**6.15.2020**

**University of Wyoming Department of Theatre and Dance**

Best Practices for Faculty and Student Productions

(This is a living document designed to be changed as needs change)

**University Policies**

At all times university policies will be enforced.

**Critical Concerns**

The department and university will not tolerate sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimidation, racist comments or acts, aggressive or abusive behavior, discrimination, unwanted physical contact, stalking, offensive comments/jokes or body language, or any conduct in violation of University rules, UW Student Code of Conduct and UW Uni-Regs Code of Conduct. If anyone is the recipient of such behavior or witnesses such behavior, they will immediately report it to the Department Chair as well as the University Title IX Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

**Definition of Terms**

The Production Stage Manager shall be referred to in this document as ‘PSM’. Each production’s human capital, which will include all performers, managers, directors, designers, and any associated Faculty and Staff, shall be referred to in this document as “The Company”.

**Safety Concerns**

Safety is the Department’s primary concern. No student, faculty or staff member should have to work in unsafe conditions.

1. All safety concerns must be reported immediately to the department Chair, Production Manager, Technical Director, faculty and/or PSM as appropriate.
2. It is the Faculty/Staff/PSM’s duty to stop rehearsal until the safety concern is resolved and incumbent on them to determine when the concern is addressed, and activity may continue.

**General Concerns**

Everyone has the right to air grievances, voice concerns and suggest needed improvements without retaliation or intimidation. Remaining silent does not help the production or build a strong ensemble, nor does it solve the problem.

1. If a performer or crew member has a grievance, concern, or suggestion, they should immediately talk to the faculty and/or staff member in charge of their area of production.
2. If a student is uncomfortable talking to the faculty or staff member, or feel their concerns are not being taken seriously, they should then speak to their advisor, a faculty member or staff member with whom they feel comfortable, and/or the department Chair.
3. If a student is uncomfortable reporting to any faculty, staff, or the department Chair, they should contact the Dean of Students or University Title IX Office as appropriate to the concern.

**Season Selection**

The Department’s goal is to stage a season of creative, diverse, educational and entertaining live productions in various formats.

1. The faculty will consider a wide variety of factors when evaluating potential productions. These include, but are not limited to, departmental faculty and student needs, talent pools, academic/production calendar, available budget, and awareness of diversity.
2. During the season selection process, reasonable effort will be made to solicit suggestions and comments from the departmental community. All suggestions will be considered during this process and evaluated for potential alignment with the aforementioned factors.
3. Inclusive scripts and productions that allow for diverse casting will be given absolute priority. On the occasions that a script which limits casting possibilities is accepted for production (Example: plays which specify one gender such as Steel Magnolias, or those that apply to one race such as A Raisin in the Sun), the faculty will ensure that the rest of the season offsets the inequity.
4. Scripts and projects that might be perceived as racist, sexist, homophobic, etc., should be carefully considered before inclusion in a season. If such works are selected, the director or choreographer will document how the production will provide educational opportunities and lead to a discussion of historical, political, and cultural issues. The director or choreographer will document how they can legally remove, conceal, or alter such elements.

**Audition Notices**

All students are encouraged, and scholarship students are required to audition for every performance opportunity. Students, faculty, and staff must be informed about the time, location, and expectations of all auditions.

1. Audition notices will be posted on the call board and the department website at least one week in advance.
2. Auditions and the location of the call board will be announced by professors in all their classes before the audition. All reasonable effort will be made to distribute this information as early as possible to best accommodate student planning.
3. All audition notices will list:

* Location and time of the audition.
* Character names, genders, pronouns, and race or that a particular role is open to any ethnicity.
* How to prepare for the audition.
* Where to find the scripts or sides.
* Callback date and time.
* If it is an open or closed audition (If open, who will be present during the audition).
* If the script or dance concert contains any touching, intimacy, acrobatics, tumbling, nudity, singing, violence, language, choreography or fight choreography.

**Auditions**

Auditions will be fair and efficient. Performers, directors, choreographers, and stage managers must work together and fulfill their responsibilities.

**Student Responsibilities:**

1. Read the script in its entirety before the audition.
2. Prepare for the audition.
3. List all known conflicts on the audition form.
4. Over-commitment can be a problem for many students. If students are auditioning for student productions (7220 Cabaret, ASOPA show, senior projects, ACDA student choreography, etc.), they must consider their availability without compromising academic and main season commitments.
5. If not cast, it is the student’s responsibility to initiate conversations with faculty about how they can improve in auditions and increase chances of being cast in future productions.

**Director and Choreographer Responsibilities:**

1. Audition notices will be posted one week in advance.
2. If the production contains touching, sexual content, intimacy, nudity, and/or violence, it will be clearly stated on the audition notice.
3. Scenes of sexual content, touching, intimacy, nudity, and/or violence, will never be required during an audition.
4. Audition notices will list exactly what is required to audition, and directors and choreographers will uphold those requirements during the audition. For example, if participants have not been asked to prepare a song, they will not be expected to sing.
5. Directors and choreographers will strive to limit auditions to three hours, each with no more than two callbacks. It is understood that productions with large casts, multiple audition sub-groupings, and/or complex text and casting requirements may need extended audition time. This will be stated in the audition notice.
6. If directors or choreographers wish to keep background or ensemble cast members at rehearsal for the entire rehearsal process, it will be stated in the audition notice.

**Casting**

It is the department’s goal to cast as many students as possible during each academic year.

1. Casting is not guaranteed, and no director or choreographer is required to cast students they think are wrong for a role; however, the faculty is dedicated to giving qualified students every opportunity to perform.
2. The faculty will meet at the beginning of every semester before auditions to discuss which students are being given too many leading roles and which are not being sufficiently cast. Casting suggestions will be made as to how to achieve greater equity.
3. Directors and choreographers are encouraged to take risks with their casting, to make non-traditional choices and be inclusive.
4. Directors and choreographers should address concerns with students regarding academic or employment workload when casting.

**Opting Out Of A Production:**

On rare occasions, a student might desire to opt out of a particular play, musical, or dance concert for personal reasons or because they disagree with the content. It is important to note that performers often play roles they personally do not agree with, but if the student does feel they must opt out, they have the right to do so without it affecting the results of their next audition. If a student chooses to opt out, they must:

1. Meet with their advisor to discuss their reason for non-participation.
2. Offer the director/choreographer reason(s) for non-participation.
3. Before the audition, notify the director/choreographer of their intentions

COVID-19 addendum May 16.2020

During the proposed return to campus in September, 2020, and possibly in January 2021, a student might desire to opt out of face-to-face auditioning, rehearsal and performance due to health concerns for scheduled on campus live performances. Students are encouraged to let their advisor, or department head know, but we are happy to accommodate this request. Scholarship students may be asked to fulfil their scholarship assignment in a departmentally assigned ONLINE project.

**Auditions For Scholarship Students**

Scholarship students have unique service responsibilities they must fulfill to receive and maintain their scholarships.

1. Scholarship students must audition for all productions within their performance discipline unless it is otherwise stated in the audition notice. For example, a stage play may not call dancers, or a dance concert may not call actors. Stage plays or dance concerts needing dancers or actors, respectfully, will announce this in the audition. Otherwise, it is assumed that dancers are not required to audition for plays, or actors for dance concerts.
2. If a scholarship student opts out of a production, they will perform other duties based on departmental service needs.

**First Rehearsals**

At the first rehearsal, directors, choreographers and/or stage managers will present the following information to the cast; the Production PSM will relay this information to the crew:

1. University rules against sexual harassment, inappropriate and insulting remarks, gestures, jokes, innuendoes, etc., and how to report such incidents.
2. A copy of these best practices.
3. The tentative rehearsal calendar, including days off.
4. If possible, the photo call date & process.
5. If possible, the respondent date & process.
6. If possible, the talk back date and process.
7. KCACTF/ACDA (or other entry) rehearsals, dates & process.
8. Strike date & general process.
9. Postmortem date & process.
10. Crew view and tech/dress date & process.
11. A safety talk which will include department rules, what to do in an emergency, location of first-aid, cold packs, fire extinguishers, safety equipment, potential hazards, etc...
12. Contact information for:
    1. Department phone numbers
    2. Title IX/EEOR Coordinator
    3. Wellness Center
    4. UW Counseling Center
    5. Student Health Service
    6. How to make a sexual misconduct report
    7. Dean of Students

**Rehearsals**

During rehearsals, it can be challenging to balance work, class, and studies so students and faculty must work together to create a time-efficient and enjoyable experience.

1. Directors and choreographers will endeavor to create a time-efficient rehearsal schedule that only calls cast members as needed.
2. Regular breaks in rehearsal are required. Directors and choreographers will announce at the beginning of the rehearsal process how they will schedule regular breaks - These breaks will include members of the stage management team.
3. It is the responsibility of the PSM to announce regular breaks, and the responsibility of the director or choreographers to adhere to the break times. Directors are encouraged to follow the Equity break schedule - One 5-minute break every 55 minutes of rehearsal or a 10-minute break for every 80 minutes.
4. As general practice, students will be given at least one (preferably weekend) day off per week. This means a minimum of 36 hours without rehearsal - this will not apply during tech/dress rehearsal week. Unforeseen circumstances such as cast member replacement may require exception to this standard of practice.
5. When not needed onstage or in rehearsal, performers will be informed as to what they should be doing (i.e., rehearsing scenes/choreography, running lines). Performers not needed during any part of a rehearsal will be allowed to do homework.
6. Rehearsal schedules and call times will be posted at least one week in advance. However, everyone involved in production must know that rehearsal schedules are subject to change based upon unforeseen needs. All performers and crew are considered “on-call” during each rehearsal period and must remain flexible and available.
7. Rehearsals cannot go past 10:00 pm except in rare emergencies.
8. Weekday rehearsals will be limited to 4 hours per day (including warmups, breaks, and note sessions). This does not apply to summer theatre. Exceptions can be made for rehearsals scheduled during a holiday or break i.e. winter break.
9. Weekend rehearsals will be limited to 4 hours per day for students(including warmups, breaks, and note sessions) - this does not apply to summer theatre.
10. Performers and crew will be on stage (or at their assigned location) at the time of their call - this means they will be in the building before call.
11. Directors and choreographers will specify if performers need to be warmed up before the beginning of rehearsal or if warm-ups are included in rehearsal.
12. Daily rehearsal and performance reports will be required for all productions, both Departmental and Student driven. The PSM will e-mail these reports to the faculty, staff and students involved including:

* Department Head
* Production Manager
* Technical Director
* Costume Shop Supervisor
* Shop Foreman
* Faculty Design/Tech Advisors
* Stage Management Advisor
* ASOPA sponsors (if applicable)

1. Copies of Daily Rehearsal Reports will also be uploaded to the production’s One Drive in the ‘Stage Management’ folder for archive.

**Health, Intimacy, Consent and Injury**

The performer's comfort, safety, and health are essential parts of any rehearsal and performance process, and it is critical that directors, choreographers, and students create a secure working environment.

1. Initial intimacy rehearsals will be staged in a controlled and private environment with only the necessary parties present.
2. Directors, choreographers and students cannot rehearse scenes that contain sexual content (including kissing or touching) without first obtaining the student’s verbal permission.
3. Directors and choreographers will discuss with the performers if touch is a necessary part of the performance. (Please note: touch, sexual content, intimacy, nudity, and violence will be clearly stated on the audition notice. Students will know in advance and be given the option to opt out before casting.)
4. If, during rehearsals, a performer becomes uncomfortable with the blocking or choreography, it is the performer’s responsibility to inform the director or choreographer. Director(s) and choreographer(s) will attempt to work with the performer to create moments the performer finds comfortable. If a compromise is not found, the performer will have the option of being replaced.
5. Directors, choreographers, and students cannot touch a performer without first obtaining verbal permission. Permission is not universal but must be granted at every rehearsal.
6. It is the performer's responsibility to speak up and state what they are comfortable with when it comes to touching. It is the director and choreographer's responsibility to listen to and respect the performer's wishes.
7. During the rehearsal process, performers should voice concern if they feel uncomfortable with the use of their cultural personhood, which may include: costume pieces, staging, dialects or makeup that can reasonably be understood as culturally demeaning, and which were not disclosed at audition/casting and could not have been expected by a reading of the script.
8. All rehearsals will begin with a check-in where the performer can address anything that could hinder or modify their participation in rehearsal (for example injury, discomfort, health-related issues, fatigue, etc.) It is highly recommended that the directors and choreographers do this in the form of a “consent check-in.” If not, directors and choreographers will clearly state to the performers how they will conduct a check-in.
9. The faculty define injury as a condition that prevents you from participating in class: performance, vocal, dance or technology/design class, or rehearsal/performance. Please speak to your instructor, director/choreographer or supervisor as soon as possible. Explain the conditions of how you became injured. Faculty, Supervisors or Stage managers will complete an injury report form for injuries received in the shop or in rehearsal.

**Tech and Dress Rehearsals**

The company’s safety and health are an essential part of any tech and dress rehearsal. It is critical that the company strives to create a safe working environment for all involved.

1. Students and stage managers are required to immediately report any unsafe acts, events or conditions to the director(s), choreographer(s), stage manager(s), all design/tech faculty/staff and the head of the department.
2. If there are any dangerous blocking or movements (such as fight choreography), there must be a safety rehearsal before every tech and dress.
3. There will be a crew view rehearsal prior to the first tech, providing the crew an opportunity to see the production.
4. Tech and dress rehearsals will have at minimum a 15-minute break after two-hours of rehearsal. These breaks are for all performers, directors, choreographers, designers, and crew.
5. Weekday tech and dress rehearsals-including note sessions with students-will ideally end by 10:30 pm but cannot go past 11:00 pm except on rare occasions when there are unforeseen and immediate issues that need to be addressed.

**Performance**

The company’s safety and health are a vital part of any performance, and it is critical that directors, choreographers, and students create a safe working environment.

1. If a production has any dangerous blocking or movements (such as fight choreography), the PSM is required to call a safety rehearsal before the house opens.
2. Cast and crew call times will be communicated. Cast and crew are required to arrive at their assigned time(s).
3. Accommodations will be made to respect individual modesty, and designated spaces will be provided for participants to change clothes and prepare for their performance.
4. Non-performers (except for the PSM, and wardrobe staff) are not allowed in the dressing room during the time between 30 minutes before the performance begins and 30 minutes after the performance ends.
5. Should any performer feel uncomfortable in the dressing room (or dressing areas) they must report it to the PSM, director and/or choreographer. If the issue is not immediately resolved, then they will report it first to the department Chair and if necessary, to the Dean of Students.
6. Special accommodations should be made for non-gender conforming individuals or any individuals uncomfortable with the dressing room assignment, as space allows.
7. The department holds no liability for students’ personal property in rehearsal and performance spaces. If necessary, the PSM will place valuables in a locked office during performances.
8. If they have not first consulted others, cast and crew members will respect the property and space of their peers by limiting behavior such as talking on cell phones, playing music or other similar activities.

**Photo Call**

Record shots are an essential part of any production as they are used for advertising, websites, portfolios, and much more. But directors and choreographers must understand that performers and crew are exhausted after a show and photos call must be run efficiently.

1. Photo calls will last no more than 90 minutes, with a goal of 60 minutes.
2. PSM will call a brief company meeting explaining photo call will be held prior to the start to explain duties and let everyone know how they can help make the photo call work efficiently.
3. Whenever possible, the date and time of the photo call will be announced at the first rehearsal. However, students and crew must know that due to time conflicts this date may change, and everyone must remain flexible.
4. When preparing the shot-list, directors and choreographers will include suggestions made by the cast and designers.
5. Directors and choreographers will provide a shot list to the PSM 24 hours in advance of photo call so that the PSM has time to generate a light cue list.
6. Photo call will be organized and run by the stage manager.
7. If a student does not want their likeness to be used for UW publicity and archive purposes they will notify the director or choreographer that they will not sign the model release form before photo call.

**Strike**

Strike is a demanding time. Performers and crews are often fatigued after putting in a full day of classwork and then staging a play or dance concert, and time management and safety must be the top concerns for everyone evolved.

1. Before closing, there will be a production meeting focused solely on strike with the stage management team. This will include department rules, what to do in an emergency, location of first-aid, cold packs, fire extinguishers, safety equipment, potential hazards, etc. Also, strike expectations and roles will be determined.
2. At the beginning of strike call there will be a brief company meeting to cover assignments and organization.
3. The stage management team will post assigned strike roles for the cast and crew prior to the closing performance.
4. Every effort should be made to keep strike to less than three hours. The needs for strike vary by production and will be evaluated on a show to show basis.

**Postmortems**

Postmortems are a time for all members of the production and department (including faculty, staff, and students) to assess the department’s practices, training, and suggest improvements. This meeting is an opportunity to offer constructive feedback regarding the production process. As Post-mortems are required for the production crew, their comments and concerns should be heard first.

1. Postmortem meetings shall be met for no more than 90 minutes.

1. All faculty and staff involved in a given production should be present.

1. The date of the postmortem will be announced at the first rehearsal and reiterated at the first technical rehearsal.
2. Prior to the postmortem, a moderator and a note-taker will be assigned to make the process efficient.
3. The full notes from the postmortem will be made available to all involved (as well as all faculty of the department) within one week of a production’s closing date.
4. Any concerns or needed improvements will be discussed and addressed in the next available faculty meeting.

**Compensation**

Pay and payment schedules will be made available to the applicable company members before they sign contracts.