

## STUDIO THEATRE PROCEDURAL OVERVIEW

The department has established three levels of student-directed production in Studio. Honors Projects and other proposals related to work being carried out for academic credit will be given priority wherever possible. Honors proposals will suffice as petitions. Independent Study proposals must follow the petition protocols, but approval rests with the Faculty. Special Projects that do not fall immediately under these categories should be proposed to TAB along with petitions. It would be best to confer with TAB well before the petition deadline as to how best to describe the special project.

### **Petitioning to Direct or Produce:**

After a script has been chosen, the director submits to TAB and the faculty a petition for a slot in the upcoming term's season (two terms in advance for Full-Lengths). Petitions must be turned in by the announced deadline. The petition form (downloadable from the departmental website) provides details on the required information: students are also encouraged to look at the examples of petitions from previous terms, which are available—along with the petition form—in the Greenroom. The faculty, in consultation with TAB, decides which petitions will be approved, and determines the schedule for the following term.

### **BARE-STAGE:**

Any student may direct a Bare-Stage one-act. A Bare-Stage production is intended to allow the director to concentrate on the most fundamental aspects of direction: working with characters, text, and the space.

**Run:** Two performances

**Length:** Running time may be no more than 45 minutes, but we urge first time directors to select shorter plays.

**Production Materials and Technical Support:** The set must be composed solely of existing acting blocks and chairs. Bare-Stages are not allowed to hang curtains, lights other than scoops, and no light cues are to be written into the board apart from blackouts.

**Props:** Only those props, costumes, sound cues, or set pieces that are necessary to make the play make sense will be considered. All requests for this consideration must be approved by TAB, who will consult the faculty as appropriate.

**Budget:** \$0.00 Bare-Stages are not allowed to spend any money or departmental resources

**Nested Bare Stage:** Should a Bare-Stage ever have to share space with a production or event that qualifies for specialized lighting or a set, the Bare-Stage will be allowed to use their lights, though for no more than a wash, and with no specialized cues aside from blackouts.

### **BARE-STAGE DEVISED PRODUCTION:**

Any student may petition to create a Bare-Stage Devised production. What differentiates a Devised Bare Stage from a scripted Bare-Stage is the lack of an extant script. A Devised production is intended to allow a group of students to collaborate and work toward creating a new piece of theatre. Because devising theatre requires exploration and improvisation prior to

establishing a concrete text, students wishing to petition for a Bare-Stage Devised production must petition *two terms in advance*. This will leave one full term for interested students to gather participants, devise, and rehearse, giving performers ample time to devise *and* rehearse over the course of a two-term process. Students wishing to petition for a Bare Stage Devised production should submit their petitions two terms in advance, and submit another petition that articulates the progress of the process the term directly before they wish to perform.

TAB created this category of petition because we understand that devised theatre has different needs and may require different consideration in terms of props, sets, and sound than a scripted Bare-Stage production. This means that as a devised production students may request the use of any item as long as they can provide adequate reasoning for their use of said item. Should a Bare-Stage ever have to share space with an event that requires specialized lighting, the production will be allowed to use their lights, though for no more than a wash, and with no specialized cues aside from blackouts.

**Run:** Two performances

**Length:** The length should be no more than 45 minutes.

**Budget:** \$0.00

**ONE-ACT:** To be eligible to direct a One-Act, a student must have either successfully directed a Bare-Stage production in Studio Theatre or satisfactorily completed a term of THEA 361 Directing.

**Run:** Two or three performances

**Length:** Running time should be no approximately 1 hour

**Budget:** \$75.00. Since everyone has different personal financial situations, no one may spend personal funds on any aspect of a Studio Theatre production. The production has only the budget allotted to it by the department (though in some cases a student may be able to secure additional funding by applying to the Richter Fund). Students must confer with the department chair or relevant design faculty regarding purchases. Receipts may be submitted to the Department Student Secretary, who will submit them to the department chair for reimbursement, but tax will not be reimbursed.

**Design and Technical Support:** Lighting, sound, costume, and set production support are all available. Videography may be included upon consultation with and approval from the faculty designer. All Designers must be committed and included on the original petition and have been approved by the faculty member in the relevant area of design before petitioning.

**Staff Support:** The designers are responsible for the execution of their designs. This may include the addition of a Technical Director, a Master Electrician, and a First Hand, Stitchers, and Wardrobe Manager.

**Stage Manager:** The SM must be committed at the time of the petition.

**Production Materials:** The set may be constructed with existing materials from the scene shop or materials ordered by the Scenic Designer through and in consultation with the Technical Director. Costumes may be pulled from the collection and altered by the production team. The cost of dry cleaning must be included in the overall budget.

### **FULL-LENGTH:**

To be eligible to direct a Full-Length production, a student must have successfully directed a scripted One-Act production in Studio Theatre.

**Run:** Three performances

**Length:** Standard full length running time is in the realm of two hours, give or take.

**Budget:** \$150.00 Since everyone has different personal financial situations, no one may spend personal funds on any aspect of a Studio Theatre production. The production has only the budget allotted to it by the department (though in some cases a student may be able to secure additional funding, in particular through the Richter Fund). The cost of dry cleaning costumes must be factored into the overall budget.

**Design and Technical Support:** Lighting, sound, costume, and set production support are all available. Videography may be included upon consultation with and approval from the faculty designer. All Designers should be committed and approved by the relevant design faculty before submitting the First Tier petition.

**Staff Support:** The designers are responsible for the execution of their designs. This may include the addition of a Technical Director, a Master Electrician, and a First Hand, Stitchers, and Wardrobe Manager.

**Stage Manager:** The Stage Manager must be committed at the point of submitting the First Tier Petition.

**The Two Tiered Petition Process:** Due to the significant forethought and work needed to undertake a full-length play, directors must complete the First Tier Petition *two terms ahead of when they intend to direct*. The Second Tier is submitted the term before the desired production dates.

**Tier One Petition:** The first petition includes basic information and the director's initial thoughts about the play. It would be advisable to have circulated the text among the proposed designers and have had a preliminary design meeting to establish basic world of the play parameters prior to composing the petition, which must include:

- Commitments from the design team as approved by the relevant faculty
- Commitment from the Stage Manager
- Rights and royalties information
- Director's Approach Statement
- Other details as specified on the petition form

**Second Tier Petition:** The second stage of development is intended to assure that the design process takes place and that a design is mostly, if not fully, completed by the time the production is cast.

- Design meetings must be held to develop the design for the petition, which will include:
- Designers' approach statements
- The set designer should submit a preliminary ground plan
- The costume designer should submit character analyses and preliminary sketches
- The lighting and sound designers should submit a discussion of their respective design approaches.

The director must submit an expanded director's approach discussion including text and character analysis. This should be modeled on the Director's Notebook taught in and compiled for the Directing class. Student Directors who have not taken the class should obtain from the relevant faculty analyses templates.

### **Directors' Meeting:**

All directors whose petitions have been approved are required to participate in a Directors' Meeting where they will discuss with TAB the scheduling of auditions and rehearsals, the approval of designs, the signing of contracts, etc.

### **Production Meetings:**

Directors of One-Acts and Full-Lengths are required to have weekly production meetings with their Stage Managers and Designers. These meetings are designed to ensure that the Director and Designers are communicating throughout the rehearsal process and addressing in a timely manner any questions and problems.

### **Auditions and casting:**

Directors may not pre-cast. All Knox auditions are open. Directors should communicate all production time commitments to all auditionees. Students who audition must provide information about their other commitments during the rehearsal period. Once the actors have been cast and have accepted their roles, the director must notify the actors of the departmental policies and the guidelines in this document regarding their commitment to load-in, changeover, and strike dates, and inform them about other important details communicated at the Directors' Meeting.

### **Rehearsal scheduling:**

Rehearsal spaces are reserved through the departmental secretary, who will communicate with directors about the procedures to follow regarding deadlines. It is the Director's responsibility to assure that requests for space usage and needs changes occur in a timely fashion.

### **Load-In, Changeovers, and Strike:**

Students involved in a Studio Production in a given term are required to attend All Studio Load-In, the Load-In of the show(s) in which they are involved, All Studio Strike, and the Changeovers before and after the production on which they are involved. All of these dates are

mandatory for every student using the space. Directors are required to account to the TAB Technical Director TAB for the attendance of their casts. Cast or crew members unable to attend, for reasons of long-standing prior engagements (of which the director should already have been informed at the time of auditions), emergencies or illness must inform their Director or Stage Manager. A director who is unable to attend must inform the TAB Technical Director and their own production teams. The TAB Technical Director will determine on a case by case basis how a person who cannot make one of these dates is required to compensate for their absence. Students who fail to attend without prior excuse risk affecting their ability to participate in future Studio productions.

**Load-In** is the complete preparation of the space for the term. The risers are assembled and arranged so that they may be used by the first event in Studio. If the first event does not require risers, then Load-In should be scheduled as the event's Changeover.

**Changeover** the day after the final performance, wherein everyone from the casts and crews of the closing show and the next show going up are required to come to Studio and prepare the space for the next show.

**Strike** is the final date called, wherein everyone participating in Studio that term comes and clears the space.

### **Production Records:**

The Stage Manager must send a list of all those involved in the show to the Theatre Student Secretary, including name, graduation year, and areas of study (majors and minors). This record should include information on Directors, Actors, Designers, Assistants, and crew members. This information also should be given to the TAB Publicity Director and will appear in the show's program. It will be kept on file in the Theatre Office for future reference. At each performance, the House Manager should make a count of the number of people in the audience, and enter that information in the Production report, which should go to the Theatre Student Secretary as well as the production team, the faculty, and TAB.

### **Post-Production:**

Once during each term—often at the very end—TAB will organize a Post-Production Meeting in order to discuss the shows that went up during the season. All Directors and Designers are required to attend, while actors are strongly encouraged to attend. The meeting is open to all who wish to participate. The meeting will be moderated by a faculty member or member of TAB. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss, in a supportive manner, the strengths and areas for growth of the productions and how Studio Theatre is functioning.

### **House Management: A TAB position**

The house manager will acquire and train ushers for every night of performance, make announcements to the audience (no eating or drinking, no picture taking, etc.), supervise special seating, including audience setup; handicapped patrons; patron concerns; opening and closing the house, cleaning up after the audience; tracking programs and tickets; and keeping a house count for every performance and getting that information to the departmental secretary for archival purposes. The house manager is also responsible for safety and should know where first aid kits,

fire extinguishers, and fire exits are located. A more detailed document about house management is available on the website.

### **Playwrights' Workshop:**

The workshop is intended to provide student playwrights an opportunity to hear a play read by actors applying intentionality under the guidance of a director. The main goal of the event is to workshop the plays with audience, actors, and directors participating in a constructive critique of the pieces following the performance. Although the playwrights are the focus, the workshop is a great opportunity for new directors to attempt directing and work on a show from the ground up. Actors should participate as often as possible to perfect this commercially marketable skill. The director and playwright should have an initial conversation about the playwright's goals and expectations, but then the playwright should step back and let the director take over the process. The director of a stage reading should not be concerned with technical elements of the script (no props, set, sound, video, or costumes) or blocking. The actors do not need to be memorized--they should have their book in hand. Rehearsal should be kept to a minimum of one week.