

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

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DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE FACULTY

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STAFF

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ADDITIONAL NUMBERS

Box Office	880-2250	Library Information	880-8117
Costume Shop	880-1753	Health Center	880-8466
Scene Shop	880-8162	Campus Police	880-8311
Financial Aid	880-8450	Operator	880-7011

OVERVIEW

This manual is designed to acquaint the students of the Theatre & Dance Department at Lamar University with departmental policies and procedures, particularly those that relate to work in theatre productions and dance concerts. Producing theatre and dance are inherently collaborative endeavors and this handbook is designed to ensure that all involved are on the same page regarding best practices for more creative, safe, efficient, and fun work.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Theatre & Dance at Lamar University is a cohesive and dynamic program in which the faculty and staff provide personalized instruction and mentorship for student growth. We develop imaginative, well-rounded students with critical thinking skills, creativity, and a passion for life-long learning. With diverse, process-oriented opportunities, including practical experience, students develop competitive and marketable skills in theatre and dance performance, production, and pedagogy. We encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, foster professionalism and artistic integrity, and embrace and cultivate diversity, while serving as a cultural resource for the University, the community, the state, and beyond.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This department provides a well-balanced curriculum for both theatre and dance students which prepares students to enter either professional careers or teaching professions. Lamar University stages serve as laboratories for training, and students can participate in all phases of our production program, including a wide range of theatrical works and dance concerts. The Theatre area is an accredited member of the Texas Educational Theatre Association. The Dance area maintains a performing company, the Lamar Dance Company. Two student organizations – Alpha Psi Omega and the Lamar Dance Association – provide further opportunities and experiences. The department participates actively in the American College Dance Festival.

DEGREES OFFERED

Bachelor of Science in Theatre & Dance, Tracks: Acting, Dance or Tech/Design

We also offer a minor in both theatre and dance. See the university catalog for a list of the required courses.

A minimum grade of “C” must be earned in each of the theater and dance courses; Students who fail to do so will be on probation the following semester.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Alpha Psi Omega (APO) is a national honorary theatrical society, with membership by invitation only to theatre and dance majors. There are over 600 chapters, or casts, at universities and colleges; the APO cast at Lamar is Pi Omicron. Its mission is to develop talents in all aspects of theatre, to foster the cultural values that theatre develops, to encourage cooperation and collaboration among member chapters, and to engage in community service through theatre. Membership is based on a point system, with points accumulated through active work both on and off stage.

THEATRE & DANCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Thanks to a number of generous individuals, we are able to offer a number of endowed scholarships to students to enable them to perform in our productions; train in our classrooms, studios, and shops; and prepare for success after graduation. We are extremely grateful for the support of the individuals who have helped make these scholarships possible. Currently, these include:

Miss Mary Alice Memorial Scholarship in Dance

Benny Jo Monlezun Bates Scholarship in Dance

David Kyle Carlin Memorial Scholarship in Theatre

Maria Concetta Cloninger Presidential Scholarship in Theatre

Ruth Kaigler Goode and D. Rex Goode Scholarship in Theatre

Lila Maurice Salles Memorial Scholarship in Dance

Jean Allen Helms Scholarship in Theatre

Dr. Adonia Placette Scholarship in Theatre

Parker Windham Memorial Scholarship

Gloria Swarts Locke and Charles Blakey Locke Presidential Scholarship in Theatre

Endowed scholarships are renewable but are governed by individual criteria, and are not guaranteed for all four years you are attending Lamar. They are offered for a maximum of four years, and the amounts vary.

ASSISTANTSHIPS

Assistantships require a certain number of hours of work in the department in exchange for the amount awarded. Students may be assigned to assist in the scene or costume shop, the box office, front of house, the department office, and/or assist a faculty member with a course (as well as assisting with receptions/ public relations/ outreach/ general facility maintenance).

WORK STUDY

Work Study positions are also available in the program for students who are declared eligible through the financial aid office. The proper paperwork through that office should be completed early in the application process as it takes about six months to receive approval. Positions are similar to those offered for assistantships. Eligibility for Work Study does not guarantee employment; positions are subject to availability.

Applications are required for scholarships, assistantships and work study, and will be available each semester online. Deadlines vary but generally will be in mid-November and mid-April.

ADVISING

Students should consult their faculty advisers regularly to ensure that students remain “on track” and progress at a rate comparable with their classmates, or, if difficulties arise, that they are helped to return to a good state of progress as soon as possible. Then the student should meet with a faculty advisor to complete the advising. A faculty advisor *must* sign the advising form, which should then be returned to Jean so that she can then lift the departmental advising hold. (She cannot lift any other holds, such as financial.) All students should see the UAC after being advised by the area advisor within the department.

REGISTRATION

After a student’s advising hold has been lifted, he or she can then register online via Self-Service Banner, each according to a university priority system that is designed to ensure that graduating seniors can be sure to enroll in classes, which they may need to fulfill requirements. Within a given level of seniority, students should try to register at the earliest opportunity in order to complete a schedule. Remember that there is usually only one section of theatre and dance classes for majors and that other classes need to be scheduled around the major.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Students are strongly urged to take advantage of every opportunity afforded them in their education at Lamar; this includes attending classes on a regular basis. The departmental absence policy is as follows: A student is granted one week's worth of classes in absences without academic penalty (2 class periods for classes meeting Tuesdays and Thursdays and Monday/Wednesday dance technique or 3 class periods for classes meeting Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.) The student's grade will drop one full letter grade for each additional absence. Changes to the attendance policy will be left up to the individual instructors. Please consult each individual instructors' course syllabus for attendance policy changes.

REVIEWS, PROBATION, SUSPENSION, DISMISSAL, REINSTATEMENT

Reviews

All students in the Department of Theatre & Dance are subject to a faculty review at the end of the Fall and Spring semester. This is a mandatory meeting where members of the faculty discuss the students' progress with them. Any student who skips their review or misses it for an unacceptable reason (as determined by the faculty) may not enroll in any theatre or dance classes the following semester or participate in any productions, and are subject to re-admittance following a meeting with the faculty.

Probation

A student may be notified of being placed on probation at their end of semester review by the faculty, or, in the event of a particularly egregious act, may be placed on probation throughout or prior to a new semester or academic year. At the discernment of the department faculty, a student may be placed on probation for: (Including, but not limited to)

- failure to receive acceptable grade(s) in a Departmental class.**
- failure to show up for a rehearsal, performance, work shift in box office/ front of house, crew call or strike as expected and required.**
- displaying of bad attitude and disrespect to fellow students and/or faculty.**
- egregious behavior revolving around a rehearsal or performance that falls outside of the proper etiquette established for that process.**
- consumption of alcohol, narcotics, smoking, or other illicit substances on the Lamar University campus or arriving on campus under the influence of these substances.**
- slander spoken in person or in texts/ over the internet about other students in the Department, Department Faculty, or the Department itself.**

All probations will be reviewed at the end of the following semester by the Department Chair and Faculty.

Any discipline designated as part of a probation is at the discretion of the

Department Chair. Probation can only be appealed to the Department Chair and/or the Chair's Designate at the Chair's discretion.

Academic Probation

Academic probation is administered by the University to students who fail to maintain an overall 2.0 GPA. Students on academic probation are not eligible for Departmental scholarships,* and must meet the Universities' requirements to get back in good standing before being allowed to participate in any theatre classes or productions. A grade appeal is the only means by which to challenge university academic probation.

***Being in good standing with the University does not automatically make a student eligible for all departmental scholarships.**

Suspension

The criteria outlined above for possible means for probation also apply to suspension. The terms for suspension include, but are not limited to the above listed terms. Suspension is administered at the direction of the Department Chair and Faculty. It may follow a period of probation or be an outright suspension. The length and terms of each individual suspension will be administered by the Department Chair on a case by case basis, and the suspension can only be appealed to the Department.

Dismissal

The Department of Theatre & Dance Faculty reserve the right to dismiss any student from the program following a majority faculty vote. This may occur as a result of any of the guidelines outlined for probation & suspension but is not limited to them. Dismissal may follow probation, suspension, or neither, as long as the student is given 24 hours notice of their dismissal in particularly egregious circumstances.

Unless a crime is committed and the student is dismissed from the University, the dismissed student will be allowed to finish out the semester and change majors at the beginning of the following semester (as long as they are in good standing with the University).

Reinstatement

A student may be reinstated into the program following suspension or dismissal at the discretion of the Department Chair and the Faculty. A reinstatement meeting with the Faculty review committee is mandatory.

******Students suspended or dismissed from the program are not welcome in rehearsal or performance spaces except as an audience member, and may be asked to leave classrooms or departmental offices if they are not present there as part of a class. Such unauthorized visits are considered trespassing, and LUPD will be called and dispatched if students refuse to leave.******

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THEATRE & DANCE MAJORS

1. Students must provide an email address that they check regularly to the Administrative Associate and should check that email daily.
2. All students must read the separate Department Safety Handbook (available online on the Department website) and submit, to the Department Office, by the tenth (10th) day of classes the signed acknowledgement form at the end of this handbook stating that you have read it and this document and agree to followed the policies and safety procedures outlined in both handbooks. Failure to do so will result in a loss of any assistantship, scholarship, or work study and may result in the student being dropped from courses in the major. Students will be notified of revisions at the first departmental meeting each semester.
3. By being a theatre and/or dance major, and signing the general agreement form at the end of this document (Appendix C), all students agree to the reasonable use of their image taken during classes, rehearsals and performances for publicity and marketing purposes for the department and university.
4. It is assumed that students will attend, and be punctual for, all rehearsals and performances for productions in which they are involved, whether working onstage or off. Failure to do so may result in not only dismissal from the production, but suspension from the department as well.
5. The Design/Computer Lab should be utilized, except for students and faculty during a class, only during designated posted hours, unless special permission is given by the Chair or AA. If you are the last one in the lab, you must close the door, ensuring that it is locked, and turn off the lights.
6. All majors are expected to see all dance concerts and theatre productions. All Theatre & Dance majors will receive one (1) complimentary ticket (comp) for each production in the season. If an individual (major or non) is involved in the production either onstage or backstage, they will receive one additional comp for a total of two (2). Comps must be requested in writing. On the first rehearsal, the stage manager will distribute a comp request form. This must be filled out and returned to the stage manager NO LATER THAN the Tuesday night rehearsal prior to opening. The stage manager will turn these forms in to the box office, who will process the requests and supply tickets to the stage manager, who will distribute them during final dress rehearsal.

Once comps are in possession of the requester, they are YOUR responsibility. Lost or damaged tickets WILL NOT be replaced. There will

be NO EXCHANGES. ALL REQUESTS ARE FINAL.

7. Intoxicating beverages and/or narcotics on university premises are forbidden by state law. Use of either on university premises will result in dismissal from the department. Smoking, or use of any tobacco products of any kind, is not allowed anywhere on the Lamar campus.
8. No one is to appear for rehearsals or class under the influence of intoxicating beverages or narcotics, whether consumed on or off the premises. Violation of this rule will result in dismissal from the production/concert.
9. No smoking, eating, or drinking in costume or in the dressing rooms prior to a performance (except water).
10. Except for designated special events, food and drink (except for water) are not allowed in the performance spaces.
11. When using rooms or other spaces for rehearsals, leave them neater than you found them. Replace all set pieces and/or furniture and leave the area clean for those who will use it next.
12. No equipment belonging to the University is to be taken from the theatre or studios. If you take anything off campus without the expressed permission of the faculty, it is considered and will be treated as a theft.

AMERICAN COLLEGE DANCE ASSOCIATION REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The American College Dance Association's (ACDA) primary focus is to support and promote the wealth of talent and creativity that is prominent throughout college and university dance departments. ACDA's sponsorship of regional conferences and the national dance festival provides the venue for students and faculty to engage in three days of performances, workshops, panels, and master classes taught by instructors from around the region and country. The conferences also provide the unique opportunity for students and faculty to have their dance works adjudicated by a panel of nationally recognized dance professionals in an open and constructive forum. Culminating with the presentation of pieces selected for their exemplary artistic quality, the conferences are the primary means for college and university dance programs to perform outside their own academic setting and be exposed to the diversity of the national college dance world.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION

1. Any Lamar student may attend and participate in ACDA. Priority will be given to dance majors followed by dance minors, followed by Lamar student general population.
2. According to ACDA policy, a student who graduates in December is eligible to participate in the conference held each spring semester. Departmental

policy requires said graduate to pay his/her own way.

3. Should a student rescind his/her ACDA commitment, he/she will be responsible for reimbursing the department for any conference, hotel or travel fees incurred by the department. Failure to do so may result in a hold on the students account, preventing the student from registering for classes the following semester.
4. ACDA participants may be required to perform at the conference. Auditions will be held to determine casting in faculty and student choreographed dances.
5. Each university is allowed to take one faculty and one student choreographed dance for adjudication in addition to one dance for the informal concert. Lamar students who wish for their work to be considered for ACDA MUST have their work adjudicated by Theatre & Dance faculty.
6. Any student travelling to a university-approved and funded event is expected to behave appropriately, always remembering that he or she is representing the University and the Department. Any behavior deemed inappropriate by the faculty and/or that is illegal will not be tolerated and will be grounds for dismissal from the Department and possibly the University.

LU Department of Theatre & Dance "General Handbook and Production Manual" and "Guidelines for Theatre Safety" Handbook

These handbooks have been prepared for your information and understanding of policies and safety procedures in the department. Please read both carefully. Upon completion of your review of these documents, sign the statement below and return it to the department office by the due date.

I, _____, have received and read a copy of the "General Handbook and Production Manual" as well as the "Guidelines for Theatre Safety," which outline the procedures and policies of this department, as well as the responsibilities of the employees and students to ensure safety within the department of Theatre & Dance.

I have familiarized myself with the contents of these guidelines. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept, and agree to comply with the information contained within these pages. I understand that these guidelines cannot cover every situation that may arise during my education/employment/assignment, but these are simply general policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures of the department.

I understand that this is not a contract and should not be deemed as such. However, should I fail to sign and submit this page to the Theatre Office by the tenth day of classes, I understand that I will be barred from working or taking classes in the department and dropped from the major.

Student's Name

X _____ / ____ / ____
Student's Signature