

Welcome to the Longwood University Theatre program. This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the production process. In addition, you will discover the responsibilities of each production position. The faculty, staff and students adhere to the same production policies. All of us working as a unified group helps to create an understanding of professionalism.

We are continually refining policy and discovering new procedures. Over the course of a student's matriculation there will be many opportunities to experiment and grow artistically. We encourage all theatre students to offer suggestions that lead to a better understanding of the Longwood production process. All suggestions will be considered and potentially included in future revisions of this handbook. This is a living document that you can help to improve.

### **Anti-Discrimination Reaffirmation Resolution of 2010**

Longwood University, an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, is an equal opportunity institution of higher learning. Consistent with Federal and State law, the University promotes equal opportunity for all prospective and current students and employees. The University will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, political affiliation, veteran status, or disability status, except in relation to employment where a bona fide occupational qualification exists.

## Production Positions

### **Artistic Staff**

- Director
  - Collaborates with designers on style of production,
  - Plans the rehearsal process
- Musical director
  - Ensures the orchestration of the production
  - Plans musical rehearsal process
- Choreographer
  - Develops dance and movement for the production
  - Plans dance rehearsals
- Stage manager
  - Liaison to all departments
  - Makes sure the entire production runs smoothly through efficient scheduling, organization and problem solving,
  - In order to hold this position you must have taken THEA 240 Stage Management and previously held the position of assistant stage manager (preferably on 2 productions)
- Scenic designer
  - Develops plans, models, storyboards and sketches of visual stage elements and properties;
  - Collaborates with director, other designers and technical director
- Costume designer
  - Develops sketches of all clothing, makeup and hair for the production
  - A separate designer may be added on occasion for hair and/or makeup
  - Collaborates with director and other designers
- Lighting designer
  - Develops sketches, storyboards and lightplots
  - Oversees focus and cueing of the production
  - Collaborates with scenic designer on projection
  - Collaborates with director, other designers, technical director and master electrician
- Sound designer
  - Finds/creates all sound effects, underscoring and ambient sounds
  - Determines best approach to amplification and speaker placement
  - Collaborates with director, other designers, technical director and sound engineer

### **Production Staff**

- House manager
  - Ensures audience safety and comfort in the front of house
  - Collaborates with stage management and the box office manager
- Technical director
  - Ensures the scenery is built safely and on schedule,

- Collaborates with the scenic and lighting designers, scenic charge and master electrician
- Properties manager
  - Finds/creates safe rehearsal and final props
  - Collaborates with the scenic designer
- Scenic charge
  - Ensures that the scenery is painted to the scenic designers specifications
  - Collaborates with the scenic designer, properties manager and the technical director
- Master electrician
  - Implements the lightplot
  - Ensures lighting focus
- Sound engineer
  - Implements speaker, microphone and sound component setup
  - Collaborates with the sound designer
- Assistants
  - The designers and the production staff could possibly have an assistant to perform duties of their choosing (research, drafting, draping, etc)
  - These positions are held by persons showing great aptitude and promise in the area of which they are assisting
  - Assistant design positions will only be offered to BFA Technology students

**Run Crews – reports to stage manager**

- Sound or light board operator
  - Ensures proper execution of sound or light cues during performances
- Projectionist
  - Ensures proper execution of projection cues during performances
- Wardrobe supervisor
  - Ensures costume preparation and cleanliness during performances
  - Oversees the wardrobe crew
  - Also reports to the costume designer
- Wardrobe crew
  - Assists performers in changing clothes during the performance
- Deck hand
  - Ensures proper execution of deck cues during performances
- Spot operator
  - Ensures proper execution of spot cues during performances

**Production Crews – report to area supervisor**

- Each position physically helps implement their assigned area
- Scenic construction crew
- Paint crew
- Properties crew
- Costume construction crew
- Lighting crew

## Pre-Production

### **Season Selection**

In late Fall the faculty begins basic discussions and brainstorming concerning rough ideas about the following years season selection. The faculty will ask for student input in a casual forum. Facebook and email have both been popular communication options. The faculty will continue to meet, every two weeks until mid February. The season will be announced at the next scheduled mandatory majors/minors meeting.

When selecting a season, several factors must be considered.

- Variety of genre and style
- Educational value and literary quality
- Box office potential
- Production calendar restrictions
- Performance/design challenges/opportunities
- Male/female roles available given the current student body
- Student interest

Each year Longwood Theatre produces at least one musical or opera.

The production schedule includes many events. Mainstage productions are given primary focus. Here are the events that we typically schedule in our facility.

- 2 Fall Mainstage events
- 2 Spring Mainstage events
- Other Mainstage offerings (ex: readings, Opera Workshop presentation, seasonal)
- LAB Theatre annual events (ex: 0-60)
- LAB Theatre student productions (Alpha Psi productions, new plays, readings)
- Other LAB Theatre offerings (ex: readings, class presentations)

The departmental secretary will pursue the rights to each production. Then the secretary will order the non-musical scripts for the following year. This will occur prior to the end of the current fiscal year. Musical and opera scores will typically not be available for order until the semester of performance.

If any issue arises and the season needs to be altered, the faculty will meet to discuss the options. As soon as possible, the theatre students will be informed of the faculty solution.

## Auditions and Tech Sign-ups

### **Audition Eligibility**

Any Longwood student can audition for Mainstage theatre productions, assuming good academic standing. Casting occurs based upon the quality of the audition and the requirements of the role in the production. Some roles may be pre-cast as an opportunity for that student to prepare for a greater amount of time than the standard rehearsal period. On occasion, the director will encourage Longwood faculty and staff to audition. Grade school children are also sought after for youthful roles.

### **Audition Requirements**

Auditions typically start between 6 - 7:00pm. Notification of audition times and requirements will be posted on the callboard. This will be accomplished in a timely manner (leaving adequate time to prepare the proper material). Contact the stage manager for the production for more information.

### **Do I have to audition?**

All theatre majors who are not in the B.F.A. Technology program should audition. All THEA 104 students must audition as explained in the syllabus.

### **Audition Forms**

An audition form must be filled out prior to auditioning. The audition form requires a detail of your class/work schedule and any potential conflicts. In addition, you may be asked your campus ID, GPA, year in school, and other general personal information.

### **Callbacks**

If callbacks are deemed necessary, all actors will be properly informed (typically by a callback sheet posted on the callboard).

### **Cast List**

After auditions and callbacks, the cast list will be posted. Actors are asked to initial by their name to signify acceptance of the roles they have been given. Acceptance of a role indicates commitment to the process.

Typically, the day the cast list goes up, there is also a first read-through. All this information will be posted on the callboard.

Performers must not alter their appearance without consulting both the director and the costume designer. Facial hair, hair color or length and physical build must stay the same as they were at the audition. If an alteration is required for the role a discussion must occur at the next production meeting. The performer will then be notified as to the specifics.

**Tech Sign-Ups**

If you are currently enrolled in a THEA 104 course, there is potential that you will be working tech on a production. Your syllabus for the course will be available via Blackboard. You will need to submit the included tech sign-up sheet to your instructor, prior to the first audition. Once all of the forms are processed, official assignments will be made. The tech list will be posted on the callboard as well as emailed to the entire class.

**Can I be involved if I am not in THEA 104?**

Yes. Just contact the stage manager of the production on the day of auditions. The stage manager will provide you with a tech sign-up form. Once filled out, the stage manager will confer with Eric Koger about the production assignments. Keep in mind that THEA 104 students will be given preferential treatment.

## Rehearsals

### **Expectations of the Performer**

Every director has his or her own rehearsal style. At the beginning of the production, all actors will be informed of how rehearsals will run, to alleviate any confusion. Basic expectations are as follows.

- Be on time. It is unprofessional to keep other performers waiting. Arriving at least 10 minutes early to stretch and warm-up is strongly encouraged. You must be vocally, mentally and physically ready to perform when the rehearsal begins.
- Bring your script and paper for taking notes.
- Bring 2-3 sharpened pencils for taking notes.
- Wear clothing conducive to movement
- Ensure proper hygiene during rehearsals, performances and costume fittings

### **Costume Fittings**

In order to have a costume for the production, you must be scheduled for costume fittings. The stage manager will collaborate with the costume designer as to the available times for fittings. Performers are expected to arrive on time to every costume fitting.

### **Smoking**

If a production requires smoking on stage, the request must be formally made via the stage manager. The director, stage manager, technical director and all of the designers must be kept fully aware of this situation. In addition the topic must be discussed at length in the next production meeting.

Recreational smoking when in costume is never permitted. In addition, costumed performers should not be outside of the building.

Smoking is only permitted outside of the building, near the street. On performance nights, cast and crew are only allowed to smoke in specifically designated smoking areas. (the smoke huts as designated by Longwood)

### **Callboard**

Stage management will post vital rehearsal information on the callboard. Students should check the callboard on a daily basis. Cast notices, changes to schedules, schedules for rehearsals, and fittings will be posted at this location. The stage manager should be notified of any conflicts occurring with the rehearsal schedule.

### **Time Management**

The time required for participation in departmental productions can be demanding. It is imperative for students to exercise mature judgment in balancing time demands as it relates to production, course requirements and other activities.

**Health**

A successful production requires that each cast, crew and production team member perform his or her duties safely and efficiently. Proper health, exercise and diet are expected. Students showing signs of illness may be asked to leave the rehearsal or potentially the production. If you are potentially contagious, you cannot participate in any rehearsals or production activities until you have been given a doctors note proving that you are not contagious. Theatre practitioners work in close proximity to one another and one undiagnosed or secretive ailment could potentially bring down an entire production.

**Purchasing**

The faculty and staff must conduct all purchasing for production use. Students should never purchase materials/items with personal funds and expect reimbursement.

## Technical Deadlines

The faculty and staff use this basic outline as they work towards a given production. It is expected that all students involved with a production in any technical capacity will also adhere to these deadlines.

If there are difficulties in meeting the deadlines, the issues must be discussed in the weekly production meetings, as well as with the faculty or staff responsible for the area in question.

### 12 Weeks Out

All designers: preliminary meetings w/ director and other design team members

### 11 – 7 Weeks Out

all designers: meetings continue

### 6 Weeks Out

all designers: last meetings with director to finalize concepts  
scenic: scenic plate package completed and handed off

### 5 Weeks Out

scenic: build period should begin  
costume: after casting, schedule measurement times  
sound: collect sounds

### 4 Weeks Out

lighting: light plot package completed and handed off

### 3 Weeks Out

costume: schedule fittings as needed  
sound: rehearsal CD handed to stage manager

### 2 Weeks Out

all designers: attend crew watch  
lighting: hang occurs  
costume: schedule fittings as needed

### 9 Days Out

scenic: all pieces constructed, painting continues  
lighting: focus occurs  
costume: last minute adjustments  
sound: updated CD handed to stage manager/board operator

### 8 Days Out

crew Watch

### 7 – 2 Days Out

all Designers: make it perfect, give management cues,  
lighting: finalize all cues  
sound: finalize all sounds and make any necessary cuts or changes

### 1 Day Out

all designers: production complete

### Typical Tech Week Schedule

It is potential that changes could occur to this schedule. At a production meeting, the stage manager should determine if this schedule is going work for the given production. It is wise to discuss tech week several times to ensure the least amount of confusion.

Tuesday: crew watch

Wednesday: technical aspects introduced (usually lighting and/or projection)

Thursday: technical aspects introduced (usually lighting and/or projection)

Friday: afternoon – paper tech  
evening - first technical rehearsal

Saturday: morning - second technical rehearsal  
afternoon/evening - back-up technical rehearsal

Sunday: morning - final technical rehearsal  
afternoon/evening - back-up technical rehearsal

Monday: first dress rehearsal

Tuesday: second dress rehearsal

Wednesday: final dress rehearsal

## Photo Call Procedure

Photo call allows designers, crew and cast members the opportunity to take photographs of the production for their portfolios. Stage Management is primarily responsible for running the photo call. Photo call should take no longer than one hour. Please remember, the more cooperative and accommodating you are during photo call, the faster it will go.

### When is photo call?

If the production is running two weekends, the photo call will be after the first Sunday matinee performance. If the production is a shorter run, the photo call will be after the Thursday night performance.

### Preparation:

1. Consult the Director and Designers about shots they would like taken.
2. Prepare a list of 24 pictures to be taken (including the cue line, page, and light cue of the tableau to be taken).
3. Prepare this list, from the end of the production to the beginning, and post it back stage and on the callboard on the day of photo call.
4. Make sure that an overhead microphone is available.

### The Time has come:

1. Remind the cast that they need to be in the theatre, unless they are making a costume change, so that they can hear the announcements about upcoming pictures.
2. Get the overhead microphone and make sure that all of the people who are going to be taking pictures are present.
3. Make sure that those taking pictures with a flash know that they need to wait until they are told they may take pictures. Know who are taking flash pictures and who are not.
4. Set up the picture to be taken, and then announce, "Next Up is...." After that (On Deck) is...."
5. Once the actors are in place for the current picture say "Freeze" or "Hold"
6. As the people taking pictures without flashes finish, check with each of them and then say "Flashes," to signify that flash pictures can now be taken.
7. Once the flash pictures are completed, say "Relax" and move on to the next picture.
8. Repeat steps 4 through 7 until all pictures are taken.

## Post-Production

### **Strike**

Longwood Theatre has a very strict strike policy. Every major is REQUIRED to attend strike for each production. Strike typically occurs after the matinee performance on Sunday. Dinner breaks will not be given. All cast and crewmembers must attend strike, immediately after the performance. In case of an emergency and you are not able to attend strike, you need to see the Technical Director to schedule makeup hours for the following week. If you do not attend strike and do not arrange to makeup the hours, you will not be allowed to work on the subsequent production. The THEA 104 class requires participation in strike and lack of participation will result in a less than satisfactory grade. Any questions concerning strike should be directed to our technical director.

The day of strike, report to the theatre and sit quietly in the house. The faculty and staff will assign each individual to various strike duties. Once you have completed a given task return to the house and wait further instruction.

Strike will last no longer than 2 hours. If the strike is not completely finished at the end of the 2-hour period, the rest of the strike will occur during lab hours the following week.