Makeup research
- Fabric Swatches (if available)

#### Lighting Designer

- Lighting Practicals Plot
- Special effects (i.e. fog, haze, pyro, flying/tracking lighting fixtures, etc.)
- Additional Set or Costume Mounts (if applicable)

#### Sound Designer

- Initial Audio Concepts via audio files and clips
- Speaker Array Location
- Additional Set Mounted Microphones/Speakers (if applicable)

#### Media Designer

- Initial Media Concepts
- Projector placement

*\*\*While there is no expectation of “final designs” at this meeting since the designs will continue to evolve during the following weeks including the costing process, there MUST be concrete visuals to express the physical elements of the production.*

**Attendees:** *Producer, Director, Assistant Director, Music Director (as needed), Choreographer (as needed), Fight Director (as needed), Scene Designer, Technical Director, ATD, Paint Charge, Props Master, Costume Designer, Costume Shop Director, Asst. Costume Shop Director, Lighting Designer, ALD, Master Electrician, Lighting Director, Sound Designer, Audio Engineer, Media Designer, A/V Technician, Stage Management, Production Management, Advisors*

### Costing #1

This first costing meeting is a way to present a first stab at how much the show (in its present state) would cost to build and put on stage. Each area should have been given a target budget number ahead of time in order to price out materials and labor costs. A typical line-item budget sheet should be presented to the group by each design area, so that the entire team can see where the money is being allocated and if there are any big-ticket items that may need to be addressed or reworked in order to reduce the materials and potentially labor costs. This is also a time to hear concerns from the shops about the feasibility of building the show.

**Attendees:** *TBD based on goals of individual meetings*

### Costing #2 (Final Costing)

Designers should have worked with their respective shops and advisors between the two costing meetings to come up with a show that is affordable, given each area's budgets. This should be seen as a more formalized presentation of a final budget, so that the production manager can access any additional monies that may need to be allocated or shifted from one area to another to accommodate fitting into the overall show budget.

**Attendees:** *TBD based on goals of individual meetings*

### Design Finals

This is the last formal design meeting before the show begins the build process. All designers are expected to present their ideas in a clear and concise way to all members of the team and any advisors, faculty and staff that may be present at this meeting. It is expected that what is presented at this meeting is the show that will be built.

*\*Note: at this point in the process individual departments and shops will begin their own*

*process of getting the show ready for the stage. Any additional questions will be handled in weekly production meetings. The meetings below are specific to the design of the set.*

**Attendees:** *Designers and Staff, Producers, Director, Assistant Director, Music Director, Choreographer, Fight Director, Stage Management, Production Management, Advisors*

### **Pre-Build/Shop Drafting**

This is the time when the shops have all the necessary paperwork from the scenic designers to begin their process of drafting construction/build drawings and begin coordinating how the show will be built, the use of the shops space, and on what schedule it will be built.

**Attendees:** *Scene Designer, Technical Director, ATD, Paint Charge, Props Master, Costume Designer, Costume Shop Director, Asst. Costume Shop Director, Lighting Designer, ALD, Master Electrician, Lighting Director, Sound Designer, Audio Engineer, Media Designer, A/V Technician, Stage Management, Production Management, Advisors*

### **Shop Drafting**

A continuation of developing final construction/build drawings overseen by the Technical Director and their draftsperson. This is also a time for the shop supervisors to look over the drawings and make suggestions of needed changes to those plates before getting to the Shop Prep phase.

### **Shop Prep**

At this time all finalized construction drawings must be given to the shops by the Technical Director or draftsperson in order for the shop to begin the build process.