

Lamar University Department of Theatre & Dance

Department Handbook; Effective Fall 2025

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OVERVIEW

This manual is designed to acquaint the students of the Theatre & Dance Department at Lamar University with departmental policies and procedures, particularly those that relate to work in theatre productions and dance concerts. Producing theatre and dance are inherently collaborative endeavors and this handbook is designed to ensure that all involved are on the same page regarding best practices for more creative, safe, efficient, and fun work.

Mission:

Our mission:

We train students in a range of areas of skills essential to the art of theatre & dance through instruction from working professionals. We develop collaborators by helping build the personal artistic voice in performance, production, and pedagogy. Our graduates are creative problem solvers and passionate members of any profession they pursue. We deliver excellence on the stage and in the classroom. We value perspectives of multiple cultures and backgrounds in our work.

We offer you, the student, a Bachelor of Science in Theatre & Dance. Here you select a concentration in acting, dance, tech/design, or education/teacher training, but receive a diverse range of training options in all areas. While we train in various techniques from the past, together we strive to create dynamic performances that challenge and engage artists and audiences of today. We are passionate about lifelong learning, building skills of the craft, and creating a supportive yet rigorous atmosphere with you and those around us. We are dedicated to extending our collective passion to the university community and beyond as educators, graduates, and professionals.

LUTD Mission Pillars:

Diversified Training.

A Bachelor of Science degree in Theatre & Dance means you train in acting, dance, AND technical theatre areas both in-class and on-stage resulting in a foundation for a career in the performing arts, graduate school, teaching, or valuable skills for any profession.

Professional Collaborators.

Working with LU Faculty who are active professionally as well as a changing variety of professional guest artists gives you ample opportunities to learn how to work as an ensemble at the highest standard.

Dynamic Performances.

Learning from classic techniques we create contemporary works together that challenge and engage the artists and audiences of today and grow with the changing forms of tomorrow.

LUTD Vision:

We create a foundation of skills for well-rounded, career-ready professionals.

We value ensemble by learning from a variety of backgrounds.

We strive for excellence on the stage and in the classroom.

We build a greater appreciation for the performing arts and performing artists in the Southeast Texas region.

We are Ensemble.

We are Lamar University Theatre & Dance.

LUTD Stats:

- [7:1 Faculty Student Ratio at Department level](#) 13: 1 Faculty/Student Ratio [at the University Level](#), providing quality and personal education.
- Guests Artists from all over the country, providing collaborative opportunities, real-world experience, and professional connections.
- 4 theatre productions a year, 2 faculty dance concerts and 2 student dance concerts give performers and technicians alike the opportunity to hone skills learned in class in the main-stage season.
- Lowest tuition-based program in the state. Scholarships and work study opportunities are available for qualifying individuals.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

A minimum grade of “C” must be earned in each of the theater and dance courses; Students who fail to do so may be placed on probation the following semester and are subject to other restrictions at the decision of the Chair in consultation with the faculty. Exception or accommodation in this area is given only at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the faculty.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Alpha Psi Omega (APO) is a national honorary theatrical society, with membership by invitation only to theatre and dance majors. There are over 600 chapters, or casts, at universities and colleges; the APO cast at Lamar is Pi Omicron. Its mission is to develop talents in all aspects of theatre, to foster the cultural values that theatre develops, to encourage cooperation and collaboration among member chapters, and to engage in community service through theatre. Membership is based on a point system, with points accumulated through active work both on and off stage.

Chi Tau Epsilon (XTE) National Dance Honor Society

It shall be the purpose of this honorary organization to recognize the superior ability of students majoring or minoring in the field of dance - performing and creative artists in the Bachelor of Science Theater & Dance degree programs at Lamar University (LU) and to promote creative activities and scholarly achievements in the field of dance. The XTE Chapter is committed to provide leadership and service to the Lamar University Department of Theatre & Dance, LU Community, SETX area, and the field of dance.

THEATRE & DANCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Thanks to several generous individuals and families, we are able to offer a number of endowed scholarships to students to enable them to perform in our

productions; train in our classrooms, studios, and shops; and prepare for success after graduation. We are extremely grateful for the support of the individuals who have helped make these scholarships possible. Currently, these include:

- Miss Mary Alice Memorial Scholarship in Dance
- Benny Jo Monlezun Bates Scholarship in Dance
- David Kyle Carlin Memorial Scholarship in Theatre
- Maria Conchetta Cloninger Presidential Scholarship in Theatre
- Ruth Kaigler Goode and D. Rex Goode Scholarship in Theatre
- Lila Maurice Salles Scholarships in Theatre & Dance (2)
- Dr. Jean Allen Helms Scholarship in Theatre
- Dr. Adonia Placette Scholarship in Theatre
- Parker Windham Memorial Scholarship in Theatre
- Gloria Swarts Locke and Charles Blakey Locke Presidential Scholarship in Theatre
- Dr. Larry Rose and Helen Rose awards in Dance (4)

A variety of additional endowed scholarships are offered through the University as well as the Dean's office in the College of Fine Arts & Communication.

Endowed scholarships are renewable, but are governed by individual criteria, and are not guaranteed for every semester a student attends Lamar. They are awarded for a maximum of four years (eight semesters) and the amounts vary based both on scholarship and year.

Friends of the Arts Scholarships are offered under similar criteria. Generally, these are awarded to incoming students in their first semester at a fixed amount, and the student receives this amount for up to 8 semesters.

WORK STUDY

Work study positions are available in the department for students who are declared eligible through the Financial Aid office. Proper paperwork to FAFSA should be completed early in the process (Usually February for the next academic year) as it can take six months to receive approval. Eligibility for work study does not guarantee employment or a minimum number of hours per week/ semester in the department. Positions are subject to availability and need.

STUDENT WORKERS

The Department of Theatre & Dance also employs student workers. These workers must complete student worker training at least once every academic year. Student workers are primarily employed to work events hosted in the theatre spaces by on and off campus groups outside of the department, though they may be employed within the department as needed.

Endowed scholarships are applied for and managed through the **myscholarship** portal on LU Connect. Please consult the portal for eligibility and deadlines. FOA Scholarships are awarded directly from the Department Chair. Work Study applications follow FAFSA guidelines with the applications generally opening in February for the upcoming academic year. Student workers must complete annual training and required hiring paperwork through LU as needed.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

All freshman and sophomore students are to be advised first by their departmental advisor during the designated advising period. Following this, they must make an appointment with the Undergraduate Advising Center. After both of these appointments, they should be able to enroll themselves in the necessary classes for the upcoming semester or be placed in classes by a UAC advisor.

All Junior and Senior students are to meet with their departmental advisor during the designated advising period. After this meeting, they are able to place themselves in classes. The department administrator or their academic advisor can address any holds they have on their accounts with them.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Students are strongly urged to take advantage of every opportunity afforded them in their education at Lamar; this includes attending classes on a regular basis. The departmental absence policy is as follows: A student is granted one week's worth of classes in absences without academic penalty (2 class periods for classes meeting Tuesdays and Thursdays and Monday/Wednesday or 3 class periods for classes meeting Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.) The student's grade will drop one half or one full letter grade for each additional absence at the Professor's discretion. Changes to the attendance policy will be left up to the individual instructors. Please consult each individual instructors' course syllabus for attendance policy changes.

REVIEWS, PROBATION, SUSPENSION, DISMISSAL, REINSTATEMENT

Reviews

All students in the Department of Theatre & Dance are subject to a faculty review at the end of the Spring semester. This is a mandatory meeting where members of the faculty discuss the students' progress with them. Any student who skips their review or misses it for an unacceptable reason (as determined by the faculty) is subject to discipline determined by the Department Chair under the advisement of the faculty.

Probation

A student may be notified of being placed on probation at their end of semester review by the faculty, or, in the event of a particularly egregious act, may be placed on probation throughout or prior to a new semester or academic year. At the discernment of the department faculty, a student may be placed on probation for: (Including, but not limited to)

- failure to receive acceptable grade(s) in a Departmental class.

- failure to show up for a rehearsal, performance, work shift in box office/ front of house, crew call or strike as expected and required.
- displaying of bad attitude and disrespect to fellow students and/or faculty.
- egregious behavior revolving around a rehearsal or performance that falls outside of the proper etiquette established for that process.
- consumption of alcohol, narcotics, smoking, or other illicit substances on the Lamar University campus or arriving on campus under the influence of these substances.
- slander spoken in person or libel written in texts/ on the internet about other students in the Department, Department Faculty, or the Department itself.

All probations will be reviewed at the end of the following semester by the Department Chair and Faculty.

Any discipline designated as part of probation is at the discretion of the Department Chair. Probation can only be appealed to the Department Chair and/or the Chair's Designate at the Chair's discretion.

Academic Probation

Academic probation is administered by the University to students who fail to maintain an overall 2.0 GPA. Students on academic probation are not eligible for Departmental scholarships,* and must meet the Universities' requirements to get back in good standing before being eligible for scholarships. The Department Chair and faculty may deem any student on academic probation ineligible to participate in productions or department classes. Grade appeals are the only active method to challenge academic probation. Beyond this, it is the students' responsibility to improve their GPA to at least a 2.0 within one full term semester.

*Being in good standing with the University does not automatically make a student eligible for all departmental scholarships.

Suspension

The criteria outlined above for possible means for probation also apply to suspension. The terms for suspension include, but are not limited to the above listed terms. Suspension is administered at the direction of the Department Chair and Faculty. It may follow a period of probation or be an outright suspension. The length and terms of each individual suspension will be administered by the Department Chair on a case-by-case basis, and the suspension can only be appealed to the Department Chair or their designate at the Chair's discretion

Dismissal

The Department of Theatre & Dance Faculty reserve the right to dismiss any student from the program at the discretion of the Department Chair and The Department Faculty and Staff. This may occur because of any of the guidelines outlined for probation & suspension but is not limited to them. Dismissal may

follow probation, suspension, or neither, if the student is given 24 hours' notice of their dismissal in particularly egregious circumstances.

Unless a crime is committed and the student is dismissed from the University, the dismissed student will be allowed to finish out the semester and change majors at the beginning of the following semester (if they are in good standing with the University).

Reinstatement

A student may be reinstated into the program following suspension or dismissal at the discretion of the Department Chair and the Faculty. A reinstatement meeting with the Faculty review committee is mandatory. Reinstatement is contingent always on readmittance to the University.

Students suspended or dismissed from the program are not welcome in rehearsal or performance spaces except as an audience member and may be asked to leave classrooms or departmental offices if they are not present there as part of a class. Such unauthorized visits are considered trespassing, and LUPD will be called and dispatched if students refuse to leave.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THEATRE & DANCE MAJORS

1. Students must check their Lamar email address at least once a day, including weekends.
2. All students must read the separate Department Safety Handbook (available online on the Department website) and submit it to the Department Office before the second class day or Production class. Students will be counted absent from Production, and will not be able to participate in any rehearsals, work study or student worker employment hours, or other related events in the Theatre and Dance facilities until they have read the handbooks and signed the completed safety form.
3. By being a theatre and/or dance major, and signing the general agreement form at the end of this document (Appendix C), all students agree to the reasonable use of their image taken during classes, rehearsals and performances for publicity and marketing purposes for the department and university.
4. All students will attend, and be punctual for, all rehearsals and performances for productions in which they are involved, whether working onstage or off. Failure to do so may result in not only dismissal from the production, but suspension from the department as well.
5. Students will respect all spaces in the Theatre & Dance facilities. They will keep the Green Room and Student Lounge clean, they will return all items to where they were borrow from, leave all spaces as they found them, and ensure that all doors they have unlocked are locked when

they leave the facility.

6. All majors are expected to see all dance concerts and theatre productions. All Theatre & Dance majors will receive one (1) complimentary ticket (comp) for each production in the season. If an individual (major or non) is involved in the production either onstage or backstage, they will receive one additional comp for a total of two (2). Comp ticket policy will be handled by the Audience Services manager. Failure to attend any performances without a written excusal from the Department Chair may result in loss of scholarships, inability to participate/ perform in productions, and/ or probation/ suspension within the Department.
7. Intoxicating beverages and/or narcotics on university premises are forbidden by state law. Use of either on university premises may result in disciplinary action from the Department Chair, including but not limited to loss of scholarship, inability to participate/ perform in productions and probation/suspension/ dismissal from the Department and the University. Smoking, or use of any tobacco products of any kind, is not allowed anywhere on the Lamar campus.
8. No one is to attend performance, rehearsals, or class under the influence of intoxicating beverages or narcotics, whether consumed on or off the premises. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the production/ concert director in consultation with the Department Chair and COFAC Academic Dean.
9. No smoking, eating, or drinking in costume or in the dressing rooms is permitted prior to a performance or a rehearsal (except water).
10. Except for designated special events, food and drink (except for water) are not allowed in the performance spaces.
11. No equipment belonging to the University is to be taken from the theatre or studios. If you take anything off campus without the expressed permission of the faculty, it is considered and will be treated as theft.
12. All students are required to **audition** for all departmental opportunities in their respective areas. All acting majors are required to audition for all main stage productions and all directors. All dance emphasis students are required to audition for both the Fall and Spring concerts and for every choreographer. Exceptions are available only upon request in writing to the department chair.

AMERICAN COLLEGE DANCE ASSOCIATION REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The American College Dance Association's (ACDA) primary focus is to support and promote the wealth of talent and creativity that is prominent throughout college and university dance departments. ACDA's sponsorship

of regional conferences and the national dance festival provides the venue for students and faculty to engage in three days of performances, workshops, panels, and master classes taught by instructors from around the region and country. The conferences also provide the unique opportunity for students and faculty to have their dance works adjudicated by a panel of nationally recognized dance professionals in an open and constructive forum. Culminating with the presentation of pieces selected for their exemplary artistic quality, the conferences are the primary means for college and university dance programs to perform outside their own academic setting and be exposed to the diversity of the national college dance world.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION

1. Any Lamar student may attend and participate in ACDA. Priority will be given to dance emphasis students followed by dance minors and Theatre & Dance majors followed by Lamar student general population.
2. According to ACDA policy, a student who graduates in December is eligible to participate in the conference held each spring semester. Departmental Policy may require said graduate to pay his/her own way.

3. Should a student rescind his/her ACDA commitment, he/she may be responsible for reimbursing the department for any conference, hotel or travel fees incurred by the department. Failure to do so may result in a hold on the student's account, preventing the student from registering for classes the following semester.
4. ACDA participants may be required to perform at the conference. Auditions will be held to determine casting in faculty and student choreographed dances.
5. Each university is allowed to take one faculty and one student choreographed dance for adjudication in addition to one dance for the informal concert. These selections will be made by the Lamar University Dance faculty, in consultation with the Department Chair and COFAC Dean if necessary.
6. Any student travelling to a university-approved and funded event is expected to behave appropriately, always remembering that he or she is representing the University and the Department. Any behavior deemed inappropriate by the faculty and/or that is illegal will not be tolerated and will be grounds for dismissal from the Department and the University.

Ticket Policy

- All ticket sales are final and cannot be refunded.
- For patrons requesting seating accommodations or general ticket inquiries, please contact the LUTD Box Office.
 - o Box Office – (409) 880-2250 o E-mail – luboxoffice@lamar.edu
- Ticket prices are as follows (Spring 2024):
 - o General Admission - \$15.00 cash
 - o Senior Citizen (+55) - \$10.00
 - o LU/LIT Faculty - \$10.00
 - o LU/LIT Students - \$7.00
 - o Children (0-12) - \$5.00
 - o LUTD Alumni - \$5.00
- Beginning in Fall of 2024, ticket prices will be as follows:
 - o General Admission - \$15.00 cash, \$17.00 card

o Senior Citizen (+55)/Student/Faculty - \$10.00 cash/\$12.00 card

o Children (0-12) - \$5.00

· All persons entering the theatre must have a ticket. Babies in arms are not permitted.

· Disruptive (cell phone usage, talking during the performance, etc.) patrons of all ages will be asked to leave. This can be disruptive to the performers on stage.

When to Arrive

· Plan to arrive 30 minutes before the performance starts.

Late Seating

· Late seating is at the discretion of the House Manager and may not be possible for some performances. Video monitors are in the theatre lobbies for latecomers or patrons that need to leave the performance early.

· For questions about our Late Seating policy, please contact the Box Office at luboxoffice@lamar.edu

Use of Technology & Recording

· Use of cameras, recording equipment and cellular phones are strictly prohibited. Patrons using said equipment during performances will be asked to leave.

Photography & Video Recording

· Due to copyright laws and in consideration of the performers, the use of photographic or recording devices of any kind inside the theatre is strictly prohibited.

LU Department of Theatre & Dance "General Handbook and Production Manual"
and "Guidelines for Theatre Safety" Handbook

These handbooks have been prepared for your information and understanding of policies and safety procedures in the department. Please read both carefully. Upon completion of your review of these documents, sign the statement below and return it to the department office by the due date.

I, _____, have received and read a copy of the "General Handbook and Production Manual" as well as the "Guidelines for Theatre Safety," which outline the procedures and policies of this department, as well as the responsibilities of the employees and students to ensure safety within the department of Theatre & Dance.

I have familiarized myself with the contents of these guidelines. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept, and agree to comply with the information contained within these pages. I understand that these guidelines cannot cover every situation that may arise during my education/employment/assignment, but these are simply general policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures of the department.

I understand that this is not a contract and should not be deemed as such. However, should I fail to sign and submit this page to the Theatre Office by the tenth day of classes, I understand that I will be barred from working or taking classes in the department and dropped from the major.

Student's Name

X _____ / ____ / ____
Student's Signature

