
Academic, Professional, and Behavioral Expectations of Students in the Department of Theatre

Students enrolled in the University of Utah Department of Theatre must understand that the study of theatre demands an extraordinary level of collaborative effort. Successful collaboration and creative risk-taking require a trust and a sense of physical, psychological, and emotional safety. Such trust can only develop when all members of a community understand and faithfully observe the professional and ethical conduct to which academic and professional theatre institutions aspire. Accordingly, every student will adopt and strive to uphold the following professional behaviors to guide them throughout their academic, creative, and scholarly work at the University of Utah and beyond.

The expectations set forth in this document are part of the academic expectations for students within the Department of Theatre who are enrolled in the BFA in Theatre, the BFA in Theatre Teaching, or participating in co-curricular or other department-supported productions. In addition to achieving sufficient grades in particular coursework, students are expected to develop the collaborative and interpersonal communication skills necessary to be successful in the theatre profession. Faculty are competent to judge whether students are meeting these academic expectations.

We acknowledge that you are both a student in the Department of Theatre and at the University of Utah. As such, you are also expected to adhere to the University's policies. Students who wish to know more about their rights and responsibilities under University policy, may review [Policy 6-400: Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities \("Student Code"\)](#). University policy and procedure supercedes department policy and procedure. *Any claim of discrimination based on a protected class must first be addressed by the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action before the department can take action.*

Serious violations or persistent minor violations of Theatre Department or University rules, policies, or regulations may result in an official warning, probation, suspension, or dismissal from the professional program and potentially from the University.

Expectations

Respect for Others

- Students will demonstrate sensitivity and responsiveness to diverse collaborators.
- Students will uphold classroom and rehearsal atmospheres that are conducive to collaborative learning and creativity (see also Sections II and III of [Policy 6-400](#)).
- Students will interact with instructors, staff members, and peers in a considerate and cooperative manner. Cooperation is not the same as obedience. Rather, cooperation means mutual engagement in the pursuit of a common goal, which requires consent.

- Students will understand and respect the theatrical production hierarchy as communicated in required introductory courses (e.g., Scenography, Intro to Stage Management, Beginning Stage Directing).
- Students will attempt to resolve interpersonal conflicts in a manner that respects the integrity of every person involved, employing Theatre Department and University processes and resources for voicing concerns and resolving conflict while avoiding gossip, flaming, trolling, or other back-channels to police behavior or enforce behavioral norms.
- Students will respect all safety protocols (including choreographed intimacy or violence) established by faculty, staff, or peer stage managers.
- Students will treat the audience and other community members with respect and dignity.

Integrity

- Students will uphold integrity in all academic and creative activities, including seeking permission to perform existing material from copyright holders and giving credit where it is due.
- Standards of Academic Conduct: In order to ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the University, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating (see Section V of [University Policy 6-400](#)).
- Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate in a clear and forthright manner with peers, faculty, and staff.

Reliability

- Students will hold themselves accountable for fulfilling responsibilities, expectations, and obligations as learners and colleagues while maintaining effective time management. This includes being on time to classes, rehearsals, and meetings.
- Behavior that endangers self or others is not acceptable in the classroom and production setting.
- Students will not use alcohol or drugs in any way that could interfere with their classroom or production responsibilities (see also Section III of [University Policy 6-400](#)).

Drive for Excellence

- Students will demonstrate self-awareness of current performance, integrate constructive feedback, and pursue opportunities for growth.
- Students will strive to balance obligations to others with obligations to self and personal well-being as well as develop an understanding of when it is necessary to ask for help in academics or other obligations.

Behaviors that may result in sanctions, probation, suspension, or dismissal:

- a. Acts of physical violence, assault and relationship or domestic violence or other forms of physical abuse.
- b. Intentional actions causing physical injury or that actually cause (and would cause a reasonable person) severe emotional distress.
- c. Participating in actions that endanger health or safety.
- d. Any physical or verbal, oral, written or electronic (i.e. text, social media, etc.) coercion. This includes any other conduct that by design, whether intended or not, recklessly places another individual(s) in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm through words or actions directed at that person which is beyond the bounds of [protected free speech](#) (see section III of [Policy 6-400](#)).
- e. The creation of a hostile environment in which others are reasonably unable to conduct or participate in work, education, performance, living, or other activities and is likely to cause an immediate breach of peace. This includes, but is not limited to, stalking, cyberstalking, and harassment or violations of the [Non-Discrimination Policy \(1-012\)](#).
- f. Conduct or course of conduct which threatens the mental or physical health or safety of any person or persons including hazing, stalking, drug or alcohol abuse and other forms of destructive behavior (for the definition of hazing see State Code 76-5-107.5. <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title76/Chapter5/76-5-S107.5.html>). “Course of conduct” means a pattern of conduct composed of a series of acts over a period of time, however short, demonstrating intentional actions.
- g. Violations of expectations outlined in this document.

When violations of University policy are alleged to have taken place, the department will follow all existing University procedures and consult with the Office of the Dean of Students and any other relevant units (e.g. Title IX, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action).

When students fail to abide by the expectations outlined in this document, such behaviors interfere with the creative process and will be addressed from an academic perspective. This may result in certain academic actions, including suspension of participation in theatrical productions, temporary suspension from course of study, or dismissal from the Theatre Department. When addressing these behaviors, the department and its representatives will follow the remediation process outlined below.

Remediation

To remain in good standing in the Department of Theatre, students must meet the expectations outlined in this document *and* earn a C or better in all courses that are required for Theatre majors, regardless of degree program or emphasis area. Students must also meet minimum required grades for courses outside the department. If a student earns a below a C in *any* required course in the department or fails to meet the expectations outlined above, a remediation plan will be created in a collaboration between the student, Area Head, Director of Undergraduate Studies, and CFA Academic Advising. If conduct involves a serious violation of University policy, the department will follow all existing University procedures, consulting with the Dean of Students and other relevant offices.

The remediation process must include an open conversation about what the expectations are and specific information on how they are not currently being met. In addition, the student should be encouraged to discuss any barriers that may be preventing them from meeting those expectations. This information will assist the remediation team in identifying the appropriate supports for student success. Remediation plans will be developed in a collaboration between the student and an ad hoc **Academic Action Committee** that includes the Area Head, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and (if grade-related) an academic advisor. If suspension or dismissal are being considered, the Associate Chair should be added to the Academic Action Committee. The intent of remediation plans is to provide clear expectations and appropriate support for student success.

Process

The following are steps that may be taken when expectations are not met:

- **Warning:** This is generally the first step in the process of remediation. However, students who have engaged in conduct that seriously interferes with the creative process may be placed immediately on probation, as described below. The Academic Action Committee (AAC) will place a student on a warning if they are not meeting the expectations outlined in this document. If a student fails to earn the minimum required grade for any class required to graduate, they will be placed on a warning. When a student receives a warning from the department, they will develop a remediation plan with their Area Head and the Director of Undergraduate Studies, including a clear timeline and set of benchmarks for success. If the remediation is related to not meeting the minimum required grade for courses required to graduate, an Academic Advisor will join the AAC. Remediation plans must be submitted in writing to the student and to Academic Advising for inclusion in the student record. At the end of the “warning” period (usually one semester), the student will meet with the AAC to review progress. Assuming that the student has met expectations, the warning will be lifted. If expectations have not been met but progress has been made, the student will be on warning for another semester. If no progress has been made, the student will be placed on probation.
- **Probation:** If a student is placed on probation, they will not be allowed to participate in production work (acting, design, stage management, assistant directing, etc.) supported by the department (including student work that is supported by the department) for the duration of the probationary period. The Academic Action Committee (AAC) may put a student on probation for not meeting the standards outlined in this document. The Department Chair may put a student on probation if they find that the student cannot function appropriately within the context of productions. Such a determination is made based on available evidence and in consultation with relevant parties (e.g., a director, Dean of Students). The student on probation will meet with the AAC to develop or continue to engage in a remediation plan that includes a clear timeline and expectations. Remediation plans must be submitted in writing to the student and to Academic Advising for inclusion in the student record. At the end of the probationary period, if the student has met expectations, the Academic Action Committee will lift probation and the student will be

allowed to participate in future productions. Alternately, if the student has not met expectations, the Academic Action Committee will suspend the student from classes in the department (see “suspension” below).

- **Suspension:** During a suspension, the student will not be allowed to enroll in classes in the department for a set period of time, as agreed upon between the Chair and the Dean of Students. A remediation plan will be developed by a team that includes the AAC, the Chair, and the Dean of Students.
- **Dismissal:** If a student is unable to perform to the level required to advance in the degree, as determined by faculty and discussed during a student’s annual review, they may be dismissed from their program by the Academic Action Committee. (Students dismissed from a BFA program may be allowed to continue to pursue an alternate degree in the department if approved by the Academic Action Committee) ([6-400. IV](#)). Dismissal is determined by the Academic Action Committee, and generally should be reflected in the student’s inability to pass classes with a C or better in their degree program, their inability to perform adequately in other benchmark reviews (e.g., juries, portfolio reviews), and/or a consistent failure to learn and abide by the professional expectations set forth in this document.

Documentation

When academic actions are taken, the ad hoc Academic Action Committee is responsible for maintaining clear, confidential documentation that can be reviewed by the members of the AAC, the Department Chair, or the College Academic Appeals Committee, should that be necessary. This should include

1. Supporting documentation for the academic action being taken (e.g., grades, written feedback from instructors to students about any performance benchmarks in the program, rehearsal/performance reports),
2. A copy of remediation plans (including dates and specific expectations),
3. A description of how the student has been included in development of remediation plans (e.g., meetings on certain dates),
4. The outcomes of remediation (e.g., student being taken off of probation),
5. Minutes of discussions about decisions of the Academic Appeals Committee regarding suspension and dismissal.

Appeals

Students who have been placed on probation, suspended, or dismissed may appeal the academic action pursuant to the appeal procedures set for the in the Student Code, [Policy 6-400.IV](#). The first step in the appeal process is an appeal to the Department Chair if a student believes the academic action is arbitrary or capricious. The Department Chair will review the case, including all relevant documentation, meet with the involved parties, and make a determination. The student may then appeal the Chair’s decision to the College Academic Appeals Committee.