



LSU SCHOOL OF THEATRE

LAB SEASON HANDBOOK

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lsu.edu/cmda/theatre.

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I. MISSION

The Lab Season provides student practitioners/scholars opportunities to develop their skills in text analysis and production in a supportive atmosphere that values experimentation and diversity but places primary emphasis on foundational experiences for directors and the members of the production team. Student projects should maximize artistic output by making best use of School resources as deemed appropriate for the project by the Lab Season Committee and School of Theatre. Student participants should use Lab productions to hone their skills in directing, theatrical design and technology, management, and acting for the stage. Together we plan to provide audiences with performances that both expand and challenge their understanding of theatre as an aesthetic practice and community endeavor.

II. PRE-PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

All students proposing a Lab production must complete the following coursework prior to or during the semester of the proposed show production.

- THTR 1001 Practical Elements of Stagecraft THTR 2021 Directing I
- THTR 2022 Introduction to Theatrical Design THTR 2025 Fundamentals of Acting
- THTR 2130 Script Analysis

III. PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Students proposing Lab productions must submit a complete set of proposal materials to the current Lab Season Committee through the online submission portal. Any such form will require:

- a basic directorial analysis of the script or scenario;
- a rationale for the production as part of the Lab Season;
- a list of specific production requirements and particular production challenges;
- a timeline for the rehearsal process;
- all information relative to securing rights and royalties for the script in question;
- a copy of the script in the form and version in which it is to be produced.

In addition, students must have identified and met with a faculty mentor in advance of submitting their proposal.

IV. AUDITIONS

A. Scripts

The individual Directors will provide the office with the text of the script in its *original* source at least one month before General Auditions for students to read.

B. General Auditions

Directors should work with the Head of Undergraduate Performance to confirm the specific dates and times for the fall and spring general auditions. Ideally auditions should consist of a single 90-second monologue. Directors should work with the Head of Undergraduate Performance to request any additional general audition requirements.

The Director will be asked to provide a casting breakdown and appropriate disclosure items for use on the audition notice.

C. Callbacks

All circumstances permitting, callbacks are scheduled in the week after the last General Audition. After callbacks, Directors may be requested to attend a meeting with all the season directors and the Head of Undergraduate Performance to negotiate final casting choices.

D. Casting

The Lab Season shows prioritize the casting of LSU undergraduate students. Any exceptions to this undergraduate casting policy must be approved by the head of the School of Theatre. Final cast lists must be vetted by the SOT before being made public. Students must maintain a minimum 2.5 gpa to be eligible to work on Lab productions. Exceptions to the gpa requirement may be made for Theatre Practicum class assignments 2026 and 4136, or Lab Production run crews.

V. PERSONNEL / DESIGN AND BUDGET

Students whose proposals are approved for the Lab Season are responsible for recruiting a production team that should include a stage manager and crew and may also include designers for specific technical areas. Directors are encouraged to make recruiting an experienced stage manager their first priority. Please note that the choice of both designers and stage managers are subject to final approval by the Lab Season Coordinator and faculty in subject areas as appropriate.

After the entire design team has met and developed a unified design concept for the show, each designer should schedule a meeting with the director and the Faculty/Staff Area Coordinator

(FSAC) to discuss realization of the concept and determine how best to use available resources. This should allow for a refinement of the budget for each area which will be submitted to the Lab Series Coordinator via the Stage Manager. **Deadlines for “Finalized Team”. “First looks”. “Final Deliverables” and “Final Budget” will be indicated on the Lab Series Production Calendar.**

Each Director is responsible for scheduling a meeting with their entire design/production team and the Lab Season Coordinator a **minimum** of four (4) weeks **prior to the First Rehearsal** in order to discuss show concept and address any special production needs. Each Lab Production will have a budget of **\$350.00** to be used primarily for costume and properties.

An approved budget is required for access to budget resources. (Projects with extraordinary fees such as rights for a musical must be approved by the School of Theatre.)

The costs of scripts, royalties and publicity will be covered by the School.

Lab productions are student-driven projects. ALL labor for each production is generated by students including but not limited to construction; light hang and focus; moving equipment; purchasing materials etc. Student directors and designers should consider their labor pool and budget when making design choices.

VI. MARKETING AND HOUSE MANAGEMENT

A. Marketing

- All marketing and publicity must pass through, and ultimately be approved, by the current Marketing Director or other responsible school staff.
- The Director of Marketing and the Chair must approve special events connected to productions, such as post-performance talkbacks
- Directors are responsible for originating the graphics and/or the graphic concepts on fliers and programs; this information should be forwarded to the Marketing Director at least four weeks before opening for approval.
- Directors should provide the Director of Marketing with a contact sheet four weeks before opening; as this will be the basis for the program, all job descriptions must be accurate.
- The Director of Marketing will assist in the creation of printed materials.
- Each director is responsible for managing the distribution of posters, fliers, etc.
- Programs will be posted online and will not include director’s notes or biographies.
- The School will print fliers and programs (on a black and white copier) at no expense to the production.
- There is no marketing budget for Lab productions.
- A production photo for publicity should be arranged with the Director of Marketing at least three weeks before opening.
- No filming is permitted.

B. Ticketing

- Each person involved with a production, including the director, is entitled to two complimentary tickets.
- Requests for other complimentary tickets (i.e. donors of material support, etc.) must be approved by the Marketing Director.
- Only House Managers can mark seats as reserved; the Stage Manager should let the House Manager know if seats need to be reserved.
- No seats can be removed, blocked out or incorporated into the production without prior approval of the Lab Season Coordinator.
- Generally, seats cannot be reserved; exceptions will be granted for legitimate reasons. (i.e. age and health-related needs, out of town guests)

C. House Management

- House Management will be provided by the School.
- The Stage Manager will be the contact with the House Manager at each performance.
- The Stage Manager should make contact with the House Manager as early as possible before each performance.
- All warm-ups and preshow checks in the theatre shall be completed by ½ hour before curtain in order to open the house.

D. Director Responsibilities

- The policy on late seating will be determined by the Director in consultation with the Lab Season Coordinator. The late seating policy should be communicated to the House Manager by the Director.
- One week before opening, the director must inform the House Management Coordinator of:
 - The show length and number of intermissions
 - Warnings which will need to be posted for the audience (i.e. smoke, fog, nudity, strobe lights, excessive profanity, etc.)
 - Any additional issue of concern for the audience

VII. CONSTRUCTION PHASE

A. Faculty /Staff Area Coordinators

ALL usage of equipment and materials must be coordinated through the **Faculty/Staff Area Coordinators (FSAC)** by meetings **and** e-mail. No meeting is confirmed until the director and/or designer receives a confirmation via e-mail.

Policies & Procedures for each area may differ so directors and designers should contact FSACs as soon as possible to become familiar with each shop's standards of operation.

Questions regarding each area can be directed to the area coordinators listed below.

- **Scenery- Professional-in-Residence/Lab Series Coordinator - *Christopher Wood***
chriswood@lsu.edu
- **Scenic Design – Assistant Professor - *Apollo Weaver***, apolloweaver@lsu.edu
- **Lighting- Assistant Professor of Lighting - *Smaida Massatt***, smaidamassatt@lsu.edu
- **Properties-Professional-in-Residence/Properties Designer - *John Eddy***, jeddy2@lsu.edu
- **Sound – Assistant Professor - *Tyler Kieffer***, tkieffer@lsu.edu
- **Costumes-Associate Professor, Costume Technology - *Kyla Kazuschyk***
kkazuschyk@lsu.edu

B. General Rules and Regulations

- All questions and requests regarding technical resources should be made through the appropriate FSAC. Designers and Directors should not approach Graduate Assistants and student workers in the production shops with equipment/materials request.
- As required by state law, all items purchased with LSU funds become the property of the LSU School of Theatre
- ALL items and equipment must be returned to storage in the same condition as when borrowed unless otherwise indicated by the FSAC for the given area. Student Designers should coordinate with FSACs to determine when and where items should be placed at the end of strike.
- ALL students involved in a production are required to take an active role in strike. When a task is completed ask for another. No one should be sitting idle while others are working unless specifically told to do so by the Strike leaders. Strike Leaders will be the Designers for each area. If no designer is present it falls to the Director to lead those areas.
- Drawings of the rep light plot, empty studio space and the guidelines will be available through the Lab Series Coordinator.

C. Lab Series Technical Resource Guidelines

Below are listed the **Minimum** resources available to Lab Shows corresponding to each Design / Technical area. From the beginning to the end of the production process, the FSACs may allow **additional** resources—as available—based upon 1) their assessment of the prior experience of each student designer; 2) regular communication with the FSAC; 3) student adherence to

production schedules and guidelines. Note that access to additional resources is at the discretion of the FSACs, either individually or in consultation with one another. Remember also:

Scenery

- All the items listed below are available to Lab Series productions but the structure cannot be altered. As part of the strike, all items must be returned to their storage location.
 - 8 periaktoi (Can be used at 8' height or 12' height)
 - 2 Platforms, 1 @ 4'x8' and 1 @ 4'x6' both legged to 16" (no change in height will be allowed)
 - 2 Platforms @1'x4' eight inches tall that will be used as steps up to the 16" tall platforms
- No masking may be moved.
- No change or adjustment to the seating risers will be permitted.

Lighting

- A house plot will be hung and maintained over the Lab season. The house plot includes
 - A 6 area general plot.
 - Each area includes 7-instrument general area lighting. (2 x front 45° instruments, 2 x side lights, 2 x top lights and front fill.)
- No changes to focus of the plot will be allowed without prior approval by the FSAC.
- Gel color must be restored to original condition as part of strike.

Properties

- Lab Series productions may have access to a limited selection of hand properties at the discretion of the FSAC for Properties.
- Lab Series productions will have access to the following furniture pieces.
 - 4 straight back chairs,
 - 1 Table (36" approx.. height)
 - 1 Futon (serves as a couch or bed)
 - 4 metal stools (18" height)
- All items requisitioned by a show must be returned in the same condition as received and any damaged items must be repaired or replaced.
- No properties are to be altered without prior approval by the FSAC.

Sound

- A pre-existing sound plot will be available for all Lab Season productions. The plot uses 4 powered speakers with a CD player and mixer for playback
- No alterations to the plot will be allowed without prior approval by the FSAC.
- Use of QLab resources is subject to prior approval from the Sound FSAC.

Costuming

- Lab Season productions may have access to a limited selection of costume pieces at the discretion of the FSAC for Costuming.
- All items requisitioned by a show must be returned in the same condition as when received. Any damaged items must be repaired or replaced.
- No costumes are to be altered without prior approval by the FSAC.

VIII. REHEARSALS

Rehearsals for LSU Theatre are limited to a maximum of four (4) hours per day (Monday through Friday), up to five (5) hours on either Saturday or Sunday. (Notes must be contained in this period.)

Breaks for rehearsals should conform to Equity standards: Five (5) minutes after sixty (60) minutes; ten (10) minutes after ninety (90) -- whatever the director prefers. Tech rehearsals should be scheduled according to the same schedule listed above. Students must have either Saturday or Sunday as a free day, with no rehearsal.

According to Louisiana State University policy, all work **MUST** end at 11:00pm on weekdays and at 11:30 PM on weekends.

IX. TECHNICAL REHEARSALS

Technical rehearsals must adhere to all of the constraints of the normal rehearsal process. During Technical Rehearsals, the Director should focus on making final artistic choices, while remaining attentive to the time constraints of the rehearsal period and the safety/well-being of the other production members. The Stage Manager and Designers should also work in an efficient and productive fashion with the Director in these rehearsals. In particular, the Stage Manager should monitor the time to make the best use of the rehearsal period and also act as the watchdog for the safety and well-being of all production members.

The Lighting and Sound designers should arrive for the first evening of tech with rough cues already programmed and ready to run. This rough cueing will provide a framework for any adjustments and/or additions the design team and director deem necessary. Tech is also a time to note adjustments to props, scenic units and costumes, all in conversation with the director. All members of the production team should work together during Technical Rehearsals; they all should understand that significant problems are best discussed in separate meetings, outside the Tech Rehearsals. This makes best use of everyone's time during the Tech Rehearsal periods. It is most crucial, once rehearsals move into the performance space, that all rehearsal time be used wisely and to its fullest potential, so that all the production members can become accustomed to their new performance environment.

The Director, Designers, and Stage Manager must plan carefully for all **technical** work that must be done in the space. Floors that must be painted, construction to the space that must be completed, lights that must be focused or hung; **all** technical aspects are the ultimate responsibility of the director, whose responsibilities include working with the stage manager, designers and technical crew, etc. to maximize time in the space during tech week. Lab Season productions are student-driven. Directors should not anticipate access to labor support outside of their team with the exception of House Management and Marketing as noted in this document.

X. PERFORMANCE RUN

The Director should help wherever needed over the course of the performance run. This includes stepping in to serve as a board op, usher, or other position, as the performance may need. Where the Director may continue to give notes during the performance run, major changes in the performance should be avoided. As a rule, the Production Stage Manager will supervise the show during the run except in the case of special circumstances.

XI. CLOSING AND STRIKE

After the final performance in coordination with the Lab Season Coordinator, the Director, Stage Manager, and Designers will schedule and lead the strike of the show. **ALL** members of the design team must be present regardless of whether any restore is required. Non-perishable items purchased for the production are property of the School and should be treated as stock items.

All Lab series stock items should be struck from the space and returned to storage. Each student designer is responsible for coordinating with their FSAC, for the prompt return of any borrowed items and/or restoration of any alterations to the space.

The Director has the ultimate responsibility for making sure that the strike and returns are complete.

Dressing rooms must be cleaned and swept. The performance space must be swept and any debris must be placed in waste receptacles.

XII. FINAL WRAP-UP

All original receipts must be turned in to the Business Manager for the School of Theatre and the budget closed by the first Wednesday after the production closes; receipts should be submitted no later than 3pm.

XIII. SAFETY AND SECURITY

THE ENTIRE PRODUCTION COMPANY must be ever vigilant about security. Pay attention that all equipment is present when you enter and leave the space. All doors to the theatre and dressing rooms must be locked whenever leaving the space. Work in the shops must be approved by the area supervisor and the appropriate safety and security procedures must be followed.

Please be smart. It is crucial that no one is left in the building alone. In addition, you are strongly advised not to walk to your cars, dorms, or fraternities/sororities alone. Please call campus transit if you need a ride.

Do not give access to groups or individuals for work not associated with your production. You will be responsible for anything that group does in the space if you provide unauthorized entry.

Please make sure all trash is disposed of in an appropriate container outside of the theatre space (we do not have regular cleaning service in the theatre or dressing rooms).

XIV. MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Applicants for the Lab Season should have a faculty member agree to mentor their production by the time they submit their applications. On a case-by-case basis, the Lab Committee may be able to help coordinate matching individual students with faculty mentors.
2. Student directors should consult with faculty mentors regarding their selection of designers, stage managers, and other members of the production team. Positions such as assistant directors, assistant designers, dramaturgs, etc. should also be vetted by the faculty mentor.
3. Faculty mentors can offer guidance to the entire production; all members of the team should be welcome to meet with the mentor. That said, student directors and mentors should agree upon a schedule of regular meetings; one check-in per week is recommended.
4. As a consultant for the entire production, the faculty mentor should encourage all members of the team to adhere to the production schedule in cooperation with Chris Wood, coordinator of the Lab Season—from “first looks” through tech rehearsals and strikes.
5. Student directors and their mentors should also agree on a schedule for mentors to visit rehearsals. Mentors are encouraged to attend one of the first rehearsals in order to establish clear channels of communication with all members of the production team.
6. Faculty mentors are welcome, with student director approval, to invite other faculty members to visit rehearsals or production meetings on occasion. These visits are intended to allow other faculty to share their own insights and expertise with the production team.