

UC Irvine Drama PRODUCTION POLICIES

This policy document (revised December, 2013) is to make certain that all UC Irvine Drama productions are coordinated under fair and equitable guidelines.

1. CASTING

A. All department auditions and casting follow university guidelines pertaining to equal opportunity. Casting is open to students of all races and national origins, except when the play or production concept addresses issues of ethnicity, in which case the Chair may approve a waiver of this rule.

B. Only currently enrolled full-time students (not Extension or "concurrent" students) and UCI staff and faculty may participate in department-sponsored productions, other than as instrumental musicians, except with the approval of the Chair. This policy, in existence since 1966, is the Department's "*Rule Number One*." (Students with full-time status at the time they were cast, but whose full-time status has lapsed in the quarter in which the show performs, may be permitted to participate in the show if the department and show director agree.)

C. No recasting may take place once rehearsals have begun, except by approval of the Casting Coordinator, the Chair or, for Director Class Projects (DCPs), the Head of Directing.

D. No student may withdraw from an accepted role except by approval of the Chair. If a student abandons a role without approval, s/he may be penalized by a failing grade, prohibition on playing other roles, denial of department-authorized awards, and/or a letter of reprimand.

E. All shows mounted and supported by the department are required to follow the department's open casting policy; no pre-casting is permitted, with the exception of guest artist roles and casting for approved special projects, in which case the pre-casting is announced on all audition notices. Early casting may be done in order to facilitate costume design/ fittings.

F. All graduate actors are required to audition for, and accept roles if cast in, all Drama Season Shows, although the Head of Acting may give a waiver where appropriate. BFA candidates must audition for all drama season musicals. Undergraduates *may* audition but cannot be required to do so. If offered a role in a production, undergraduates (and graduates in areas other than acting) must, within three days from the cast posting date, officially accept or decline their role by completing, signing and turning into the Drama office a Role Acceptance or Decline Form [RADF].

G. All Drama Season Shows audition during Welcome Week and the first week of Fall Quarter, to resolve potential casting conflicts prior to posting. DCPs and all other projects will audition with the approval of the Head of Directing after casting is posted for the Drama season.

H. The Casting Coordinator will review all submitted cast lists for Drama productions with the Head of Acting and Undergraduate Acting. Conflicts between shows or disagreements about casting choices will be resolved by conference of the Casting Coordinator, the Head of Acting, and the director(s) of the salient productions, within the stated time-frame. Disputes over or questions about an actor's participation in a given production will be decided by the Casting Coordinator; directors and actors have the right of appeal to the Chair.

I. Final priorities for casting are:

1. faculty directed season productions.
2. faculty directed workshops.
3. grad director thesis productions.
4. DCPs and other projects

J. Posting of casts for all shows will take place within 48 hours of submission of cast lists to the Coordinator of Casting.

K. Students cast in any department production are required to register for credit as soon as the registration period opens for the quarter in which the show performs. Specific registration instructions for each production will be printed on the Role Acceptance/Decline Forms and also available from Production Stage Managers.

2. PRODUCTION EVALUATIONS

Actors, designers, technicians, etc. officially taking part in any Drama Season Show are entitled to evaluate their experience. Forms for so doing will be distributed by the stage manager of each production (both electronically or in paper form) after which they will be made available to directors (via the Head of Directing--for graduate directors), the Associate Producer and Department Chair.

3. GRADING GUIDELINES: ACTORS IN PRODUCTION

A grade for acting in a production is determined by two factors: the **director's evaluation** and the actor's **responsibility** to the production schedule. *(Note that, for shows directed by student directors, the "director's evaluation" is made by the faculty mentor of the show in consultation with the student director.)*

The **director's evaluation** is based on the actor's talent and dedication (i.e., proficiency, development of skills, response to direction, ensemble attitude, and preparedness [including lines memorized on time] in the rehearsal and performance of the role(s).)

Responsibility is the actor's record of attending all scheduled calls and appointments and readiness to work on time.

Each of these factors weighs as half the final grade. Actors have full control over their attendance and punctuality records and, except for adjusting the final grade by one plus or minus degree, the director cannot give or take away points for the actor's own responsibility record.

It is the actor's responsibility to attend all scheduled calls. "Scheduled calls" are all calls that are announced via email after the previous night's rehearsal. Actors are required to be available for rehearsals for three-and-a-half hours on weekday evenings between the hours of 6:30 and 10:00 pm, eight hours on Saturdays or on days when classes are not in session between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm, and to be on call throughout the tech weekend (the weekend before opening). Actors are also expected to be available on performance days from one hour before "half-hour" through the curtain call of the show. Actors must also hold open, for a possible "brush-up" rehearsal, the evening before public performances resume in a show that has a second week of performances. "Scheduled calls" also include costume appointments, extra meetings with the director, publicity and photo calls once these are set and "talk backs" with specific audiences.

Permission to be excused: If the actor believes s/he has a reason to miss a rehearsal, or to come late, s/he must request a release in advance and in writing. The stage manager has forms for making such a request, and each request will be reviewed and decided by the director. Whenever possible, a release will be granted for serious hardship. But if a release is not granted, an actor may not miss a call without a negative impact on his or her grade.

Grading for Responsibility: A record of each actor's attendance and punctuality is kept automatically by the stage manager (and by costume staff for costume appointments). 50% of an actor's grade is based on attendance and punctuality (this includes rehearsals, performances, costume fittings, and one-on-one coaching).

Grading by Director's Evaluation: 50% of the actor's grade is based on the director's evaluation. The director takes into account the level of the actor's ability evidenced at auditions and in early rehearsals and considers this in relation to the degree of challenge in the actor's role(s). Throughout rehearsal it is expected that actors will apply themselves assiduously to honing their skills and improving their understanding and execution of the work. The director's evaluation also takes into account the actor's attitude of respect towards fellow cast, crew members and production staff, apparent preparation between rehearsals, and overall dedication to the production.

4. GRADING GUIDELINES: DIRECTORS IN PRODUCTION

A grade for directing a production is determined by the Head of Directing.

It is determined by two factors:

First: the **mentor's evaluation** of the director's abilities and dedication (i.e., overall proficiency, script analysis and research, development of concept, collaborative spirit, ability to give clear and effective direction, capacity to instill an ensemble attitude, and preparedness at rehearsals), and second: the director's **responsibility** in attending scheduled calls and production meetings, meeting deadlines set by the production office, collaborative responsibility, and readiness to work on time.

Each of these two factors makes up the director's final grade.

A grade of "A" = 4.0 points. 3.0 points will be given for overall proficiency, script analysis and research, development of concept, collaborative spirit, ability to give clear and effective direction, capacity to instill an ensemble attitude, and preparedness at rehearsals and 1.0 point will be given for attending scheduled calls and production meetings, meeting deadlines set by the production office, such as having prop lists, sound cue lists, etc. ready as required, observance of department policies, and readiness to work on time.

Production Planning Meetings Process: For supported productions (*not Director Class Projects "DCPs"*), directors are required to attend production meetings at which the progress of conceptual thinking and collaboration with designers is reported to faculty mentors. These meetings are denoted as follows:

Faculty Mentors Meeting
Budget Meeting
"Greenlight" Design Deadline Meeting

At the "Greenlight" Design Deadline Meeting the director must receive approval from the Associate Producer and Production Manager to proceed with their production plan. The Production Office then schedules subsequent meetings to monitor and make practical adjustments as the production progresses and to fine-tune the operations of technical and dress rehearsals. The director is expected to attend these meetings and call additional

meetings of the production team at times that are reasonable. The director must attend all Production Meetings as scheduled by the Production Office. (These meetings are facilitated by the Production Stage Manager). Meetings may also be scheduled by the director's faculty mentor.

Responsibility: For all Drama Season Shows and DCPs the record of attendance and punctuality is kept automatically by the stage manager who is also charged with maintaining a record of actors' and directors' attendance.

Evaluation of DCPs: A grade for directing a DCP is determined by the Head of Directing (or appointed designate). It is determined by evaluation of the director's abilities and dedication (i.e., overall proficiency, script analysis and research, development of concept, collaborative spirit, ability to give clear and effective direction, capacity to instill an ensemble attitude, and preparedness at rehearsals, including student evaluations of the director), and attending scheduled calls and production meetings, and observance of DCP guidelines. These factors weigh into the director's final grade.

5. GRADING GUIDELINES: DESIGNERS AND STAGE MANAGERS IN PRODUCTION

A grade for designing or stage managing a production will be based on the following factors: the **mentor's evaluation** of the student's talent and dedication to the project; and the student's **responsibility** to attend conceptual development meetings, mentor's meetings, production report meetings, production meetings; meet all deadlines set by the production office and shops; and be ready to work on time. **Grades for designers** are based on the following point system and scale: 20 points for attendance at all required meetings. 5 points taken off for any meetings missed unless excused in writing beforehand. 20 points for reliable response to deadlines. 15 points for communicating and working effectively with others. 15 points for response to mentors comments and assignments. 30 points for quality of design. **Grades for Stage Managers** are based on the following point system and scale: 20 points for Auditions and pre-production work. 20 points for the rehearsal process. 20 points for Tech and Dress Rehearsal process. 20 points for Run of Show and Strike. 20 points for Close out and Drama 240 paper.

Mentor's Evaluation: The mentor takes into account the level of the student's experience at the start of the project and considers this in relation to the degree of challenge presented by the project. Throughout

the preparation phase and rehearsals, it is expected that students will apply themselves assiduously to honing their skills and to improving their understanding of the work. The mentor's evaluation also takes into account the student's attitude of respect towards collaborators, crew, and production staff; apparent preparation between rehearsals; apparent progress between tech, dress, and opening, and overall dedication to the production.

6. NUDITY: PERFORMANCE APPROVAL

A. UCI Drama recognizes that nudity can be an important element of the theater artist's palette and integral to the aesthetic world of a production. As a publicly funded institution we recognize too that our community is diverse, and that individuals hold divergent and sensitive moral and social concerns regarding public nudity. Nudity makes a powerful statement. It is taboo-breaking whether presented as erotic, comic, spiritual, or spectacular. Its artistic power requires a department policy that does not forbid it, while its social impact demands we not abuse its value in a casual or exploitative manner.

B. A "mutual veto" is exercised between the Chair, for the department, and the production's director regarding all uses of nudity in a department production. No director or company member may be required to include nude scenes or participate in a production that requires nudity. No director or company member may present nudity on stage without department approval. Full agreement must be reached by the department and the director before proceeding with production nudity. In order for this mutual veto to be properly applied, *decisions regarding nudity must be reached at the time of a play's selection.*

C. "Nudity" in this policy includes full or partial nudity. Partial nudity is defined as bared buttocks, female toplessness, the use of garments that are transparent or provide minimal genital covering or that are so loose the actor might be exposed. Nudity does not include underwear or other garments that provide as much covering as a bathing suit.

D. If nudity is specified in a script proposed for department approval, the director must state whether or not s/he intends to stage the nudity as written. *If a director wishes to add nudity that is not called for in the written script, s/he must advise the department when submitting the script.* Proposals to retain scripted nudity or add nudity must state explicitly in writing (a) the degree of nudity [full frontal; full non-frontal, partial nudity, etc]; (b) the duration of exposure, from a minimum to a maximum length of

time; (c) the roles and genders of those who will perform nude; (d) any physical contact between nude performers and others; (e) any simulated sexual activity by a nude performer alone or with others; and (f) the director's rationale for the use of nudity.

E. The department may agree to the nudity as proposed, or to a modified version acceptable to both department and director. If the department permits nudity, it will do so according to the written description agreed to by department and director. Mindful of its legal and ethical obligations, the department will then limit the *casting and crewing* of the show to students who are 18 years of age or older. As this age restriction requires advance planning, nudity **may not be added during rehearsals**. An exception may be requested of the Chair only if all company members are 18 or older, all members consent to the addition, and there is time to assure that all crew members will be 18 or older and the nude content can be advertised to the public.

F. The use of nudity in a production will be announced beforehand to actors auditioning for the show. The audition form for the show will contain the written description of nudity agreed to by the department and director, including the director's justification for nudity. No actor will be required to perform nude, or to be in a production containing nudity. Potential crew members will also be advised in advance of nudity, and will not be required to work on a production containing nudity.

G. In rehearsing nude scenes, the Department Policy on Casting and Rehearsing Productions with Nudity (below) will apply at all times. In student-directed shows, the Chair, Associate Producer or the Head of Directing will be present at the first rehearsal of each occurrence of nudity in the show.

H. The department will alert the public in advance to the presence of nudity in any production. The department will decide if audiences will be restricted to those 18 or older.

I. The Chair and/or Associate Producer or other a designated faculty member will view a dress rehearsal before the production opens to be sure the intended nudity conforms to what has been agreed to between director and department. The written agreement will be upheld, and the Chair may require adjustments to assure that the agreement is not violated.

7. NUDITY: CASTING AND REHEARSAL

A. Director's responsibility: If production nudity is approved by the department, the director must state on the printed audition form that no one under 18 will be cast in the show. The audition form must also name the roles requiring nudity, the exact degree of nudity, and describe actions to be performed while nude, following the description required in paragraph 3 of the Department Policy on Nudity. Auditioning actors must be allowed to decline to perform such roles, or decline to be on stage during nude scenes, or decline to be in the production.

B. Actor's responsibility: Actors are advised to consider very seriously the commitment they may make to perform nude. The department will not permit any student under 18 to perform nude, regardless of the student's willingness to do so. If an actor commits to play a nude scene, s/he is expected to perform as agreed; otherwise it is unfair to the production and to other actors who might have been cast in the role.

C. No nude auditions: Actors willing to be cast in roles involving nudity shall not be required to audition nude. The director may request the actor to perform part of an audition in a bathing suit, with a bathrobe available to cover up when not actively auditioning.

D. Rehearsals:

1. The director and a stage manager must both be present during rehearsals of any actors working nude. Student directors must have the Chair, Associate Producer or the Head of Directing present at the first rehearsal of each use of nudity in the show.
2. The only persons to be present while rehearsing nude scenes shall be those absolutely required. Except for run-throughs, cast and crew members not directly involved in nude scenes shall not be present in the rehearsal area.
3. All entries to the rehearsal area will be locked or an assistant will be stationed outside each door to stop anyone who might enter.
4. Actors performing nude scenes shall bring robes to rehearsal, or robes must be supplied to them. The robes will be kept close at hand, and actors will cover up during any break in the rehearsal for notes, etc.

8. OVERLAPS BETWEEN PRODUCTIONS

Actors may be cast in two shows with overlapping rehearsal periods, but only under the following limited circumstances:

A. Both directors must agree on the joint casting and must submit a written plan (in calendar format) for sharing actors in rehearsal, to be approved by the casting supervisor.

B. Each director may claim at least 50% use of an actor's rehearsal time, or 25% when a role is under five lines, until two weeks prior to the opening of the first show (Show A), with exceptions to the 25% limitation if the "under five" actor has a particularly challenging assignment.

C. From 14 to 7 days prior to the opening of Show A, that show will be given primary use of the actor, while relinquishing the actor to Show B for approximately one-and a half full (4 hour) rehearsal periods, or three half-periods (a total of six hours).

D. From tech weekend through the opening of Show A, that show will have exclusive right to the actor's time.

E. During the run of Show A, Show B may not call the actor to rehearse - except to a sit-down read-through of Show B on the Saturday morning prior to a second weekend of Show A's performances.

F. Except as noted in E, the director of show B may not call actors to rehearse until a full 24 hours have elapsed after their final performance (of Show A) ~~their strike of show A~~. If a performance is on a Sunday, they may not rehearse until the following Tuesday.

9. FINAL INVITED DRESS REHEARSALS

A. The final dress rehearsal of all Drama Season Shows may be designated as an *Invited Dress Rehearsal* for outreach purposes.

B. Any such invited rehearsals:

1. must be designated as such on the production and Department schedules.

2. must have a house manager.

3. must have an invited audience checklist.
4. must have an audience limited to a maximum of 50% of the house capacity.
5. must permit the lighting and sound tables to remain in use.
6. must restrict its audience to persons not otherwise drawn from the regular UCI community.
7. must not be advertised or announced in postings or general invitations on or around campus.

10. PRODUCTION PLANNING

A. Planning for the Drama production season begins in late Fall Quarter. The Chair (Artistic Director) and the Associate Producer chair these meeting with the assistance of the Heads of Acting & Design, Directing and Music Theater. Full Faculty input is strongly encouraged as the Drama Season is the outward reflection of the work of the department. Suggestions as to themes of the season, specific titles to be considered, and other special considerations such as gender balance and specific actor, director, and designer needs are to be introduced at this time.

B. Suggestions for season planning *can* be solicited from students and faculty alike and brought to the Artistic Director for consideration and faculty vetting.

C. Production Planning Meetings (PPMs) are held from the first week of Winter Quarter, at which point proposals-evaluated by the Drama Faculty. All interested faculty are welcome to attend PPMs. The Head of Directing will act as an intermediary between the faculty and the graduate directors regarding their slates of suggested play titles for thesis productions. Final decisions on the season, together with tentative scheduling and budget allocations for each production, will be decided by the Chair and Associate Producer, in accordance with the consensus of PPM attendees and the faculty-at-large.

D. The Head of Directing is responsible for scheduling the Director Class Project offerings for the department, and will consult the production schedule for information regarding optimal dates for DCP offerings.

11. PRODUCTION RUNNING TIME

A. Running time for any production may not exceed two-and-a-half hours, including intermission(s).

B. The department Chair may grant exceptions to these policies.

12. PROGRAMS AND PUBLICITY

All printed and publicity materials must originate from or pass through the Claire Trevor School of the Arts Publicity Office, where they are subject to departmental approval (including “signing-off” by all artistic staff associated with each production). All programs of the Drama Season must contain Director’s and/or Dramaturg’s Notes on the production. Productions may not be “dedicated” to anyone except by departmental action. “Special thanks” are restricted to persons not directly associated with UCI Drama. An “Honorary Producer” annotation is reserved for donors over \$2,500 and will be placed “above the title” of the play.

13. REHEARSAL HOURS

Rehearsals for drama department productions may only take place during the dates and hours scheduled on the master rehearsal calendar.

A. Evening Rehearsals:

1. Regular weeknight rehearsals will be from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m. There will be no rehearsing after 11:00 p.m.

2. Directors who request more than one space through the Associate Producer may rehearse performers simultaneously in different locales, with a choreographer, music director, or assistant director conducting separate calls within the total daily rehearsal period.

B. Coaching Sessions:

Coaching sessions with small groups or individual performers without a stage manager present may be scheduled by mutual agreement of the director (choreographer, music director, assistant director, dramaturge, fight director, voice/speech/dialect coach) and the performer(s) during the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. preceding a weeknight evening rehearsal.

C. Daytime Rehearsals:

Rehearsals on Saturdays or during academic breaks are for seven hours unless otherwise designated on the master rehearsal calendar. These seven hours must be within a consecutive eight hour period, including a one-hour meal break. Performers may not be rehearsed longer than five hours without a one-hour break. However, a “straight six” hour rehearsal may be called. In this formula, a twenty minute break must be taken mid-rehearsal period. Eight hour periods may be called any time between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on days designated in the master rehearsal calendar for performers to be released in the evening for auditions or to see another department show.

D. Tech and Dress Rehearsals:

Tech and dress rehearsals are scheduled in cooperation with the Production Office. All dress rehearsals are closed except to production members, drama faculty, and others as approved by the director, the Chair/Artistic Director and Associate Producer.

E. Rehearsal Breaks

There must be a ten-minute break after every 90 minutes worked. Since breaks are for both actors and stage managers, directors should not give notes during breaks.

F. Pre-show notes from Directors:

Directors may only give general focus or inspirational notes prior to 30 minutes before curtain.

14. ROYALTY NEGOTIATIONS

The Production Office will handle all royalty negotiations.

15. STRIKE: PRODUCTIONS

The schedules for show strikes are determined by the Production Office. Strikes are handled by a combination of Production Staff, TA's and a Strike (101) Crew.

16. FACULTY PROJECTS

For purposes of this policy, a “Faculty Project” (FP) is a show or performance piece initiated and led by one or more drama faculty members on UCI premises, during the academic year and that may include UCI student actors, designers, and/or directorial, dramaturgical, and stage and house management personnel and rehearses or prepares outside regular class hours on weekdays and/or on weekends. (i.e., independent from department-authorized shows.)

GUIDELINES

1. All student participation in a Faculty Project is voluntary. It is understood that some FPs may require little or no design or production, but whatever scale of performance is intended, it is the faculty leader’s responsibility to assemble a production team and cast. Students may or may not receive academic credit for their work.
2. FP casting may not conflict with rehearsals or performances of department-authorized shows. When possible, titles for FPs will not be announced prior to auditions for department shows that will be in conflict. FP auditions may be held only after competing department shows have completed casting. Alternately, an FP may hold auditions at any time that the Casting Coordinator determines that all conflicting department shows have been accommodated
3. All casting for Faculty Projects must be approved by the Casting Coordinator.
4. FPs are not supported by departmental funds. The department may contribute towards some Faculty Projects, but faculty are advised to provide their own funding or seek non-department sources for support.
5. Rehearsal and performance space must be secured by the faculty member in charge of the FP from the Facilities Director.
6. Performance space may be provided free of charge to the FP, and the use of available equipment is allowed, but no other production support is provided. Scenery, costumes, etc. must be arranged by the faculty leader without reliance on SOTA’s shops. Volunteer production workers may build and construct on the premises if production heads agree to provide space; otherwise, all building must take place privately.
7. All graduate students that are used in FPs must be approved by Area Heads.
8. Billboards and advertising for FPs must be approved by the Department Chair.
9. Rehearsals for FPs must use spaces that do not conflict with Drama season shows and Director Class Projects. The rehearsal schedule must conform to published department rules on rehearsal hours

10. Unusual Faculty Projects (FPs that are not covered by the definition and guidelines stated here) must be approved by the Department Chair and Area Heads.