

The guidelines in this book are intended to establish a common understanding among all those participating in the Theatre Laboratory, a co-curricular program of the Department of English, Theatre and Speech Communication, and the Theatre Major. We hope that every member recognizes that their participation and contribution, performed in a committed and timely manner, is necessary to the Laboratory's overall success.

Furthermore the handbook provides a framework for building upon our strengths, evaluating our performance and providing for the necessary spontaneous and unpredictable creative ideas that contribute to professionalism and excellence.

I. MISSION AND GOALS OF THE THEATRE LABORATORY

The faculty and staff of the Theatre Laboratory at Berea College believe that theatre is a vital element of a liberal arts education and assists the college in fulfilling its commitments to higher education. The Theatre Laboratory provides students an educational environment that strives for professional performance standards of high quality.

The Berea College Theatre Laboratory, through the study and practice of theatre, supports the college's mission and Commitments by:

1. Providing a high quality theatre education that connects with the liberal arts foundation and outlook;
2. Providing a safe, stimulating environment for the creative expression of ideas as well as the development of independent thinking;
3. Providing performing opportunities for all students (majors and non-majors) as well as the larger community;
4. Encouraging students to respect and honor all people while working collaboratively within the academic and applied environments;
5. Providing opportunities for students and faculty/staff to engage in service to campus programs, departments, and those outside the campus community;
6. Providing a theatre education that combines cultural, theoretical and applied study and practice through specific study of theatre history, dramatic literature, dramaturgy, acting, directing, design, technology and management;
7. Providing a season of performances for all students as well as the larger community;
8. Providing for the students majoring in theatre a strong foundation in all the arts of the theatre at introductory through advanced levels. This foundation will provide a path to advanced education or vocation in the theatre. Students may choose, with the assistance of the faculty and staff, to focus on specific elements of theatre production and study. Furthermore, faculty and staff are committed to providing the tools necessary to make the transition from an educational environment to the work place;
9. Providing visiting artists for lectures, demonstrations and/or performances for the campus and larger community;

10. Recognizing that creative expression is universal, the Theatre Laboratory supports professional and educational experiences regionally, nationally, internationally through travel, professional conferences and theatre attendance;
11. Enhancing the awareness that creative expression has a connection to all cultures;
12. Providing a labor environment that integrates the academic instruction with the practice of production;
13. Encouraging and providing the resources for students to foster attitudes and practices of professionalism; and
14. Promoting life-long support and appreciation of the arts.

The Theatre Laboratory serves the theatre majors and minors of Berea College first and foremost, followed by service to the Campus and the Berea Community. Realizing that our resources (people, funds, equipment and space) have limitations, we will make decisions that extend beyond the functions of the Theatre Laboratory based on careful consideration of our production, academic and professional standards.

II. THE THEATRE MAJOR

The English, Theatre and Speech Communication Department offers a major in Theatre that provides for a sound generalist education in all aspects of theatre: the literature of the drama, theatre history, acting, directing, and design. The major unites the curricular program with the Theatre Laboratory labor program, the Resident Professional Artist, and the Senior Theatre Project. The Theatre Laboratory is the play production organization that supports the performance of four full-length plays per academic year and the student-directed, one-act productions sponsored by the Berea Players. The Resident Professional Artist is a working theatre professional on-campus who leads the six student acting apprentices in acting study and who appears in full-length plays alongside the student casts. The Theatre major is characterized by a unique and careful blend of curricular theatre study with individualized, practical experience in theatre production, under the direction of the Theatre Faculty and professional artists.

B.A. Degree with a Major in Theatre

Requirements for the Theatre major are as follows, in addition to the General Education and electives required for a degree:

Required Core Courses—THR 119; ENG 122; ENG 138 or 364; and THR 481

Required THR Elective Courses—Three courses chosen from the Principles sequence of THR 115, 117, 315, 317, or 318; two courses chosen from: THR 310, 311, or 312; and three additional THR electives

Required Collateral Courses—Either a foreign language through the third (103) level or a foreign language through the second (102) level and either THR 127 or ENG 245.

Exploring the Major—Students interested in this major should enroll in THR 119 and/or pursue practical experience in one of the Theatre Laboratory’s productions as early as possible.

Admission to the Major—Students must pass ENG 122 and THR 119 before applying for admission to the major.

Course Sequencing Considerations (in order to complete degree requirements within eight terms)—Satisfactorily complete ENG 122 and THR 119 prior to entering the first term of sophomore year. THR 481 is to be taken during the first term of senior year.

Proficiency Requirements for Retention in and Completion of the Major—Students must earn a grade of C or higher in ENG 122 and THR 119. Once accepted into the major, students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher and a GPA in the major of 2.5 or higher in order to be eligible to participate in Theatre Laboratory productions as actors or members of the production team (directors, designers, dramaturges, stage managers). Students who are participating in order to fulfill course laboratory requirements or labor assignments are exempt from this standard, and other opportunities will be available to insure that students whose academic standings are low may still work in theatre productions in a limited way. Majors will be required to audition for three productions in the Theatre Laboratory. Only the auditions are required: students need not accept roles in any production nor is it mandatory that directors cast them. Majors will be required to serve at least once for a major production: 1) on a scenic or lighting crew, 2) on a costume or make-up crew, and 3) in stage management, house management, or dramaturgy.

Other Considerations or Recommendations—Majors must satisfy departmental standards for effective oral and written communication.

Working with students prior to their declaration of major – the Sophomore Experience

The Sophomore Review is designed to assist prospective majors to assess:

1. Current preparation for the Theatre Laboratory
2. Aptitude for Theatre Studies
3. Seriousness for completion of the Theatre Major Program.

It is also the beginning of the student’s thinking about the Senior Theatre Project. See Appendix One, *The Sophomore Review*

Appendix Two contains a *Theatre Major Check Sheet* that will assist the student in advising preparation and planning.

III. THEATRE COURSES

All theatre courses are described in detail in the Catalogue and on-line at <http://www.berea.edu/catalog/etsc.asp>.

IV. ROTATION OF CLASSES FOR THE THEATRE MAJOR

All Theatre classes are offered on a rotation covering a three year span. Most courses which comprise the core of the major are offered yearly: Dramaturgy and Theatre Aesthetics (THR 119), Principles of Technical Production (THR 117), and Principles of Acting (THR 115). Courses which are offered every other year include Voice and Diction (THR 127), Advanced Acting (THR 325), Principles of Directing (THR 317) Principles of Theatre Management (THR 318), Playwriting (ENG 206) and Principles of Design (THR 319). Theatre and Drama in Western Cultures (THR 310), Theatre and Drama in Age of Mass Media (THR 311) and Theatre and Drama in Non-Western Cultures (THR 312) are offered one per year rotating in a three year cycle. Practicum courses are offered each term.

Please refer to the Theatre Laboratory Website for additional information on the rotation of classes - <http://www.berea.edu/etsc/theatrelaboratory/majorsminors/sophreview.asp>

V. PRODUCTION OFFERINGS

Each academic year, the Theatre Laboratory produces a season of full-length plays selected and directed by the Theatre faculty, selected student directors, and/or guest artists in the McGaw Theatre. Performances are free to Berea College students, but tickets are required for admission. Students must reserve or pick up their tickets in person with valid student identification. Only one ticket per ID can be reserved. One production per year is selected to provide a Convocation credit. Paid tickets range in price from \$5 to \$10.

The Tharon Musser Experimental Theatre, a black box, offers students the opportunity to showcase their particular skills or to experiment with a variety of theatrical forms. Please see the Students Bill of Rights for details on producing and performing.

VI. SEASON SELECTION CONSIDERATION

The selection process is guided by the mission of the Theatre Laboratory. The mainstage season is an integral part of the academic program

The season is selected by the Theatre Laboratory faculty and staff, including a student representative from the theatre majors. Suggestions are always welcomed, and should be directed to the Director of Theatre. Please see <http://www.berea.edu/etsc/theatrelaboratory/majorsminors/sophreview.asp> for a complete list of genres that will be explored.

The season selection process begins in February of the previous year. Copies of scripts must be submitted to the Director of Theatre before they can be considered. The season will be announced to the Theatre Laboratory community and then to the general public, usually during the last production of the previous season.

VII. FACULTY AND STAFF

The faculty and staff of the Berea College Theatre Laboratory are as follows:

Verlaine McDonald, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of English, Theatre and Speech Communication

Shan R. Ayers, M.F.A. Associate Professor of English and Theatre and Head of Design and Technology

John S. Bolin, Ph.D., Professor of English and Theatre

Rodney L. Clark, Ed.D., Assistant Professor of Theatre

Deborah G. Martin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Theatre and Director of Theatre

Richard Sears, Ph.D. Professor of English and Theatre

Mary Ann Shupe, B.A., Costume Designer and Costume Studio Supervisor

VIII. THEATRE LABORATORY LABOR POSITIONS

The Theatre Laboratory maintains a labor staff of 26 workers who fulfill positions in all aspects of theatre education and production.

- Building Monitor
- Teaching Associates
- Box Office Manager
- Box Office Associates
- Scenic Carpenters
- Senior Electrician
- Master Carpenter
- Properties Coordinator
- Lighting Technicians
- Senior Sound Technician
- Sound Technicians
- Assistant to the Costumer
- Make-up Coordinator
- Costumers
- Makeup Technician(s)
- Custodians

Each year in the spring, applications are accepted for all positions. Decisions will be made by the faculty and staff and announced before registration begins.

IX. CASTING POLICY

These policies govern both the McGaw and Musser productions.

- **All productions are cast from auditions.** A person wishing to be considered for a role must prepare an appropriate audition. With rare exceptions (i.e. professional guest artists), no role is pre-cast
- Auditions are open to all students, faculty, staff and community members. All things being equal, priority consideration is given to students, with theatre faculty and staff considered second, and all others last.
- Auditionees are not only cast based on individual talent, but are considered as party of an ensemble.
- Auditions are announced through a variety of public relations methods on and off campus.
- It is the policy of the Berea College Theatre Laboratory to follow what is known as “non-traditional casting.” This policy is defined as the casting of ethnic minority and female performers in roles where race, ethnicity, and gender are not germane to the character’s or play’s development.

X. CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE POLICY

Any persons found at performance or rehearsal under the influence of alcohol or drugs **will** be dismissed immediately from the project. Also, it is very unlikely that such a person will be cast or hired to work in future theatre projects here.

All areas of the Jelkyl Drama Center are to be kept smoke-free. Smoking is not permitted inside the building or on the grounds surrounding the building. This is a Berea College policy. There are specially designated smoking areas elsewhere on campus.

XI. BUILDING USAGE AND SCHEDULING POLICY

The Director of the Theatre Laboratory is in charge of the use of the Jelkyl Drama Center and, with consultation with the theatre faculty and staff, must approve all scheduled events in the building. For classes, labor, and production purposes, all areas of the Jelkyl Drama Center will be open from 8:00 am- 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Rehearsals usually take place between the hours of 6 and 10:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Any additional weekend or evening work must be scheduled in advance with the Director of the Theatre Laboratory who must request of the Building Monitor to open the building for specified times.

XII. KEY DISTRIBUTION POLICY

Normally, the only students who receive keys for the building are the Building Monitor and the Stage Manger for the specific production in rehearsal. On occasion, it becomes

necessary to issue keys to other students for specific reasons. During these times, a key will be checked out through the faculty for a limited time. Any loss of keys will result in the student being responsible for the cost of changing of locks.

XIII. PRODUCTION STRIKE POLICY

All students involved in a production are required to remain after the last performance to actively participate in strike. *Do not ask to be released from this important duty.* Any exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis and will be the decision of the Technical Director and the Director of Theatre.