

# **Hendrix College**

# **Theatre Handbook**

## **Department of Theatre Arts and Dance**

### **Mission Statement**

"Who am I?" cried the actor playing Oedipus more than two thousand years ago and, ever since, students of the Liberal Arts have tried to answer that question for themselves. The mission of the Theatre Arts Department at Hendrix College is to empower students engaged in the eternal quest to understand themselves, their peers, their spiritual values, and the world in which they live.

Over the centuries Theatre Arts have held a central position in the Liberal Arts curriculum. This nucleus of study has had many names: rhetoric, music, fencing, dance, among others, but always included the three aspects of intellectual, emotional, and physical development and self-knowledge. The Theatre Arts curriculum at Hendrix College continues this ancient tradition of growth through the over-lapping of critical analysis, mimetic interaction, and manual or spatial skills.

By its very nature our program is multi-faceted rather than highly specialized. Our graduates may continue beyond college in more narrowly focused fields of study within the discipline, but our mission is to prepare such graduates up to the point of option, so that they have a solid spring-board from which they may decide to specialize in their later careers.

The Theatre Arts Department offers a number of courses and production opportunities for those students who major in other fields. Besides such possibilities, we see part of our mission as the bringing of a wide variety of theatrical experience to students *as audience members*. We find ourselves in a time and place where many students coming to college have never seen a live theatrical production of any kind. Widening the cultural horizons of such students is a challenging and rewarding feature of our mission. The diversity and richness of this experience is greatly enhanced by the generous funding opportunities provided to us by the Hendrix-Murphy Foundation. To take one clear example of this, all of our students, no matter how limited their involvement in theatrical productions, can share in the methods and techniques of a great number of professional guest directors, playwrights, and theatre artists through this exceptional feature of our program.

Our students learn that there are no easy answers to Oedipus' question, "Who am I?", yet in making that quest through study of the discipline of Theatre Arts and Dance they will find the means whereby to cultivate the whole person.

## **LEARNING GOALS**

*“Theatre is a clear window into the mind, the soul, the heart of humankind—the study of which should be the aim of higher education. Theatre brings life to learning.”*

Jane Alexander

Actor

Chair, National Endowment for the Arts (1993-1997)

ATHE Conference 1997

Offering students the opportunity to seek answers is the mission of the department. To that end we seek to accomplish these learning goals:

To create an environment that is both rigorous and encouraging,  
To provide direct learning experiences in the classroom and  
To recognize indirect learning experiences outside of the classroom—intellectual, emotional and physical,  
To understand the need that each culture possesses for self expression,  
To embrace the collaborative nature of the discipline.

## **HENDRIX PLAYERS**

In the Hendrix College Theatre Arts and Dance program, our diversity is our strength. Active, involved, and essential members of the program come from all academic disciplines. In fact, approximately 10% of the student body participates in theatre and dance productions. Every student is welcome and encouraged to participate in the program. There is a place for everyone in the Theatre Arts department. All auditions are open to all students; you do not have to be a major or minor to be cast in a show. The various shops offer something for everyone, no matter what your interests are. Any student may volunteer to work in the Costume Shop, Set and Lights, Properties, or the Box Office. Work study is also available in each area.

No matter who you are or what your major, the Hendrix Players would love to have you join our ranks and participate in productions viewed and enjoyed by the campus and the community.

## **THEATRE ARTS AND DANCE SCHOLARSHIP**

The Hendrix College Theatre Arts and Dance scholarship is a scholarship renewable for up to four years of study at Hendrix College. This scholarship provides **up to** \$1,000 a year. To apply for this scholarship, applicants must submit a letter of recommendation from a teacher (who does not necessarily need to be involved in Theatre or Drama) who can comment on creative ability, cooperation, and willingness to work with others. Both performance and non-performance applicants are encouraged to apply. Preference is given to individuals who apply for admission by February 1 and audition prior to February 20.

Recipients of this Theatre Arts and Dance scholarship must maintain a GPA of 2.0 and are required to complete 20 hours of Hendrix theatre/dance related work a semester. These recipients are encouraged to work in a variety of theatre areas. In addition to auditioning for and being in plays, recipients can work in any of the shops, such as Box Office and Publicity, Set and Lights, Properties, and Costumes. Majors, minors, and non-major/minors receive and maintain this scholarship. Some recipients concentrate on one area, while others work for more than one of the shops. Recipients are indeed encouraged to explore the different areas, if they so desire. No prior knowledge is required for any of the shops--there will always be supervisors or knowledgeable people nearby who can help the curious scholarship student learn how to perform tasks such as working a soundboard or sewing a costume. Even Hendrix students who do not receive the Theatre Arts and Dance scholarship are encouraged to work in the different shops and audition for the plays.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR A B.A. IN THEATRE ARTS (Total 12 Courses)**

Theatre Arts majors should generally adopt the following courses sequencing guidelines:

100-level courses for first year students; 200-level courses for second year students; 300 and 400-level courses for third year students and for fourth year students. With occasional exceptions all major coursework is offered yearly.

- TART 120     Voice, Articulation, and Text Reading
- TART 140     Beginning Acting
- TART 150     Stage Movement and the Alexander Technique
- TART 210     Script into Performance: Text Analysis
- TART 220     Theatre Practicum
- TART 260     Theatre Production: Scenery and Lighting
- TART 280     Theatre Production: Costume and Makeup
- TART 310     History of the Theatre and Drama I
- TART 311     History of the Theatre and Drama II
- TART 497     Senior Seminar
- TART 430     Stage Directing
- TART 450     Production Design

Independent Study: The department will consider proposals for Independent Study that are attempted to deepen an understanding of the theatre arts. Independent Studies may not replicate regular course offerings. Courses taught on alternate years will not be offered through individualized instruction.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR A MINOR IN THEATRE ARTS (Total 6 Courses)**

A minor in Theatre Arts will consist of at least six courses distributed as follows:

TART 210 Script into performance: Text Analysis

TART 220 Theatre Practicum

Any one of the following:

TART 120 Voice, Articulation, and Text Reading

TART 140 Beginning Acting

TART 150 Stage Movement and the Alexander Technique

TART 160 Reading and Writing Dance—an Introduction

Any one of the following:

TART 260 Theatre Production: Scenery and Lighting

TART 280 Theatre Production: Costume and Makeup

Any one of the following:

TART 310 History of the Theatre and Drama I

TART 311 History of the Theatre and Drama II

Any one of the following:

TART 390 Playwriting

TART 430 Stage Directing

TART 450 Production Design

Independent Study: The department will consider proposals for Independent Study that are attempted to deepen an understanding of the theatre arts. Independent Studies may not replicate regular course offerings. Courses taught on alternate years will not be offered through individualized instruction.

## MAJOR REVIEWS

Each student interested in declaring a major in Theatre Arts must complete an interview with the Theatre faculty at the end of both sophomore and junior year. In this interview the faculty will assess the student's abilities, strengths, and weakness. They will also make recommendations to the student concerning completion of the program. Another review will take place at the beginning of the senior year to assess the student's plan for graduation and beyond. At the end of the senior year an exit interview will be conducted with faculty members.

## REHEARSAL DEMEANOR

Expectations from actors and technicians:

- Arrive at rehearsal 10-15 minutes early in order to be ready to begin on time.
- Wear shoes, clothing, and hair style appropriate to rehearsal. This means wearing rehearsal shoes, skirts, jackets, etc when provided and pinning hair back and out of your face.
- Bring your script and a pencil to every rehearsal; the Director will often give notes that need to be written down and remembered. You cannot depend on the Stage Manager or director to provide you with a pencil at every rehearsal.
- The only people with the authority to correct problems are the Director, Technical Director, Costumer, and/or Stage Manager. Actors are *never* to correct other actors unless given authority to do so by the director or stage manager. Students are *never* to correct one another unless given authority to do so by the Director.
- Please initial the sign in sheet at *every* rehearsal.

**All absences from rehearsal are considered unexcused unless previously approved by the Director and most likely will result in a replacement for the particular student and his or her role in the production.**

## COSTUME POLICIES

The use and care of a production's costumes are essential to the success of each year's season of plays, musicals, and operas. TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR COSTUMES and paying close attention to the following policies will ensure the smooth, efficient, and professional operation of our Costume Shop.

- Actors **must** schedule a specific time for their fittings.
- Actors **must** arrive for their fittings at the scheduled time.
- If you have to reschedule your fitting, you must let the Costumer know 24 hours in advance.
- No **eating, drinking, or smoking** in costume.
- Actors are responsible for providing their own make-up. Orders will be taken by the costumer before each show.
- Actors are responsible for personal hygiene and should not be reminded of it.

## **CREW RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **STAGE MANAGER**

Prompt Book includes:

- All notation for lighting and sound cues
- Blocking notations
- Technical schedules
- Rehearsal schedules
- Ground plan
- Company list
- Pre-show duty list

Role with actors:

- Support the actors
- Organize things efficiently so the actors get the maximum out of rehearsal time
- The Stage Manager runs the show during performance
  - Out of respect for the Stage Manager's function, the actor should always yield to him or her.
  - Out of respect for the Assistant Stage Manager's function, the actor should always yield to him or her.
  - The actor should follow directions given by the Stage Manager.

Assisting the Director:

- Begin and end rehearsal by:
  - Preparing the cast for rehearsal: making sure all are in rehearsal shoes and clothes, onstage prepared for the work with cell phones turned off or collected, etc.
  - Announcing any business that concerns the production: costume fittings, news from the stage designer concerning the set, etc.
- Take all blocking notation and advise the director of blocking errors during rehearsal
- Make careful notes of where props are placed off stage or discovered on stage
- Spike all set pieces
- Time the show as running rehearsals begin; keep the director apprised of the timing of each act
- Call all lighting cues, sound cues, and effects

Working with the Technical Director:

- Discuss cue calling sequence and headset etiquette
- Prepare prompt book with light and sound cues noted before first Technical Rehearsal
- Determine which ASMs shall be on headset

Other Duties:

- Follow the direction of the House Manager as for the cue to begin performance as well as after intermission
- Oversee all backstage activities during the run of the show, including the call of cues to lighting, sound, and actors
- Always talk with the Director if you have questions or concerns

## **CREW RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)**

### **ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS / PROPS**

ASMs work with the Stage Manager and Prop Manager in order to ensure that the show runs smoothly. There are usually 2-4 Assistant Stage Managers for each production. The two components to this job are:

- Coordinates running of properties along with Property Manager and Stage Manager
- Assisting the Stage Manager during rehearsal as needed and, during the run of the production, working with the Stage Manager to assure the smooth operation of the backstage areas.

### **BOX OFFICE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES**

General Responsibilities:

- sending out email reminders about events (such as try-outs, cue-techs, meetings, and picnics) and about opportunities for theatre scholarship students to get some hours
- signing off on the hours of theatre scholarship students and students who are working toward practicum and volunteering
- delegating tasks to student workers, checking crew and cast interest in t-shirts and coordinating t-shirt designing, money collecting, payment, etc.
- keeping the Box Office clean and organized and maintaining the lobby order
- coordinating publicity to Table Talk, Hendrix Today, the Democrat Gazette, etc
- helping as asked with posters, particularly in regard to posting these posters around campus
- greeting auditioning students with forms and pencils, collecting the forms and distributing them appropriately to director or technical director, taking photographs of auditioning students
- distributing a cast and crew list
- labeling and filing slides
- performing duties as requested

Board Responsibilities:

- designing, completing, and striking the show case (which typically holds information about the playwright or other themes related to the production)
- designing, completing, and striking the show board (an artistic endeavor which must include the posting of important information such as production, playwright, and dates)
- updating the board of production dates (which means punching out letters and pinning up the production line-up (with important information such as production, playwright, and dates))

## **CREW RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)**

### **BOX OFFICE MANAGER (continued)**

#### Program Responsibilities:

- request "Special Thanks" program information from cast and crew members
- consult with professors about program information
- type in names of all students involved in the production with their job titles
- gather other necessary program information, including one or more pictures
- continue updating the program as necessary

#### Ticket Responsibilities:

- taking reservations (on the phone, through email, etc)
- coordinating Sunporch reservations
- coordinating ushers
- keeping careful track of reservations in an Excel file
- labeling envelopes to put tickets into
- assigning people to seats and placing tickets into the appropriate envelopes

#### Ticket Window Responsibilities

- dress in nice clothes
- direct ushers and answer their questions
- open the window thirty minutes prior to the show
- place patrons on a waiting list when necessary (reserved tickets will be released to people on this list ten minutes prior to the start of the production; a professor usually helps with this process)
- keep a running count of walk-ups and late-comers
- after the production starts (and tickets are no longer being handed out), count empty envelopes to learn how many people with reservations came; also, count how many ticket reservations were unclaimed
- fill out a house report with information on weather, walk-ups, late-comers, no-shows, attendance, etc

### **CREW RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)**

**Property Master:** Has great responsibilities for which previous experience as an Assistant Stage Manager/Props would be helpful. The PM works with the designer and director under the guidance of the technical director and is responsible for locating all of the properties used in a production. These are all the items used on stage that are not part of the set or costumes, and may be pulled from stock, purchased, borrowed, built, painted, or found. This may include shopping at antique, junk, thrift stores, etc. Having access to a vehicle is almost essential. The PM handles the money spent on purchases for the production and keeps a record of the monies spent. During the production the PM “runs” the props backstage and makes repairs as needed.

**Student Technical Director:** Works under the guidance of the Technical Director and is responsible for implementing the design decisions of the TD. The Student TD may organize the lighting technicians that will make up the hang/focus crew, train them in proper procedure, prepare the lighting equipment for use, schedule the hang/focus sessions, run the hang/focus sessions, locate and purchase any color media, patterns, rental and special equipment, keep records of expenditures, take notes during the cue setting, tech and dress rehearsals, make changes as needed by the TD. During the run of the production the Student TD is responsible for completion of a sound and light check and repair of any problems before each performance.

**Wardrobe Assistant:** Is an important position for the smooth running of the production and can be done by someone at any experience level. Usually two or three wardrobe persons are needed per production, working under the supervision of the Costume Designer (CD). They work with the CD to assist with the construction and fitting of costumes. During the production they assist actors in changing costumes and keeping track of costumes pieces. The Wardrobe Crew is also responsible for maintaining and cleaning the costumes after each performance. Any addition responsibilities are assigned by the CD.

**Board Operator:** Is to work with the Lighting Designer during the preparation of the lighting instruments, hang and focus and gel the instruments, prepare any special effects, program the light board, run the board during all the technical and dress rehearsals and performances, and assist in the light and sound check. Prior experience is not necessary.

**Stage Crew:** Is not only necessary for any production, but is also a way for those with varying levels of experience to be involved in the production process. The duties will vary from show-to-show but usually include preparation of the stage for use at each performance, set up of stage units, cleaning of the stage-set floor, and setting up the furniture. It may include construction, finishing and painting of scenery, operation of the lift/revolve system, slide or scenic projectors, fog and smoke machines and/or other special effects, and any other responsibilities as assigned by the TD.

## **PROPERTY CREW DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The following are responsibilities of all crew members:**

- Attendance at all production and prop meetings, designated rehearsals, performances, and strike;
- Must have dark (black) clothing and a working flashlight.

### **The following are responsibilities of the Prop Manager and Prop Crew/Assistant Stage Manager(s):**

- Meet all deadlines including having rehearsal, furniture, food, and final props due;
- Buy/Pull/Modify/Build/Procure all required props for a production;
- Put away rehearsal props and furniture prior to first full dress rehearsal;
- Return all borrowed props within one (1) week of production strike;
- Set up prop tables and label as required for the production.

### **The following are additional responsibilities of the Prop Manager ONLY:**

- Keep complete and accurate records of purchases and borrowed props;
- Stay within designated budget. Any purchases over budget must have prior approval from the
- Technical Director; and
- Perform additional research on the production props as required.

### **The following are additional responsibilities of Prop Crew/Assistant Stage Managers ONLY:**

- Prepare the backstage areas prior to the first full prop rehearsal including:
  - clean out trash, junk, and sweep;
  - determine needs for running lights;
  - glow tape (with Stage Manager) areas as needed prior to first full technical rehearsal;
  - tape stage layout for rehearsals prior to beginning of rehearsals
- Assist the Stage Manager as needed.

**As a general rule, props crew members are expected to spend as much time doing their jobs as actors spend rehearsing. However, the hours are more variable until the final rehearsals in tech week.**

## **LIGHT CREW HEAD DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Prologue**

In the theatre of today, the use of electronic dimming has radically changed the way people think about light. Never before has it been possible to do so much with light to make it a dominant yet integrated element of the overall design. The electronic dimmer and memory system allow more control than have ever been possible. Even though it is the Technical Director who makes the decisions in regard to color, intensity, focus, distribution, and timing, it is the light crew who makes this vision a reality. The light crew consists of the Light Crew Head (sometimes called the Student Technical Director) and two-to-four light technicians.

### **Duties**

The duties of the Light Crew Head are many and varied.

- Re-lamp and repair of lighting instruments
- Acquisition of new lamps, color media, patterns (gobos), and special effect lights (SFX)
- Rig special lighting effects
- Set up running lights backstage
- Hang, focus, and gel lights for a production
- Be on call in the theatre during tech, dress rehearsals, and performances to solve electrical problems
- Assist the TD in instruction of the Light Crew in proper operational procedures of lighting equipment
- Schedule work periods with Light Crew at first company meeting

## **SOUND CREW HEAD DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **During the pre-production period:**

- attend the production meetings;
- discuss with Director and Technical Director possible sources of sound effects, music effects, and live sound reinforcement needs;
- procure recording media as well as sound and music effect sources as needed;
- record sound and music effects onto chosen media;
- prior to first sound run, set auxiliary equipment such as house mixer, microphones, live sound effect devices (phone ringer, etc.);
- note positions on the tape counter of the beginning and ending points of each sound cue.

### **During the production (technical and dress rehearsal and performance) period:**

At first sound rehearsal:

- write all cues onto standard format sound cue sheet;
- perform cues as needed;
- make necessary changes to cue sheets and to recorded sound cues before next rehearsal;
- take all notes in writing;
- make calls on the page system at stage managers discretion.

## **SOUND CREW HEAD DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)**

### **Before a rehearsal or show:**

- turn on all necessary sound equipment;
- run a sound check of speakers, microphones, sound playback devices, and headsets;
- correct any problems that may arise in sound levels, editing, etc.; and
- report completion to Stage Manager.

### **After the show:**

- turn off necessary sound equipment; and
- make any necessary “fixes” to levels, cues, editing, sound effects, etc.

**All crew heads must attend weekly productions meetings to share progress and discuss needs for the progression of the show.**

## **LIGHT AND SOUND BOARD OPERATORS**

Responsibilities include required attendance Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday afternoons of tech week for dry tech rehearsals. Each board operator must also attend each rehearsal of tech week until the close of the show. The board operators should make time in the weeks before tech week to learn how to run the board and practice running the board under the supervision of the Technical Director or Student Technical Director.

## **THEATRE USHER POLICIES**

Any Hendrix student is welcome to serve as an usher for any of the Hendrix Players productions. Typically, an usher will come at 6:45 p.m. on the night of a production (or 1:15 p.m. for a Saturday matinee). Regular ushers are required to stay for an hour unless dismissed earlier by one of the Box Office managers. Anyone who is unable to commit for an hour should not sign up for the position without prior approval. Being early enables ushers to review proper procedures, answer the questions of patrons, and perform any last minute duties (such as program folding or printing) that might be found necessary by the Box Office managers. There are two full-show ushers, both of whom must stay for the whole production and perform normal usher duties in addition to their full-show duties.

### **Important Notes for Ushers:**

- Ushers must wear **nice clothes**, such as skirts, dresses, khaki pants, dress pants, and nice shirts. **No jeans** and **no flip-flops**.
- Smoking is prohibited in the theatre. Beverages and food items are also not allowed. Ushers need to kindly inform guests of these rules if they are not following them.
- Both sets of house doors are to remain closed until the House Manager or Box Office Managers approve opening them. Ushers need to be standing by both sets of doors (preferably at least three ushers per door). Ushers should open and close the doors as cued (the doors can be opened when the house opens, while they need to be shut right before the production begins).
- When patrons arrive, ushers may hand out programs. Giving programs out early means that patrons will have something to do while waiting for the house to open.
- At least one usher on each side will be ushering patrons (in ticketed productions) to their seats. These ushers need to become acquainted with seating arrangements prior to beginning this task. Ushers also need to be sure to keep their ticket stubs and turn them in to the Box Office directly after the production.
- Ushers need to always be courteous.

### **Notes for the Two Full-Show Ushers:**

- The in-house usher will be seated inside the theatre near one of the doors. The in-house usher uses his or her flashlight to enable guests to successfully navigate in the dark. This usher also makes sure there are no disturbances (such as people talking on cell phones). During unticketed productions, this usher needs to count the number of patrons in the theatre and inform the Box Office of the number. This usher needs to ensure that there are no safety hazards inside the theatre and that the house is clean.
- The outside usher sits outside the house. During all productions, the outside usher will usher in late patrons with his or her flashlight and take care of any problems that occur outside the theatre doors. This usher needs to ensure that there are no safety hazards outside the theatre.

## **TICKET POLICIES**

Tickets to all productions by the Hendrix Players are free, though a few productions, such as the Senior Seminar, are open seating and do not require tickets. Reservations are strongly encouraged, as Cabe Theatre has limited seating. To check production schedules, go to the Hendrix Theatre website (<http://www.hendrix.edu/theatrearts>). To make reservations, contact the Cabe Theatre Box Office and provide **all** of the following information:

- the name the reservations will be held under;
- the phone number that can be called if there are questions about reservations;
- the number of tickets desired;
- any special needs that need to be met (such as difficulty walking down stairs);
- and the date and time you and your guests will attend.

Reservations will not be taken after 3 p.m. on the cut-off date. Depending on ticket availability, walk-ups on the night of the production may be placed on a waiting list. For the major productions, there will be a 7:30 p.m. production on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, while there will also be a 2:00 p.m. matinee on Saturday. Note that the Box Office will open thirty minutes prior to the start of a show. Tickets will be **released** ten minutes prior to the start of a show, so please be early.

### **How to Make Reservations**

There are many ways to make ticket reservations:

**Sign up in the Sunporch:** For Hendrix students, this method is one of the easiest ways. A week preceding a production, there will be people sitting in the Hulen Sunporch taking reservations. Clearly print all the necessary information, and your reservation is made.

**Go to the Box Office Online Form:** Go to the Hendrix Theatre website (<http://www.hendrix.edu/theatrearts>) and click the link on the side labeled "The Box Office Online." Then, fill out all the requested information and click "Submit Form."

**Call the Box Office:** If you call during regular Box Office hours, someone should answer your call. If you receive the voicemail, however, simply note all the relevant information noted above under **TICKET POLICIES**. The Box Office number is (501) 450-1343.

**Walk to the Box Office:** If you like to talk to people face to face, feel free to go to the Cabe Theatre Box Office window during regularly scheduled hours. Someone should be around to take your reservation.

### **General Box Office Information**

Telephone Number: (501) 450-1343

Office Hours: 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

**Join the Hendrix Players mailing list! Simply call or email the Box Office with your mailing information and request to be on the production schedule mailing list.**