

Departmental Procedural Changes (March 3, 2017)

Yes, for some, change does not come easily. Hopefully, changes that reduce bureaucracy and streamline procedures will come as a relief. The primary goal of these changes is to assure that Studio Theatre serves the department's educational mission as an extension of the classroom and is a place in which students may put into practice what is learned in the classroom. Participation in Studio Theatre primarily will be based on what one hopes to learn versus what one has already achieved.

Bare Stage Production: Bare Stage productions are intended to focus on the relationship between the director, the actor(s), and 3 dimensional space. This is the ideal opportunity for the emerging director to work intimately in space without the additional layers of production values. Bare Stage productions must have a stage-manager. They may not have sets, lighting, sound, video, departmentally resourced costumes, or furniture other than acting blocks. Productions may request plot driven props, which will be approved by TAB. Lighting is limited to the work lights.

Tech Supported Production: Tech support productions are by definition more creatively involved and demand more of the director. All tech supported productions may integrate sound, lighting, set, costume, properties, and video design, and have a budget of \$250.00 from departmental funds and access to departmental materials with approval from Margo, Craig, and/or the chair as appropriate.

"X week of the Term:" As term weeks are not all equal from term to term and year to year, the actual dates of the weekends of the respective terms of a given academic year will be determined at the season planning session.

Changes forthcoming:

1. Season planning: In an effort to unify the department more effectively, the Studio Theatre season will be announced simultaneously with the main stage season both of which will be designated as the Department of Theatre Season. Consider companies such as Steppenwolf that have shows on multiple stages: it is all Steppenwolf.

Rationale: Season planning is the norm in the professional theatre. Getting accustomed to thinking ahead is a valuable life skill. Knowing what we will be doing by the end of one school year will allow everyone to plan effectively for the next season in the next school year. This means that cost savings can be realized, design concerns can be targeted early, and human power can be apportioned more effectively.

2. Studio Theatre Performance Weekends:

1. Productions in Studio Theatre each will have two weeks in the space. Thus performance weekends will be the 3rd, 5th, and 7th weeks of the term (Faculty directed productions usually will perform in the 8th week and we do not perform in

the 9th week to avoid interfering concluding coursework). Playground will usually go up in the 4th weekend of the term and not interfere unreasonably with weekend rehearsals of the next play or the build in progress.

Rationale: Granting all productions, regardless of whether they involve tech support, two full weeks in the space ensures that they will all have the time to acclimate to the space. This applies equally to Bare Stage and Tech Support productions.

3. Studio Theatre Project Applications:

The current petition will be replaced with an application. This application may be for a text-based play or other project as proposed. Such projects might include but are not limited to workshops, scene nights, actor open mics, readings, etc.

Rationale: The current petition process has become too complicated and overly prescriptive. We have been trying to foresee and forestall every possible problem through the petition with the result being that the petition process is too cumbersome and too off-putting. It is intended that knowing when all productions will be going up will allow students to work effectively and creatively toward each event.

4. Benchmarks for success:

All Studio Theatre productions must meet the following benchmarks to assure that each production is on schedule toward success:

- a. Margo and Craig must approve potential designers.
- b. Designs must be approved in the 7th week of the term prior to the term in which the production will go up.
- c. Bare Stage directors must submit a list of critically necessary props to the TAB production manager for approval at least four weeks prior to move-in weekend.
- d. Bare Stage productions must costume out of the wardrobes of the company.
- e. No personal money may be expended on a production unless it is for approved reimbursement.

5. Text Based plays direction:

- a. Directors may direct a Tech Supported production if they have taken the directing class or directed a Bare Stage production. Directors no longer must do a one act prior to directing a full length.
- b. Tech Supported productions may be one act or full length plays.
- c. This application dispenses with the two-tier petition procedure that previously applied for full-length shows.
- d. Bare Stage productions will be one acts defined as 45 minutes or fewer.

Logistics:

1. Season Planning session:

Applications will be accepted at the end of the second week of spring term. In the third week of the term, all applicants, TAB, and the faculty will meet to discuss the

applications and the scheduling of the forthcoming season. Applicants will have the opportunity to speak to their applications relative to what they hope to learn through the process and the general scope of the production. It is not necessary to come prepared with a full text analysis, evolved approach statement, extensive production lists, or fleshed out design concepts at this stage of the process. The new season will be announced by the 6th week of spring term.

2. Production Teams: The learning process and not potential of the final product should govern designer and stage manager assignments. Directors no longer need to know *at the point of application* who will be their design teams and stage managers. Once an application has been approved, they may begin the process of bringing on a design team. Applicants approved to direct in the fall are advised to work over the summer to develop the design. Assignment of stage managers will be discussed as part of the season planning. Assistant stage managers will be brought on at will and each production is urged to take on assistant stage managers to perpetuate the training. Note: The entire production team must be assembled and approved by the 7th week of the preceding term or the project will be removed from the studio season (or a Tech Support production will be converted into a Bare Stage production in the event that the design team did not come together).

3. Over commitment:

The faculty reserves the right to veto production personnel if it is clear that an individual has over extended themselves and is in danger of jeopardizing their academics (and health). Students may not work on back-to-back productions in a given term, as that compromises both productions.

4. Posters:

A single large sized poster will announce the full season. Individual shows may each have an individualized poster.