

**LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY THEATRE  
STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2008-2009**

# UNIVERSITY THEATRE THEATRE STUDENT HANDBOOK

## MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

The Louisiana Tech University School of the Performing Arts provides comprehensive training in the fields of music, theatre, dance, movement, playwriting, stage management and arts management which connects the broad spectrum of historical and contemporary issues related to art and craft; and in promoting the relationship between theory and practice, prepares professionals and teachers for leadership in national and international culture and art for the twenty first century.

The School seeks to disseminate knowledge in five ways.

- **First**, we introduce students in the University's general education courses to the art and craft of music, theatre, dance, movement, playwriting, stage management and arts management and to creative opportunities available within each discipline.
- **Second**, we educate undergraduate majors about the place of the performing arts in society, their history, processes, techniques, and skills. Students then can graduate not as specialists but as broadly educated individuals prepared to enter many professions, including careers in music, theatre, dance, movement, playwriting, stage management and arts management and education. We expect those who continue in the performing arts to seek further training.
- **Third**, we educate graduate students in theatre to become creative, skilled, and knowledgeable theatre scholars and artists with attention given to refined judgment and critical ability.
- **Fourth**, we expose the University community to performing arts events that are of the highest artistic merit.
- **Fifth**, we share with audiences and artists throughout the country new works developed at Louisiana Tech.

The School is committed to providing our students with a world context for viewing and appreciating the performing arts. Every effort will be made to expose our students to the expanse of performing arts as practiced throughout the world and within varied cultures.

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## THEATRE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purposes of the Department of Theatre are to educate and train artists of the theatre and to provide for its students a foundation of professionalism and dedication to their art within a climate of diversity, discovery, and risk.

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The following is a collection of rules and guidelines for the theatre student. Study of, and adherence to, these rules is necessary to attain the solid theatre education Louisiana Tech has to offer. This handbook will help students throughout their tenure at Tech. By following its guidelines, students will be placed in a position upon graduation to receive faculty recommendations that are critical for future academic and professional success.

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE RESPONSIBILITIES, REQUESTS OR EXPECTATIONS REVIEWED IN THIS HANDBOOK WILL RESULT IN LOSS OF SCHOLARSHIP, ASSISTANTSHIP OR STANDING WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT.**

(The Student Handbook for all Louisiana Tech University students is available at <http://www.latech.edu/tech/students/judicialhome.htm>, and all students are responsible for reading and knowing its contents.)

**THE THEATRE STUDENT**

By working with the theatre faculty and staff and with guest artists, the student will have the opportunity to take classes and assume duties in many areas of the theatre and will have been involved in the production of many plays. This continuous exposure to productions will be the foundation of the theatre practitioner's training.

Students should also seize the opportunity to attend all theatre productions and selected programs from the Music, Dance, and Visual Arts areas. Appreciation for the arts (and especially all the performing arts) is a priority of the theatre program, and attendance or participation in all events is a requirement of a theatrical education.

**HONOR CODE**

In the Fall of 2003, Louisiana Tech University adopted a new Academic Honor Code. It is available at <http://www.latech.edu/tech/students/judicialhome.htm>

All theatre students must be familiar with the Honor Code, and are bound by its provisions.

**PLAGIARISM**

The Louisiana Tech Academic Honor Code contains the following provisions regarding plagiarism:

*“Representing another persons work or any part thereof, be it published or unpublished, as one’s own, is referred to as “plagiarism.”*

The Honor Code goes on to deal very specifically with what constitutes plagiarism. Theatre students must know these specifics, as this code will be the policy of the Theatre Department. Plagiarism is cheating, and will be dealt with in all Theatre classes in accordance with the Academic Honor Code.

## **FACULTY ADVISORS**

Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor. The student will keep in touch with the faculty member concerning developments in the student's professional training. It is the student's responsibility to:

1. Schedule advisement with the advisor during the planning period scheduled by the University and throughout the quarter as necessary. If the student does not schedule their advising appointment during advising times posted by the advisor he/she will have to schedule an appointment at their advisor's convenience.
2. The student seeking advisement must come with:
  - A proposed schedule of classes written on the form provided in the racing form.
  - You must include the section number, sequence number, and times of classes.
  - You must have your Quarterly Activity Report Form filled out with all production activities pursued during the prior quarter, all academic notes of interest, awards and honors, classes passed, failed or dropped, etc. [Quarterly Activity Report forms are located in the Office of the Coordinator of Theatre.]

The student should take the courses advised by the faculty advisor unless the classes are closed or there is an extenuating circumstance. Any digression from the curriculum must be brought to the advisor's attention as soon as possible.

## **MAJOR/MINOR MEETINGS**

All theatre majors and minors are required to attend the scheduled Friday, 12:15pm weekly meetings. If a student has a 12:30 class conflict, he/she will be expected to attend the first 15 minutes of the meeting. If the student gets out of class at 12:15 he/she will be expected to attend. If it is a class conflict, the student must turn in a copy of the fee sheet for the appropriate quarter. If a student must miss a meeting he/she must submit a written letter to the Coordinator of Theatre stating the reason for the absence. If the absence is a doctor's excuse, the student will need to submit a letter and the excuse from the doctor's office. Outside employment is not an excused absence. You must make arrangements in advance with your outside employer for your work schedule to allow you to attend the mandatory major/minor meetings.

## **SPTH 260/460 PRACTICUM**

All majors are required to enroll in Theatre Practicum a minimum of 7 times before graduation. This class is fundamental to the department's goal of providing experience in practical theatre production to all students, and a labor pool which enables the production of fully realized plays. Failure to meet the requirement will adversely affect the student's ability to graduate in a timely fashion.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

The Theatre Program recognizes that many of its students are heavily committed to departmental production activities. The faculty, when possible, attempts to schedule class assignments with this commitment in mind. However, students cannot assume that production commitments take precedence over academic assignments. A production assignment, cast or crew will not be considered an acceptable excuse for late academic assignments or absences from class. In addition, students are to refrain from using production responsibilities as excuses for missing classes and/or class assignments for courses in the major/minor area.

## **THEATRE PROGRAM PRODUCTION PRIORITIES**

The Theatre department's first priority is academic. The following is strictly the Theatre department's production priorities list. Nothing should ever be scheduled over main stage rehearsals, technicals or performances.

- FIRST:** The quarterly main stage productions.  
**SECOND:** Projects resulting from required course work such as Ten Minute Play Festival  
**THIRD:** Laboratory productions offered to the public.  
**FOURTH:** Additional student and organization projects. [i.e. TTP or Alpha Psi Omega productions]  
**FIFTH:** Opportunities outside the university setting. [i.e. Community Theatre]

## **THE CALL BOARD**

The University Theatre Call Board is located on the wall outside the Coordinator of Theatre's office. All messages of academic, production, or personal importance will be placed there. It is required that theatre majors and minors check the Call Board by 3 p.m. daily. Not having read a notice is not an excuse for failure to respond and will be considered irresponsible behavior.

## **AUDITIONS**

All students except those who have secured management, technical, or design positions for a show must audition for all Theatre Department productions. This includes all productions listed on the season brochure. You must make arrangements in advance with your outside employer for your work schedule to allow you to attend all mandatory auditions.

## **STUDENT WORK RESPONSIBILITIES**

As part of the practical aspect of theatre education, theatre majors and minors are

required to attend all work calls, hang and focus, and strikes unless there is a conflict with a class. Special permission can be obtained on an individual basis for other conflicts such as National Guard, special family events, etc. Students who have conflicts will present an absence request in writing to the Coordinator of Theatre at least two weeks in advance. You must make arrangements in advance with your outside employer for your work schedule to allow you to attend all work calls, hang and focus,

strikes and any other event that the Coordinator of Theatre or Director of School of the Performing Arts deems mandatory.

The Theatre Program at Tech prepares the student with a comprehensive education. Therefore, activities in all areas of theatre are expected of the theatre major. The student should plan with his/her advisor so that by the time of graduation the student will have work experience on productions in all the major areas of theatre, including performing, design, technical work, stage management, and front-of-house operations. Students must write a letter of intent to the faculty to secure assignments in areas other than performance.

### **PROTOCOL**

The theatre student will always conduct him/herself in a professional manner while engaged in SPA related activities. Student decorum, in the community and beyond, reflects on the University Theatre.

Theatre students will address all faculty and staff with a formal title in all official departmental business and whenever non-majors or members of the general public are present. This includes all faculty, staff, patrons and secretaries. Students will not address faculty by their first names unless specifically asked to do so. Hearing another student using familiar address does not mean that it is condoned.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Property of the University Theatre and the SPA must be used in keeping with the state's property guidelines. No property of the state may be moved within or taken from the campus without following the very strict University regulations. Please confer with the appropriate faculty member before relocation of property. Specialty equipment and power tools are not to be used without the knowledge and consent of the faculty or graduate student and is strictly monitored.

### **BUILDING POLICIES**

The Howard Center for the Performing Arts is open from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Students who need to be in the building during other hours must be accompanied by a faculty member, the assigned graduate assistant or approved crew head. Prior arrangements must be made with the Production Coordinator or Technical Director. Permission cannot be given over the telephone. Remember any and all work materials and work areas must be cleaned and organized after being used.

The Theatre Green Room is a student lounge, meeting room, and class room. Students may eat and drink in this area provided all refuse is disposed of properly.

Privileges will be revoked for all students for a period of one week any time the area is not found spotless by a faculty member.

There is no eating or drinking in the University Theatre or Howard Auditorium. No smoking is permitted in Howard Center except in cases of approved functions such as actor business in the final week of rehearsals and performances. There will be no smoking on the front steps of Howard Auditorium or the front steps of the Drama Building. The student should alert the proper authority when unusual activities or non-familiar individuals are present in the facility.

### **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Graduate students on a graduate assistantship are employees of the university. All employees of the university are bound by rules established by the University of Louisiana Board of Supervisors and are directed to review Louisiana Tech University's Policy 1416, regarding Outside Employment of the University Employees.

Students pursuing a major in Theatre are encouraged to avail themselves of the rich opportunities provided by the Department of Theatre. Majors are required to attend classes, attend published Departmental Meetings, attend published Departmental calls, and make participation in the Department Productions a priority. Failure to comply with this mandate will result in the student having his or her scholarship and or assistantship revoked.

### **SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS**

The Tech Theatre Players is a student organization that promotes effective communication between students and faculty in the SPA. This organization enhances the academic, performance, and social areas of the students' experience in the program.

Alpha Psi Omega is the nationally recognized Theatre Honors Society. Membership in this organization is contingent on a theatre student's dedication for his/her craft as well as maintaining the highest of academic standards. Students will be invited to join after completing work on several productions (often above and beyond the call of duty) and maintaining a 3.0 GPA for two quarters. Members of Alpha Psi Omega retain their membership for life.

These organizations are valuable assets to the freshman or transferring student, especially in acquainting him/her with the department and the University as a whole. The School of the Performing Arts provides a close knit and cooperative environment in which to work, and the student organizations enhance that atmosphere. Organizations will have a faculty sponsor present at all sponsored activities.

### **COORDINATOR OF THEATRE OFFICE & FACULTY OFFICES**

Theatre students should maintain a business-like manner in all the offices. Relaxation and general hanging out should be done in the theatre Green Room.

Students working in the Coordinator of Theatre's office, box office, or in any way

meeting the public (like putting up posters) must be dressed professionally. The requested look is pressed slacks, skirt or nice jeans with a collared shirt. Other attire is acceptable if it would be considered more professional than the clothing described.

Faculty correspondence and class materials are highly confidential. Teachers' desks and papers are strictly off-limits.

Students who have copying needs for class work must not use the SPA copy machine for any reason. Student organizations may have copies run in the SPA office with written permission from the Coordinator of Theatre.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Students should use SPA phones only for official business. All incoming calls should be answered "University Theatre. This is \_\_\_\_\_ may I help you?" Intercom calls should be answered with the area and the student's name. For instance: "Mr. Smith's office. This is Gary." Messages taken concerning School business should be dispersed as soon as possible. You must ask the caller for the correct spelling of his/her name, (if you are unsure), and phone number. If the caller informs you that the faculty has their number please say: "In the event Mr. Smith is not in his office when he returns your call, may I take your number for his convenience."

## **SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES**

### **I. PHILOSOPHY**

The scholarship program is designed to reward the outstanding student of theatre and to attract him/her to Louisiana Tech University. Students should look upon themselves as departmental aids who contribute to the theatre program as needed.

### **II. REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Theatre Major/Minor
- B. Maintenance of an overall 3.0 GPA
- C. Maintenance of a 3.5 GPA in the major
- D. Suitable progress toward the degree goal; student must complete a minimum of 27 credit hours per year.
- E. Satisfactory fulfillment of assigned responsibilities for departmental productions.
- F. Attendance of all school meetings
- G. An audition or portfolio interview will be required of all applicants. The audition/interview will be scheduled throughout the year.
- H. You **must adhere to all of the return dates** and end of quarter dates that are specified on your list of "Highlight of Important Dates". [If you have a conflict with any of the dates, such as not being able to get plane reservations, etc., please notify the Coordinator of Theatre ASAP.

**FIRST FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY OF THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL RESULT IN YOUR SCHOLARSHIP BEING REVOKED FOR ONE QUARTER.**

**SECOND FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY OF THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL**

RESULT IN YOUR SCHOLARSHIP BEING REVOKED FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR.

THIRD FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY OF THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL RESULT IN YOUR SCHOLARSHIP BEING REVOKED PERMANENTLY.

**If a student does not participate fully in any given quarter, he/she must return the full amount of waiver or scholarship (or a partial amount as determined by the Coordinator of Theatre) to the University.**

### **III. SCHOLARSHIP ASSIGNMENTS**

Scholarship assignments will be made for each production at the earliest possible time and, whenever possible, before actual work begins on that production. The student will be given his/her preference of job assignment whenever possible; however, the student will be shifted in responsibilities so that he/she receives a variety of experiences. Every effort will be made by the department to keep demands on the time of scholarship students reasonable.

Scholarship students should expect to serve on a minimum of three production running crews during each academic year. The scholarship student will complete a total of 75 scholarship hours per quarter. Performance in a production will count as 30 scholarship hours toward the completion of this requirement. Crewing a production will count as 30 hours toward completion of the requirement. If either of these options is impossible to complete, the student may be granted permission to complete all hours in the shops or offices as assigned. **NOTE:** If the student is enrolled in SPTH 260/460, the student will complete a total of 80 hours (30 hours for SPTH 260/460 + 50 hours for scholarship)

### **IV. ASSESSMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

The Coordinator of Theatre will assess both the academic and production work of the scholarship recipients at the end of each quarter. Assessment will be based on the student's fulfillment of scholarship requirements and the subjective analysis of the student's continuing progress.

A theatre scholarship is intended to be a reward for the student whose work is outstanding both in academia and in production; assessment will be based on a balance of these two parts of a student's work. Outstanding work in production is usually based more strongly on the attitude of the student doing the work than on the skill that the student may exhibit in any particular task. Production work must be done on time if the production is to be successful and if all working on the production are to gain maximum educational benefit. Therefore, a student who seeks to contribute more positively and consistently to the completion of a job will be assessed more favorably than a student who works the minimum time required or who seeks to do only certain kinds of work.

The faculty may, at the end of each quarter, withdraw aid from any student who,

in the opinion of the faculty, has not satisfactorily fulfilled all the requirements for the scholarship. Should the faculty recommend such a revocation, the student in question will be notified in writing and given seven days to request a hearing and review. A panel consisting of faculty members and a student scholarship representative will seek to determine the merits of both the recommendation for revocation and the appeal by the student involved. The panel will make a recommendation to the Coordinator of Theatre.

**If a student does not participate fully in any given quarter, he/she must return the full amount of waiver or scholarship (or a partial amount as determined by the Coordinator of Theatre) to the University.**

## **V. REAPPLY**

Due to the number of scholarships available for the theatre students, it will be necessary to schedule a meeting with the Coordinator of Theatre no later than the third week of Spring Quarter. At this meeting you will need to inform the Coordinator if you are moving off campus and or no longer in need of a dorm scholarship, or any changes that need to be made to your existing scholarship. It is also a time that you can apply for additional scholarship.

## **VI. SCHOLARSHIP MEETINGS**

All scholarship students must attend all three scholarship meetings per academic year. If you have any conflicts, please arrange a meeting with the Coordinator of Theatre.

## **VII. ADVISING**

Students who are currently enrolled are expected to register for the next quarter during the early registration period conducted the last three weeks of each quarter. Department Heads or appointed faculty members advise during the schedule registration advisement period; however, the student should be well acquainted with his/her particular curriculum as well as any special registration requirement of his/her department or college.

*Students are responsible for taking the courses required in their curriculum as they are offered and are responsible for completing any prerequisites that are required.*

### **RULES OF ADVISING:**

- ♣ Please be responsible and on time for your advising appointment.
- ♣ If you will not be able to make your appointment, you must call the theatre office (2930) to cancel prior to your scheduled time.

- ♣ If you miss your appointment and do not provide the advisor with a doctor's excuse or official university excuse, you will not be allowed to reschedule your time to be advised. You will have to make an appointment with the Dean of Liberal Arts office to be advised.
- ♣ Please check your calendar before signing up for advising so that no changes or switching has to be made.
- ♣ If you do not sign up to be advised on one of these days, you will be out of luck. These are the ONLY days that have been set aside for advising.
- ♣ Please have the "TRIAL ADVISING FORM" (found in your racing form) filled out with all the pertinent information.
- ♣ You must remember it is YOUR responsibility to know what classes you need to take each quarter. The advisor's function is merely to help you stay on track and keep you focused.

## VIII. BOARDS

Boards will be scheduled once a year. The goal will be to have them scheduled before SETC preliminary auditions. The purpose for Boards is to allow each Theatre **MAJOR** the opportunity to meet with the entire Theatre Faculty at one time. The Theatre Faculty will review the students' progress in the program. Each student with an acting emphasis will be required to prepare two contrasting monologues or a monologue and a song, not to exceed 2 (two) minutes total. There will be no accompanist provided, however a C.D. / tape player will be available to play taped accompaniment. Directors, Designers, Technicians, Stage Managers, Arts Managers will present a 3 minute presentation of their portfolio or prompt book, depending on discipline.

### GENERAL REQUIRMENTS FOR BOARDS:

1. Sign up for your Board appointment must be done in advance. The sign up sheet is on the call board next to the Theatre office.
2. These are general auditions, and many people will be being seen. Auditionees should arrive at least 30 minutes prior to their audition/interview time and check in with the Stage Manager as soon as they arrive.
3. Present two prepared monologue - a total (for both pieces) of **90 seconds or less**. If you go over your 90 seconds the stage manager will call "time" and you must stop at that very moment.
4. If you plan on doing a monologue and a song -- **Be prepared to sing, 16 bars of the song**. There will be no accompanist, so please bring an accompaniment tape. Do not perform the song a-capella. If you plan on singing, must alert Don Stevens in writing at [dstevens@latech.edu](mailto:dstevens@latech.edu) no less than one week prior to the

boards.

### MONOLOGUE DO'S AND DON'TS:

1. When you come on stage, say both your first and last name, pausing slightly between the two so that the auditors can hear you clearly. Then introduce your monologue- "Hi, my name is First\_name (pause) second\_name, and I will be doing Dorine from "Tartuffe" by Moliere. If you aren't sure of pronunciations, get them before you audition.
2. Men's Apparel:  
No flip flops. Please dress as if you were going on a job interview, as this is exactly what it is. Everything must be ironed and shoes must be polished. NO white socks.
3. Women's Apparel:  
No flip flops. Please dress as if you were going on a job interview, as this is exactly what it is. Everything must be ironed. Tight clothing or clothing that reveals your belly button is a distraction. Wear make-up (the lights are harsh) and keep your hair off your face. Don't wear backless shoes, or high platform shoes. A simple low-heeled pump is the best bet for any audition.  
  
It is important for both men and women that we need to see your natural movement, not restricted by footwear. Again I remind you to dress like a professional. Remember, if you don't respect what you do, no one else will.
4. Do not choose a story monologue, they do not show the range of an actor.
5. Do not props. Only use a chair if absolutely necessary.
6. Don't talk to chairs or inanimate objects. In general, place the person you are supposedly talking to somewhere on the back wall of the theatre over the heads of the auditors.
7. In your imagination, you should be talking to someone from whom you need something. And, you must fully understand the meaning of every word in your piece.
8. Choose monologues that are within a range of ages that you play comfortably. An 18 year old boy doing Willy Loman just won't cut it.
9. Movement is good! There is no rule that says you have to stand center and stare straight ahead for the entire time.

### INTERVIEW / PRESENTATION DO'S AND DON'TS:

1. When you enter the room, introduce yourself using your full name, pausing slightly between the two so that the auditors can hear you clearly. You may shake hands; you must make eye contact with each person you are interviewing with. If you are going to do a presentation you must introduce your work and walk us through your portfolio. If you aren't sure of pronunciations, get them before you interview.
2. Men's Apparel:

No flip flops. Please dress as if you were going on a job interview, as this is exactly what it is. Everything must be ironed and shoes must be polished. NO white socks.

3. Women's Apparel:

No flip flops. Please dress as if you were going on a job interview, as this is exactly what it is. Everything must be ironed. Tight clothing or clothing that reveals your belly button is a distraction. Wear make-up and keep your hair off your face. Don't where backless shoes, or high platform shoes. A simple low-heeled pump is the best bet for any interview.

Graduate assistants will serve as the primary support staff of the theatre and the SPA and will be given major production and/or administrative duties.

- I. Selection: graduate assistants are selected on the basis of GRE, GPA, and letters of recommendation, audition or interview.
- II. Graduate assistantships are \$2000 to \$6000 for nine months. The individual is paid on the last working day of each month.
- III. Arrival and departure dates for graduate assistants will be determined by faculty. State holidays and any additional holidays may be granted by the Director of the School of the Performing Arts. Students who anticipate needing early dismissal in May should alert his or her advisor at the earliest possible date so the arrangements can be made.
- IV. The graduate assistant is the role model for the undergraduate. He/she will be given certain privileges. The view undergraduates have of the assistant and how he/she handles these privileges will color the success in managing the assistant's area assignment.
- V. Graduate assistants with at least 18 graduate credit hours are eligible for teaching duties. Students should petition the Coordinator of Theatre for teaching assignments.
- VI. Graduate assistants are eligible for Theatre Scholarships. Applicants must maintain a 3.8 GPA. Recipients will sign an agreement containing responsibilities of the scholarship. Failure to comply will result in the retraction of the award, and it will be the student's responsibility to refund the accepted monies.
- VII. This is a professional assignment. The graduate assistant is expected to treat the position as an internship preparing for a major role in a non-academic setting.
- IX. The faculty strives to assist the student in beginning a professional network. Components of this process are attending appropriate sessions with guest artists, serving on hospitality crews for theatre events, and attending professional meetings as promoted by the faculty. The student can expect to have certain expenses for travel to meetings and therefore, should include these costs into the student's budget.

**Failure to comply with will any or all of the responsibilities, requests or expectations covered in this handbook will result in the graduate student having his or her scholarship and or assistantship revoked**