

# DRAMA

## BFA Acting Handbook

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2019 BFA Graduating Class

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## Our Program

The University of Alberta BFA Acting program provides a creative and educational climate in which an ensemble of actors learn and begin to practice the discipline of acting. This program is dedicated to building an understanding and furtherance of theatrical art and its role in society. It is designed to prepare students for a career in professional theatre, film, television, radio, computer games, and other media.

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# BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS IN ACTING PROGRAM

Acting students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the policies and procedures outlined in this document. Contact the Coordinator, Class Advisor or your instructors when questions arise.

## Introduction

Welcome to the BFA Acting Program in the Department of Drama at the University of Alberta. The purpose of the following material is to provide you with information, policies, and procedures of the Acting Program and the Department of Drama, and to supplement the information contained in the University of Alberta Calendar. Although you will be part of a comparatively large Drama department, enrollment in the Acting program is purposely limited to a small number of students so that faculty-student contact can be maximized, and each student can receive individual attention. During your three-year residency in the program you are encouraged to take full advantage of consultation with the Program Coordinator, your Class Advisor, Undergraduate Advisors, and other supervisors, instructors, and the Department Chair.

## Program Description and Objectives

### The Graduates

Successful graduates will be highly skilled. They will recognize that acting is not a narrow discipline, but incorporates a wide variety of complementary and supplementary skills including dance, singing, stage combat, clown, etc. They will be disciplined, passionate, flexible, committed, and creative.

They will know how to research a play and role, how to work independently and collaboratively, how to audition, and how to 'bank life experience' and integrate it into their work. They will have good technique (vocal and physical), script reading ability (cold and prepared), and a strong 'stage sense'.

They will be responsive to impulses from without and within: physical, emotional, creative, and intellectual. They will be respectful of the character, the audience, the theatre tradition and its place among all the arts, and of processes required to create fine theatre.

They will have a variety of survival skills including the ability and desire to: "keep the faith" when actual experience doesn't measure up to ideals and expectations; continue with professional development; and adapt and cope creatively with professional realities in theatre and related performance industries.

### The Program

The BFA Acting program is designed to serve the individual, the ensemble, and the art. Its aim is to educate, inspire, and train the students.

The faculty endeavor to encourage and engender the following in their students: discipline, passion, faith, trust, curiosity, independence, aspiration to excellence, a love of language, fascination for the art of the theatre, a high level of motivation, and a desire to confront society through their art.

The program encourages the development of creativity, imagination, concentration, intuition, knowledge of the acting process, and responsibility for the theatre that the students are making.

Throughout the residency students are encouraged to view theatre not only as specialists (actors), but also as a communal experience which involves writing, production in all its contexts, participation in play selection, and the governance of the Department. Students are given a voice, a share in the ownership of the workings and performances of the Department together with the responsibility that goes along with it. Opportunities are provided for the student actor to explore his or her creative self in a context that encourages risk, acting vulnerability, and idealistic passionate commitment to the art of theatre.

Instruction and performance projects require knowledge of theatre history together with reading and research skills designed to serve not only specific exercises, but to set the work at hand into the context of theatre as an art which has significance to society and to individual audience members at various levels: personal, local, provincial, national, and global. To this end, a dynamic relationship with the vital theatre community in Edmonton is essential, as is an awareness of the history and relevance of the Department of Drama and its alumni at local and national levels.

## **The Ensemble**

The concept of the ensemble involves the particular attitude of the actor towards the work and fellow actors. Working in an ensemble necessitates great awareness, concentration, and focus during rehearsal and performance, not only on the specific aspects of one's role but also on the constantly changing and evolving relationship with the other characters/performers. As a result, there must be mutual trust and respect developed among the performers with regard to their work, for each is sensitive and dependent on the others throughout the process. This does not mean that the actors must necessarily like one another personally or develop social relationships; an ensemble involves an artistic relationship in which the personality of the fellow performer is important only as it is reflected in the development of the character and the shaping of the scene. Within the work, actors can challenge each other and provide vigorous stimulation for the whole group, but not in terms of personal ego or jealousy; argument can and should take place, but quarrels are destructive to the ensemble. Professional etiquette and good manners are thus inseparable from the focus of the work.

This artistic and professional attitude is reflected in the rehearsal process, including the focused use of every rehearsal moment. The discipline is seen in the actor's intensive involvement in focusing on the relevant needs of the scenic work for that day, both when acting and when at the side of the rehearsal space. The active use of the time can be seen in how actors use opportunities when permitted to leave the rehearsal space to practice with each other on their own.

It should be evident that in an ensemble, the actor's attitude also involves the relationship to the other contributors to the production, such as the director, stage manager, coaches, designers, choreographer, musical director, and production staff. An ensemble involves the tight-knit cooperation of all its members to achieve its results; there is no room for a "we/they" attitude, either for the actors or anyone else.

## **Second Year**

The second year serves as basic training in acting, dance and movement, voice, speech, and singing. Individual and group exercises and improvisations form the basis for analysis of text, scene study, and character development. The dramatic material explored is from a selection of modern and contemporary realism.

Students present scenes and one play as an exercise before an invited audience at the end of the year. The focus of the year includes the following areas:

### **First Term:**

- Preliminary understanding of self in expression
- Initial understanding of and contribution to an ensemble
- Neutral Mask
- Understanding a text in terms of action, through the playing of an objective, given circumstances, creative character construction and development, and use of personal instinct and intuition

### **Second Term:**

- The actor's responsibility in the rehearsal process in realistic-based text
- Acquisition of research techniques in preparation of a role
- Application of action/objective
- Independent preparation, making offers, and exploring within rehearsal and performance contexts
- Presentation of a full-length play as a public acting exercise

## **Third Year**

The third year focuses on extension and “period styles” in the course work in acting, singing, dance and movement, voice and speech, and characterization. This work includes Shakespeare and plays selected from Greek, Restoration, 18th Century, Modern, etc., and includes, a clown unit and two productions in the Corner Stage Theatre. The aim of the third year includes the following:

### **First Term:**

- Ability to build and portray character and extend range of expression
- Initial skills in the understanding and ability to work with formal/heightened language and movement
- Ensemble development

### **Second Term:**

- Ability to understand, explore, and portray character and movement within a period context
- Ability to understand and use heightened language
- Ensemble development

## **Fourth Year**

During the fourth and final year, the focus is on performance and the ensemble participates in the Studio Theatre season as the resident company. In addition to the Studio Theatre productions, there are workshop level acting exercises with MFA Directors, a dance showcase culminating performance, studio classes in dance and movement, voice and speech, dialects and singing, and professional workshops in film, television, and broadcast voice.

The aim of the fourth year includes the following:

- Consolidation of skills for preparing independently at a professional level for each stage of rehearsal and performance.
- The ability to prepare, rehearse, and perform over an extended run at a professional level in full production conditions.
- Understanding and practicing appropriate deportment and protocol in relation to all technical and production aspects of professional theatre.
- Acquisition of beginning skills in film and broadcast acting techniques.
- Ability to contribute fully to a total ensemble.

### **Residence Requirement**

Students must normally complete the BFA Acting degree program as full-time students over a consecutive three years of courses at the University of Alberta.

### **Academic Performance**

To qualify for the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting, students must have successfully completed the curriculum, have met all promotion, continuation, final year, and residence requirements, and receive the recommendation of the Department.

### **Punctuality and Attendance**

- Punctuality and attendance are considered fundamental in professional theatre, where failure to be on time, ready, and present may result in dismissal.
- Punctuality and attendance are the responsibility of each individual.
- In BFA Acting, absences and lateness will affect your grade. Why?
  - » BFA Acting readies you for professional conditions and expectations.
  - » Classes are experiential, work cannot be replaced; it is missed.
  - » Lateness or absence affects others, as Acting is interactive and involves pair and group work.
- Standard medical or dental checkups and appointments with photographers, bankers, auditions, etc. should be scheduled outside of class or rehearsal time.
- Urgent dentist, doctor, or specialist appointments may be scheduled during class hours, if there are no other options. Communication in advance with all instructors is imperative; follow the procedure below.
- If you are ill enough that you are unable to work or if you are contagious so a threat to others' health, you should stay home. However, you must follow the procedure below.

### **Absence Notification Procedure**

If you have to be absent, follow this procedure for all classes and rehearsals. Before class(es) begin, **inform the BFA Acting Coordinator and all your instructors and directors (by email)**



State that an absence will occur and why. It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that each instructor for the day is informed. **This does not, however, constitute an excused absence.**

### **Definitions:**

**Unexcused Absence:** you are not present in a rehearsal or class (including independent work sessions and rehearsals that fall within class hours)

**Excused Absence:** you are not in any of the above, however you have obtained permission for the absence (see procedures below)

### **Daily Classes**

Any unexcused absences and lateness in classes will lead to a lowering of the grade. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be able to attend the class, but it will be recorded as an absence.

The course grade will be lowered for each unexcused absence.

It is the student's responsibility to find out if there are ways to catch up on work missed.

SEE EXCUSED ABSENCES BELOW

### **Rehearsal**

Follow the same notification procedure as for classes and also inform your Stage Manager.

Absence from the first rehearsal of an Acting project may result in removal from the show and a recasting of the role. This includes unexcused lateness in returning to class at the beginning of any term or after Reading Week.

Unexcused absence(s) from a rehearsal of a project or scene study unit will lead to a lower grade (see grading impact above) and possible failure, and/or recasting of the role.

SEE EXCUSED ABSENCES BELOW

### **Requesting an Excused Absence**

In some circumstances, an excused absence may be granted. Usually these are concerned with health or extenuating circumstances.

### **Advance Negotiation**

An excused absence may be granted after consultation with your instructors, Class Advisor and the Acting Coordinator. To request an excused absence, email your Class Advisor and the Acting Coordinator, cc. to instructors who will be affected. Your email should state the reason for the request, the time and date, and list the classes that will be affected. Where possible, outline how the absence will be handled, as arranged with instructors or directors, so that there is a satisfactory plan in place.

### **Sudden Absences**

Occasionally someone suddenly has an emergency or significant (or contagious) illness. Where advance negotiation for excused absence is impossible, it is your responsibility to:

- Inform coordinator and instructors before classes start (using procedure above). This does not, however, constitute an excused absence, so read on . . .



- Follow up as soon as possible to request an “excused” designation and address possibilities for catching up with missed work (note that this is not always possible). Email your Class Advisor and the Coordinator of BFA Acting, cc to your instructors.

### **Impact of Absence on Grading**

The course grade will be lowered for each unexcused absence.

The participation grade or potentially a course project grade may be affected by Excused Absences, however the impact on your grade can be minimal when appropriate negotiation or discussion is held with your instructors. Each case is different and communication before and, when that is impossible, immediately after the absence is key.

After three absences you are required to meet with your Class Advisor and the BFA Acting Coordinator. In certain cases the course instructor will also be present.

## **Policy on Student Activity Outside of Required Coursework and Requests for Absence**

### **Employment**

The policy of the B.F.A. Acting Program is that students are advised not to take on activities outside their regular course work. In the case of financial need, where the student needs to work in order to be able to continue in the program, the work should not unduly interfere with a student’s progress in the program and must not take place during scheduled classes or rehearsals.

### **Creative Projects**

Classes and rehearsals must take priority when contemplating work outside the department and permission for absences will only be given for extraordinary opportunities. If a student wishes to take on an outside creative project or attend auditions, commercial shoots, etc., they must first follow the Advance Negotiation procedure, see above.

- Check with the appropriate instructors to determine that the projected absence/work will not interfere with your development or have a detrimental effect on the work of other members of the class.
- Then apply in writing to the Coordinator of the Acting Program, cc to Class Advisor and affected instructors. Specify all details, including dates and arrangements with and permission from instructors. Apply in sufficient time for the application to be reviewed by the Acting Committee.

## **Counseling of Students**

Address issues as they arise, so you can continue your work in the most productive way. The level of academic counseling is as follows:

- Instructor
- Class Advisor
- BFA Acting Coordinator
- Department Chair
- Class Representatives

## Class Representatives

Each class elects a class representative. Duties and responsibilities include:

- To act as liaison between the class and various administrative or instructional persons; e.g. regarding scheduling special events, scheduling difficulties, exam conflicts, overlapping assignments, etc.
- To call meetings of the class to: discuss proposals for the upcoming year; organize funding for the audition tour; review the day-to-day operation of the class, etc. Classes have found that bi-weekly meetings are useful.
- To report at meetings of the Acting Committee on:
  - » successes, strengths, weaknesses, and problems that occurred within the instructional time frame
  - » proposals for the following term or year

Fourth Year appoints/elects a Representative for Drama Council and two Representatives for Student Rep meetings with the Chair. Third Year appoints/elects an Alternate for each of these meetings. Experienced representatives should pass on in detail the duties and functions of this position, to incoming Representatives.

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### Pre-Specialization:

- 1 year of Arts, including English 101 or 110, and a maximum of three drama courses. Drama Courses may include: DR 150, 103 and 240.

### Second Year

- Drama 208 Theatre History I
- Drama 203 Theoretical Analysis of Play Texts
- Drama 334 Beginning Movement & Fencing
- Drama 335 Movement in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 344 Voice and Speech
- Drama 345 Speech in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 355 Acting in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 356 Acting-Technique I
- Drama 358 Acting Technique II
- Drama 393 Production Lab
- Drama 399 Explorations in Acting I/ Singing

### Third Year

- Drama 308 The Modernist Stage
- Drama 312 Modern Canadian Theatre

- Drama 434 Theatre Movement
- Drama 435 Movement in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 444 Advanced Voice and Speech
- Drama 445 Speech in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 455 Acting in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 456 Advanced Acting Technique I
- Drama 458 Advanced Acting Technique II
- Drama 499 Explorations in Acting II/Singing

## Fourth Year

- Drama 534 Advanced Movement
- Drama 535 Movement in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 544 Dialects and Accents/Language Styles
- Drama 545 Speech in Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 554 Rehearsal and Performance
- Drama 595 Professional and Critical Orientation
- Drama 599 Explorations in Acting III / Auditioning for the Camera

# REHEARSAL and PRODUCTION PROCEDURES

## BFA Acting Productions

The BFA Acting program stresses production experience and over the program each group presents a number of exercises and productions to the public. There is a profound and integral inter-relationship between all your instructors and course content. All class productions and in-class performance projects present you with an opportunity to apply all the instruction that you have received. Usually, each year offers a variety of in-class performances and the following public exercises:

### Second Year

Course	Project	Term/Date	Room
DR 334	Fight Night - Fencing Demonstration	November	Corner Stage
DR 355/8	One performance exercise - minimal production support	March/April	3-125 FAB

### Third Year

Course	Project	Term/Date	Room
DR 456-1	Physical Theatre Creation	October	Corner Stage
DR 434	Fight Night - Stage Combat Scenes	November	Corner Stage
DR 458-2	Shakespeare Presentation	March/April	Corner Stage

## Fourth Year Productions

### Studio Theatre Productions

Studio Theatre is the Department's main stage, presented in the Timms Centre for the Arts. Normally the season consists of four shows. Each student is in three of the four productions.

Two of these shows are MFA Directing thesis show which each cast about half of the BFA Acting class plus two professionals. The design teams for Studio productions are drawn from BFA and MFA Design students, as well as guest and faculty designers; some are MFA Design thesis shows. Stage Management and Production personnel are students in the BFA Technical Theatre and Stage Management programs when they are available.

### FAB Productions

Course	Project	Term/Date	Room
Projects	During the Studio 2 rehearsals and performance, some students will perform in MFA Directing project(s).	Fall	3-125
Projects	During the Studio 3 rehearsals and performance, some students will work on MFA Directing new play project(s)	Winter	TBA
DR 534	Dance/Movement Final Showcase	January	BLT

### Limited Productions

The Department has a wide variety of productions throughout the academic year. There are varying levels of production support available, depending upon the nature of the class and project. *Second and Third Year BFA Acting projects receive minimal technical support.* The intent is to provide elements necessary to the acting experience rather than to present a fully designed show.

## CASTING POLICY

Full length play projects are an important part of the pedagogy of the BFA. There is one such performance project in second year, two in third year, and four in fourth year at Studio Theatre. Each student is cast in three of the four Studio shows. These projects give the student the opportunity to participate in the ensemble building of a fully staged play and to experience the playing of the arc of a story from beginning to end.

All casting decisions are made by the Acting Committee who work in conjunction with the director/instructor of each project. The Acting Committee makes these casting decisions by considering the optimal learning potential of each role for each student. Size of role is not necessarily the best determinant of challenge and growth. In second year, students are cast in the play project at the end of second term in relation to what they are able to handle at this stage of their development. In third year, students are cast whenever possible for range; in roles that will stretch them, even if they would not likely be cast in such roles in the profession. Roles for the Studio season operate independently of any previous casting, and model for students the challenge of professional practice. In the Studio year, we wish students to be shown to maximum advantage and cast them to showcase their ability. The Acting

Committee strives to give good opportunities to every student but realistically plays have their own demands and some casting must serve the play and production, even if it is not ideal for an actor.

The program is committed to non-traditional casting which means that we do not consider anyone's ethnicity, skin color, body shape, or gender as a final determinant in how they are cast.

Roles must be earned. All your work, in every course, is part of preparing for public performances. Casting takes into account your demonstrated capacity to undertake the work required of any role for which you are deemed suitable.

## Auditions

For in-house projects and Studio Theatre, auditioning/casting procedures are flexible, and designed according to the wishes of the acting instructor/director and the experiential needs of the students. Casting is the joint responsibility of the acting instructor/director and the Acting Committee.

## TICKETS FOR PERFORMANCES

**In House Productions:** Sign-up to attend in-house productions is typically done online. Stay tuned for details.

**Studio Theatre:** Tickets can be obtained through the Timms Centre for the Arts Box Office, 780-492-2495. Each Fourth Year BFA Acting student is allotted two complimentary tickets for each of their Studio Theatre productions. A sign-up sheet is posted in the Green Room for each of these productions. Fourth year BFA Acting students who are not in a specific Studio Theatre show are entitled to 1 ticket for themselves to see their classmates perform. You can book this by emailing Timms Box Office at [uastudio@ualberta.ca](mailto:uastudio@ualberta.ca) for your comp booking.

**Recent Studio Theatre, 4th year BFA Acting productions include:**

- *Weasel*, directed by Kevin Sutley, 2022
- *She Kills Monsters*, directed by Mieko Ouchi, 2022
- *God of Carnage*, directed by Patricia Darbasie, 2021
- *All for Love*, directed by Peter Hinton, 2019
- *School for Scandal*, directed by Mitchell Cushman, 2018
- *The Government Inspector*, directed by Ron Jenkins, 2017
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Marti Maraden, 2016
- *The Dream Play*, directed by David Kennedy, 2015
- *The Threepenny Opera*, directed by Brian Deedrick, 2015
- *Buffini Fest: Loveplay*, directed by Jan Selman / *Blavatsky's Tower*, directed by Sandra Nicholls, 2014
- *Bloody Poetry*, directed by Glenda Sterling, 2013
- *Whisper*, a collective creation guided by Jonathan Christenson & Brette Gerecke, 2012
- *Nicholas Nickleby*, directed by Brian Deedrick, 2011
- *Robert Zucco*, directed by Stefan Dzeparoski, 2009
- *Major Barbara*, directed by Jim Mezon, 2009
- *Twelfth Night*, directed by Mary Vingoe, 2008

In addition to regular faculty, visiting artists frequently teach/direct productions and projects. In recent years, guest artists have included: Leah Cherniack, Micheline Chevrier, Jonathan Christenson, Marianne Copithorne, Pat Darbasie, Brian Deedrick, Brian Dooley, Bill Dow, Stefan Dzeperoski, Susan Ferley, Jim Guedo, Dean Gilmour, Richard Greenblatt, Peter Hinton, James MacDonald, Marti Maraden, Suzie Martin, Jim Mezon, Mieko Ouchi, Jean-Stephane Roy, and Mary Vingoe.

Every 2 or 3 years a new play is commissioned and premiered at Studio Theatre. Normally the Lee Playwright in Residence creates a play for a specific class to perform at Studio Theatre.

## OTHER

### Room Bookings

Room bookings for students enrolled in Drama classes are coordinated online. You will be emailed the URL for the sign-up page.

Students are entitled to a maximum of 2 hours a day, up to 10 hours a week across all rooms. Rooms bookings are offered on a first-come-first-served basis. This time is strictly to be used for activities related to drama classes.

The website is updated each Friday for the following Monday through Sunday. The website will be down each Friday from 8:00am-10:00am to update the following week's availability.

If you encounter problems, or have questions or concerns, please contact Production and Operations Assistant, Emily Pole at [prodops@ualberta.ca](mailto:prodops@ualberta.ca).

### Withdrawal of Classes for Technical Rehearsals and Performances

All classes except Theatre Studies Classes (eg: Drama 208, 203, 308 and 312) are withdrawn, as follows.

2nd & 3rd year tech/performance week as follows:

- Thursday all classes off except for acting class
- Friday all classes off except for Theatre Studies and Acting class

After the weekend production:

- Monday all classes off except for Theatre Studies

In 4th Year, classes are withdrawn for those in a Studio Production on Monday through Friday during the week of the opening night.

In the 4th (senior year) we aim to follow Equity guidelines as closely as the conditions allow.

Equity Agreements Guidelines state regarding a "Designated Day Off":

- The Actor shall be entitled to one scheduled full "Designated Day Off" which shall be free of rehearsals and/or performances.

- A “Designated Day Off” shall be defined as a full 24 hours in addition to the standard 12 hour rest break at the end of each workday.
- The regularly scheduled day off within each work week may be changed by unanimous consent of the Actors on not less than one week’s notice.
- In no case may there be more than eight days between Designated Days Off.

(A full day off is one free of rehearsals, performances and/or teaching responsibilities). Normally at Studio Theatre, the day off is Sunday.

## **Coaching**

Movement and Voice Coaches are assigned to most BFA Acting productions during the 3rd and 4th year. Coaching sessions are different from voice and movement technique classes. The objective of coaching is to help the actor incorporate these techniques into the specific productions.

- Coaches give verbal or written notes related to the specific needs of the project and the student. These notes are usually given during the note period of the rehearsal either by the Coach or Director, or posted on the notice board.
- If there has been a change while the Coach has been away, it is the student’s responsibility to advise the Coach if notes cannot be incorporated because of changes in the production. In that way, the Coach is informed as to why a given note may not have been acted upon.
- The student will benefit from coaching if s/he approaches the coach with a specific area of concern (i.e.: ways to achieve interpretive, physical, vocal, or stylistic choices).
- It is the student’s responsibility to understand the notes given by Coaches, write them down, and incorporate them into the work.
- The Department assigns Coaches to a limited number of contact hours according to the year level and needs of the production.
- Actors should be flexible to the changing needs of the production. Coaching sessions explore a variety of options that the actor then takes back into rehearsal. The actor’s final choices will be decided between the actor and the director.
- In preparation for each coaching session the actor is responsible for their own warm up before the scheduled start time of the coaching session. The actor should bring all relevant costume, footwear and prop items necessary for developing their role.
- Actors are responsible for their own warm ups before rehearsal and performance.
- Coaching sessions will be initiated either by the actor, director or coach and scheduled by stage management.

# **THE ACTOR’S RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **CALLS**

### **Call Boards**

A Call Board for each of the three years of the BFA Acting program is located at the south end of the bulletin board opposite the Drama Office. These Call Boards are



the main centre of communication among the members of the classes and the faculty and staff.

Studio Rehearsal Calls are posted in Timms Green Room.

## Email

Email is also used extensively. Make sure that you and the Instructor, Director and/or Stage Manager are clear about communication protocols so that you can receive and respond in a timely fashion.

**Students are expected to consult their Board and University Email address at least twice a day.**

## Rehearsal

- Calls for rehearsal are never missed without permission from the director and notification to stage management.
- All calls begin exactly at the time posted on the call board. Be sure to arrive at least 10-15 minutes before the call; be ready to work when places are called.
- Extra calls are often made, and you are subject to a call at any time. Be sure to clear all obligatory business and appointments with the director and stage management before the first rehearsal. Do not make obligatory appointments during the periods that could be used for rehearsals.

## Performance

- The half hour call is considered a deadline call; be in the theatre well before this. Be certain you know what deadline the stage manager has set as a stage door call.
- The stage door call is the latest time that the stage manager needs you in the dressing room area. If you are not signed in at that time you are considered absent from the call.
- Always sign yourself in on the sign-in sheet. Never sign in someone else.
- Curtain Call - Never break or change the rehearsed curtain call for any reason; the stage manager is responsible for all calls.

# REHEARSAL AND PRODUCTION PROTOCOL AND ETIQUETTE

- Be sure to get a good night's sleep before all rehearsal days.
- Never drink alcohol or take drugs before a rehearsal or performance.
- Be very careful of your voice and your body. If you feel vocal or muscular strain in rehearsal, tell the director immediately.
- Plan a personal warm-up before each rehearsal and performance.
- No matter who is responsible for calls, the final responsibility for an entrance is yours during rehearsal and performance.
- Do not leave the rehearsal hall without gaining permission from the director or stage management.
- Make certain the rehearsal of your scene is finished before you leave the immediate rehearsal hall area.
- Make certain you know what to work on before the next rehearsal

- Always remain for director's notes at the end of rehearsal
- Unless you are involved in the scene change, clear the area immediately
- Never touch lighting, sound, or stage equipment unless you are so assigned
- Always try out a new rehearsal or performance prop or stage business until you are secure, before rehearsal or performance.
- Respect all those involved in the production - their schedules, and priorities
- Only members of the company are allowed to attend rehearsals. All others must have permission from the director to attend, a day ahead, if possible.

## **BASIC REHEARSAL PRACTICES**

### **The Script:**

- Make sure your script has plenty of room to record notes of blocking, character, etc.
- Be sure to put your name, address, and phone number in your script.
- Note, in sequence, the rehearsal units in which you appear, as well as the page number where each unit begins.
- Use a pencil to write down all movement and stage business. General notes are often best kept at the back of the script.
- Ask well ahead of time if there is an off-book date.
- When you drop a line, hold your position and characterization and say "line". Do not snap your fingers. Do not vocalize your frustration.

### **The Director:**

- Never approach the director while s/he is working with a scene in progress.
- Never walk between the director and the rehearsal.
- Never ask another director for assistance or coaching unless you have cleared this with your director.
- Determine quickly how your director likes to work and find ways to use this to your advantage. Do not try to change directorial procedures or techniques to suit your method of working.
- Directors interrupt rehearsals - actors do not.

### **The Cast:**

- The rehearsal space is just that. Respect the space and your fellow actors and their process. Extraneous talking and distracting behaviour should be avoided at all times. Suggestions, criticisms, prompts are not your responsibility and are not to be offered.
- Never speak to, or distract in any way, an actor waiting for an entrance cue.
- Never speak to, or distract in any way, an actor in warm-up or in preparation for their character.
- Do not eat when a rehearsal is in progress.

- Do not coach another actor.

### **Rehearsal Props:**

- When your hands are required to be occupied with props for a scene, use rehearsal props as soon as you are off-book. Use them during every rehearsal until performance props are provided.
- Return rehearsal props to the props table at the end of the rehearsal.
- Never touch another actor's props, and never handle or touch weapons unless assigned to do so.

### **Performance Props:**

- Always return props to the props table as you are leaving the acting area.
- Always check the prop table before the show begins to make certain that all your props are there.
- Report a broken prop to stage management.
- Never sit on performance furniture when it is stored backstage.
- Never touch another character's props and never handle or touch weapons unless assigned to do so.

## **COSTUMES**

### **Rehearsal Costumes**

Students must provide rehearsal costumes (rehearsal skirts, dark slacks, character shoes) for Drama 356, 358, 456, 458, and 554. Additional rehearsal costumes may be signed out by the director through the Wardrobe Supervisor for FAB, 492-2484.

#### **Please note:**

- For rehearsals, select clothing appropriate to the costume you will ultimately be wearing. Find clothes that provide you with a feeling of the character and the period you are working in.
- Once you have a rehearsal costume, wear it to each and every rehearsal until it is replaced by your performance costume.
- You must be wearing your rehearsal costume when places are called. Adjust your time of arrival to allow for this.
- Wear shoes to rehearsal similar to those you will wear in performance. Have them on before the rehearsal start time.

### **Costume Appointments/Fittings**

The following rules of etiquette should be observed when attending costume fittings:

- Always show up on time for your fitting.
- Do not touch anything in the costume shop unless you have permission.

- Upon arrival – take your belongings into the fitting room and keep your clothes/footwear out of the way.
- Never bring food or drink into the costume shop.
- Make sure that you are not wearing lipstick, heavy make-up, powdery antiperspirant, perfume (especially musk), or an excess of hair product. These items may stain the costume.
- Observe good rules of hygiene.
- Have your hair up and out of the way.
- Wear proper underwear and socks. This means:
  - » Men: Briefs/boxer briefs
  - » Women: Panties (NO thong underwear), and wear correct style of bra(s) for your intended costume
- After your first fitting, bring shoes and corsets to following fittings.
- Once you are in costume, make sure that you are free to move in ways that are required in the play. It's better to know in advance that there is a problem rather than risk harming the costume and yourself.
- Talk to the designer during fittings about ways to use and wear your costume. Do not wait until dress parade.
- Ask the designer for a clear idea of make-up and decide how much of this is your responsibility.
- Discuss the accessories that you will need to work with (i.e. watches, handkerchiefs, purses, fans, swords, etc.) with the fitter and/or designer
- Acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the designer, cutter and sewers. Courtesy is always appreciated.

### **Handling the Costume in Performance:**

- Leave personal jewelry at home
- Handle all costumes with great care
- Off-stage, carry a train until the moment before an entrance; skirts and capes are held so they do not touch the floor and are pulled up in the rear so that they are not sat upon.
- It is your responsibility to be completely dressed, even if you have dressers to help you.
- When completely dressed, check your costume card to be sure you have not forgotten anything.
- When you are finished wearing a costume, immediately return it to a hanger and replace all accessories neatly.
- Never receive guests or leave the theatre in any part of your costume or make-up.
- Always finish your make-up, including powder, before putting on your costume. If the costume goes over your head, put a cloth over your head to protect the make-up and costume.
- Always remove your costume before taking off your make-up.
- Be very careful of neck make-up. Except in a few cases, base colour can be blended out an inch or more below the chin.

## Hair Policy

Actors need to transform, and hair style is often part of that transformation. In the senior year, if a designer or director deem hairstyle absolutely necessary to the integrity of the directorial concept, they may request that hair length be altered, sometimes significantly. Hair colouring may also be asked for if the colour can be returned to the original shade at the end of the show should the actor choose, (the product used should be considered for the health of the actor and the condition of the actor's hair). If you are not willing to alter your hair length or colour, you should inform the Acting Coordinator by the end of third year so this can be discussed before casting. Where issues arise, the decision must be made only after consultation with the Actor, Directors, Designers, and Acting Coordinator. The impact on the following show and the design plans for the actor's next character also need to be taken in to account. Hair is ultimately the actors' property, and the student actor cannot be compelled to cut or dye their hair.

Moustaches and beards can be seen to function as masks and are therefore discouraged unless a period piece asks for them.

## Hygiene

Be aware that, as an actor, you will be working in close proximity with other actors and, therefore, attention to matters of personal hygiene such as frequent showering and teeth cleaning is essential.

# TECHNICAL, DRESS, AND PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES

## Technical Rehearsals

- This most difficult of all rehearsal times can be greatly helped by the complete attention and cooperation of the entire company. You have had up to eight weeks to coordinate the text, the crews often have only one day to coordinate the entire play.
- The stage manager is in charge and conducts the progression of the rehearsal, cutting from scene to scene according to the needs of the technical staff.
- Never question the authority of the stage manager or technical crew heads.
- Remain within call, attentive, and do not engage in unnecessary conversations
- Actors can be of great help to the technicians by holding their characterization from scene to scene and by adhering to performance timing during the technical rehearsal.

## Performance Procedures:

- Sign-in at the stage door or stage manager's board before the half hour curtain call.
- Do not invite anyone backstage until after the final curtain.
- Do not bring radios, chess sets, cards, or other diverting devices to the backstage or dressing room area during the run of the show.
- Leave all jewelry, money, and valuables at home or in the care of stage management. Never leave valuable clothing or accessories in the dressing rooms.

- An actor or crew member not working on a show in progress should not use the dressing room and shower areas nor leave books and personal items in these areas. Never use the dressing rooms for study, lunch, or chat during the run of a show.
- Maintain a professional attitude of quiet and concentration in the make-up and dressing room areas.
- Never comment to the other actors or technicians about their work in the show while it is progress. If you have a criticism or suggestion, take this to the director if it involves another actor; to the stage manager if it involves a technician.

## **Preparation and Strike**

Actors must expect to help with the set-up, when requested, and be present for the strike for all projects throughout the three year program. The stage manager or technical director will give you assignments or let you know how best to help the process. This may also include the setting up and taking down of chairs and risers for performances in FAB.

## **Other**

### **Financial Responsibilities of the Student**

Students are responsible for the following expenses:

- Tuition and University fees
- Books
- Scripts for all projects
- Items of clothing (dance footwear, tights, leotards, rehearsal skirts, pants, knee pads, character shoes)
- Water bottles, yoga mats

### **Reference Letters**

Students who wish reference letters from Faculty or Guests should ask in person at least three weeks ahead of the mailing deadline (when possible). If the Referee agrees, the students should provide, in writing, the name of the scholarship, the criteria for the scholarship and pertinent names and addresses. Be sure the referee knows how the organization wants to receive the recommendation (eg: email, snail mail, and whether it is to go via you or be sent independently).

### **Production Calendar**

Please review as this calendar shows updated meetings, deadlines, and the production schedule for the academic year.

This is accessed on the Google Calendar; arrange for access through **Emily Pole**, Production and Operations Assistant.

## Personnel

These are some of the faculty and staff that acting students are likely to come across through the production elements of the program. They do many duties within the department but noted below is where you are likely to run into them. Introduce yourself!

- **Larry Clark** – Technical Director for Timms
- **Lee O'Reilly** – Technical Director for FAB
- **John Raymond** – Stage Management Supervisor (BLT and Timms)
- **Jane Kline** – Property Master
- **Joanna Johnston** – Wardrobe Supervisor
- **Julie Davie** – Costume Cutter

## Related Documents and Appendices

The following documents are referred to in this Handbook, and should be obtained, read in detail and referred to throughout the program:

### From Coordinator

- Department of Drama Rehearsal Policy Document
- General Department of Drama Handbook
- BFA Acting Weekly Schedule (posted on your Call Board)

### From Production & Operations Assistant, Emily Pole

- Department of Drama Production Calendar  
*Please also check the online Department Calendar often for updates.*

### From Venue Operations Manager, Iain Graham

- Administrative Info for Drama Department Productions  
Found here <https://www.ualberta.ca/drama/resources/policies>  
*Note: Please also follow up with the Theatre Administrator for questions or clarifications.*

## Checklist

- ☐ Read: Department of Drama General Handbook
- ☐ Read: BFA Acting Handbook
- ☐ Read through "Related Documents" list so you know where to look for information
- ☐ Crowdsource plays to read. Your class may want to suggest plays for Studio Theatre considerations. It is in your interest to suggest plays that serve the whole class well and that interest you. NOTE: your play suggestions will be very welcome, as the Studio Theatre Committee considers many criteria.