

ACTOR'S ETIQUETTE

Acting can be exhilarating for the actor, but the process demands time and effort. These guidelines should help you to understand the minimum expectations set by the Department for actors. If you are registered for THEA 390: *Theatre Practicum*, these guidelines constitute the minimum criteria by which your grade will be determined. Read these guidelines carefully; you are responsible for knowing and understanding what is expected of you as an actor.

BE THERE

Conflicts. Be sure to write down all the conflicts you are aware of on your audition form. If an emergency or serious conflict arises during the rehearsal process, notify your stage manager immediately.

Call. This is the time that you are expected to be at rehearsal or at a performance, ready to work. This should tell you that you should arrive in plenty of time to warm up, change into rehearsal clothing and organize yourself so you are ready to work at the time you are called. The daily schedule is published via email each day. Check the daily schedule for your call time each day and pay particular attention to your "first call" so that you arrive to your first call on time. If for any reason you do not receive the schedule via email you are responsible for calling your stage manager.

Punctuality. There is no excuse for being late. Make it your goal to arrive 15 minutes prior to your call time. If there is an emergency, call your stage manager immediately.

REHEARSAL

Rehearsals. We spend more time in rehearsal than we do in performance. This is our process; you can learn a great deal by observing the director and other actors. Take full advantage of your rehearsal time by being attentive and respectful. Rehearsals are for exploring the possibilities the text offers; commit to the process and your skills will be strengthened.

Prepare. Come to rehearsal fully prepared to work. Engage your character research as soon as you are cast and develop the history and life of your character outside of rehearsal. Memorize your lines and review your lines and notes between the end of one rehearsal and the beginning of the next.

Warm-Up. Give yourself plenty of time to warm up. You are responsible for ensuring that you are physically, vocally and mentally ready to work at the scheduled call time.

Notes. When the director gives you notes, pay attention and write them down. Respond to the note with a "thank you." If you need clarity, ask for greater detail, but **do not argue with the note.** *Actors are responsible for taking the notes given to them and incorporating them into the work.* Notes aren't just for you; everyone gets them. You can strengthen your own work by listening carefully to the notes given to other actors. Continually review your notes and be sure to incorporate them into your work. If you need to discuss a note, talk with the director in private.

Script. Memorize your lines *verbatim*. No more, no less. Do not paraphrase your lines. The playwright chose the words for a reason; work to discover the syntax, rhythms and language that the playwright has given your character and no other. You have an ethical responsibility to perform the text as written.

Line Notes. Actors are responsible for performing the work of the playwright *verbatim*. Stage Management will, on specified rehearsal dates, take note of which lines are dropped, paraphrased, added, skipped, and jumped. They will also note when you call for a line. These notes will either be posted or given to you after rehearsal. Make sure you review these notes and fix the problems they identify.

Actor Notes. NEVER give notes to another actor. It's rude and not your job. How would you feel if someone else told you what to do?

COSTUMES

Hair. When you are cast your appearance becomes the basis of the costume designer's palette. You cannot change the cut, style or color of your hair without first seeking the approval of the costume designer. Likewise, you cannot acquire additional piercings or tattoos without prior permission!

Rehearsal Costumes. These are costumes you wear during rehearsal to help you discover the physicality and locomotion possibilities and constraints of the clothing. If you are wearing rehearsal costumes, make sure you put them on at the beginning of rehearsal, and return them the way you found them after rehearsal.

Fittings. Do not be late. Do not tell the designer how to do his or her job. If you have a concern, voice it. If you have a preference, keep it to yourself.

Dressing Room. Your station will be assigned. Classes may be scheduled in the dressing room so you must store your makeup kit and other supplies on the white rack above your station. Be respectful of your fellow actors and each person's individual needs when preparing for performance. After curtain call, remove your makeup and return your costume pieces to the designated racks (notifying the wardrobe crew of anything of which they should be aware). Clean your station and push in your chair before leaving. There is no eating or drinking while in costume and no food and beverages (other than water) are allowed in the dressing room.

PROPERTIES

Props. Check your props before rehearsals and performances to ensure that they are where you need them. Use the prop during the course of the rehearsal or performance only as it was designed to be used. Never touch any prop that is not assigned to you. Never sit on production furniture when it is backstage. Return your props to the prop table after rehearsals and performances. Check your pockets! Notify the run crew if any of your props need maintenance.

TECH REHEARSAL & DARK AND QUIET TIME

Dark & Quiet Time. This is the beginning of the technical rehearsal process when the lighting and sound designers build cues and set levels. *This is not about you.* Be attentive, patient and cooperative. You will be asked to stand onstage and move to different locations as the lighting designer creates looks and sets levels. Keep talking to a minimum. Feel free to bring something to read but be aware that you will be asked to keep your head up so your face can be fully seen. The stage manager will tell you what color clothing to wear. Make sure you wear the appropriate clothing – it's very important!

Technical Rehearsals. While you can accomplish work during technical rehearsals, techs are primarily for the designers and technicians. Give them your full attention and patience.

VALUABLES

Place your valuables (cell phone, wallet, jewelry, etc) in your valuables bag at your dressing room station. Hand your valuables bag to stage management when they come to collect valuables at 15-minutes to places during tech and performances. You are responsible for your valuables until you hand them to stage management.

WORKING TOGETHER

Stage Management. When a member of the stage management staff tells you something, always reply with "thank you" so they know you have heard and understand the direction.

Respect. Respect yourself by eating properly and getting sleep during rehearsals and performances. Your health is critical to the rest of the cast. Respect others by treating everyone as you wish to be treated. You are all part of the same company whether you are an actor or a member of the crew. If you are disrespectful to others, they lose respect for you.

Read. You are liable and responsible for anything you sign. Read the audition form and practicum agreement carefully and ask your stage manager or director if you have any questions.

Cell Phones. The Department adheres to a strict policy of no cell phone use in Klein Theatre and its ancillary spaces. You may use your cell phone on announced breaks, but only by stepping out of the rehearsal or performance area. Cell phones are to be turned off when not in use. If a family emergency requires you to have access to your cell phone, speak with the director for an exception to the policy or give your phone to the stage manager to monitor.

Drama. Keep it on the stage. If you have a personal problem with a fellow actor please leave it at the door. If there is a problem with a fellow cast member that is seriously disrupting your ability to work, talk to the director.

Gossip. Just say no. It can be hurtful and destructive to the process.

PERFORMANCES

Performances. You must arrive at the theatre via the Stage Door. You *must* sign in at every performance and scan the callboard for any important announcements. Sign in for yourself, and only yourself. Stage Management needs to know that everyone is present; the sign-in sheet serves this purpose. Commit to your personal best for every performance. The people in a small audience paid the same ticket price as the people in a sold-out house. You worked hard during rehearsal so don't shortchange yourself, your cast or the audience. Challenge yourself to stay fresh.

Post-Performance. Tend to your costumes and station before leaving the theatre. You must remove your makeup before leaving the theatre. To greet audience members in the lobby, exit through the stage door.

Backstage. Be quiet. Whispers can be heard in our intimate theatre. Be aware of what's going on onstage and be prepared for your entrances. If you do not have an entrance, stay out of the wings; your presence increases congestion in a very small space.

Backstage Pages. Stage Management will make calls through the paging system in the dressing room area. Always respond to calls with "thank you" so the stage manager knows you have heard and understand the call.

Brush Up. Sometimes a production will schedule brush up rehearsals between the Sunday performance of the first week and the Thursday performance of the second. You are responsible for keeping your work vital and fresh in the interim. Remember, you are responsible for performing the work as it was directed for every performance of the run.

AfterWords. If you are invited to AfterWords, RSVP as soon as possible. While in attendance, enter the stage once you're out of costume and makeup. Be respectful of the audience and other people that are talking, but don't be afraid to be yourself. Just be aware of your language and that you are representing the Department of Theatre & Dance to our patrons.



With thanks and appreciation to Actors Equity Association for allowing us to adapt its Code of Conduct for our use.

UMW THEATRE

as of August 13, 2021