

**Rehearsal / Performance Protocol
For
Long Beach City College
Dance Program**

Code of Ethics

Part of the great tradition of the theatre is a code of ethics which belongs to every worker on the legitimate stage. This code, while tacit, has been observed throughout the centuries and will continue long after us. It is neither superstition, nor dogma nor a statute enforced by law. It is an attitude toward craftsmanship, a respect for associates and a dedication toward the audience. This code outlines a self-discipline which, far from robbing one of individuality, increases personal esteem and dignity through cooperation and common purpose. The result is perfection which encompasses all that is meant by "Good Theatre."

The Show Must Go On! I will never miss a performance.

I shall play every performance to the best of my ability, regardless of how small my role or large my personal problems.

I will respect my audience regardless of size or station.

I shall never miss an entrance or cause a curtain to be late by my failure to be ready.

I shall forego all social activities which interfere with rehearsals and will always be on time.

I shall never leave the theatre building or stage area until I have completed my performance.

I shall remember that my aim is to create illusion, therefore, I will not destroy that illusion by appearing in costume and makeup offstage or outside the theatre.

I will not allow the comments of friends, relatives or critics to change any phase of my work without proper authorization. I will not alter steps, business, lights, properties, settings, costumes or any phase of the production without consultation with and permission from the director.

I shall accept the director's advice in the spirit in which it is given for he sees the production as a whole and my role as a portion thereof.

I shall look upon the production as a collective effort demanding my utmost cooperation, hence I will forego the gratification of ego for the demands of the choreography.

I will be patient and avoid temperamental outbursts, for they create tension and serve no useful purpose.

I shall respect the dance and the choreographer, remembering that "A work of art is not a work of art until it is finished".

I shall never blame my co-workers for my own failure.

I will never engage in caustic criticism of another artists work from jealousy or an urge to increase my own prestige.

I shall inspire the public to respect me and my craft though graciousness in accepting both praise and constructive criticism.

I will use stage properties and costumes with care, knowing they are tools of my craft and a vital part of the production.

I will observe backstage courtesy and shall comport myself in strict compliance with rules of the theatre in which I work.

I shall never lose my enthusiasm for the theatre because of disappointment or failure for they are the lessons by which I learn.

I shall direct my efforts in such a manner that when I leave the theatre it will stand as a greater institution for my having labored there.

Line of Authority / Communication

Director

House Manager

Box Office

Ushers

Music Director

Musicians

Sound Technician

Costume Designer

Costume Assistant

Costume Crew

Choreographer

Dancers

Stage & Lighting Designer

Stage Manager

Assistant Stage Manager

Stage and Lighting Crews

Technical Director

Shares supervision of Stage & Lighting Designer (see above)

PREFACE

We are a performance-oriented department. The purpose of our production is to involve both students and community in an artistic process that is created in an educational atmosphere. Our major goal is to present an expression of and a passion for our art in a performance of ultimate presence, clean technique, precision timing, and dynamic energy. To help in this presentation, before it ever reaches the stage, the dance department offers an eclectic background in styles and techniques, provides rehearsal spaces and faculty advisement, supports the discipline and conviction you have for the art, and gives structure and guidance in the creation of new works.

A lot of hard work goes on in classes and rehearsals before we make it to the performance arena where, sometimes, we feel lost in the shuffle. It is especially important, at that time, to pay respect to each other's work in choreography, dance, and tech crew. On the following pages, you will find guidelines that will help ease your way through the rehearsal-to-show process, and will give you a protocol to help you and your fellow dancers get to that sense of accomplishment, at the end of the show, with everyone's integrity intact. The first section gives information and tips about the rehearsal process. The second section describes the mechanics of the performance experience and makes suggestions involving traditional etiquette.

Key words to keep in mind, that will help make your production a success, are: 1) Commitment (organize your priorities/obligations and remember that your physical appearance is required at all rehearsals), 2) Communication (through the production staff, callboard, telephone, etc.), 3) Discipline (obligations to the show, to training, to studies, to attendance, punctuality, etc.), and 4) Courtesy (do unto others....).

Overall, you should have a good time with this creative learning experience. Be professional and keep your eyes, your ears, and your mind open. Pull from your adrenalin; let it give you that extra boost of power and exuberance. Remember, this is your show and your dance department; don't be afraid to show your pride in everyone's accomplishments.

REHEARSAL

A Word To:

1) Choreographers

2) Dancers

3) Techs

CHOREOGRAPHERS

Communication and patience are tantamount in this time frame. Know that there will be problems (creative blocks, dancers' injuries, lack of energy, etc.) with which you will have to contend. Most of the time, staying calm and constructively directing your dancers through these snags will help their progress and rid the air of undue tension. Your positive energy, used at appropriate moments, during a particularly stressful time, can be a motivational force in helping them perform at maximum efficiency and expression. Also, being there promptly, with the rehearsal agenda (even though that may change as things work or don't work in the dance as you progress), expressing your ideas clearly and inviting questions when there are problems, and thanking your dancers for their time and effort will aid in setting you free to do the creative work in which you have involved yourself.

ADDENDUMS TO THIS SECTION ARE:

- 1) Give your designers your ideas about what you want in costumes, makeup, lighting, and sound; keep in touch with them. Talk with the director first.
- 2) Have the program copy handed in to the director on time (you will be given deadlines).
- 3) Find out the dates and times of the first showing, the final showing, the tech runs, when we get into the theatre, and performances.

DANCERS

Put yourself in the hands of the choreographer; allow her/him the freedom to mold you into the image she/he has envisioned in her/his mind's eye. Give your full consideration and patience to this artist whose medium is your body and soul. If she/he hits a snag in the choreography, stand by patiently and keep warm. Be aware of problems as they arise and present them to the choreographer only after you have taken some time to work them out on your own. Be especially attentive to the choreographer's notes after each rehearsal; work on them before the next meeting.

It is of great importance to keep your body finely tuned from this point through the performance; warm up before you get to rehearsal. Try to eat right; don't gulp down junk food on the run. Get enough rest. It is important to continue attending your dance technique classes to keep in top shape and prevent injury.

Also, there may be times when the costume designer may require your presence for measurements and fittings. It only takes a few minutes and must be done as soon as possible.

TECHS

Plan on experiencing all tech work (costumes, lights, sound, and backstage) while attending this college. If you've performed all of the above tasks, choose one in which you are most proficient; the department will appreciate your expertise (especially in sewing costumes).

Crew work is demanding and intense. Your whole crew experience is concentrated into one or two weeks where you may be devoting every evening (late) and every spare moment during every day of that week or two to the rehearsal/performance.

Crew schedules are posted a month to two weeks before the performances so that you have plenty of time to plan your tech hours; excuses for not being there will not be tolerated. Find out from the director which crew will come in at what time. Usually, you can count on being there the weekend before the concert, the week of tech runs, and all performance nights.

Also, it is helpful to watch the dances before the tech run and get used to the theatre or performance area before you have to move around in it.

PERFORMANCE

- 1) Introduction**
- 2) Choreographers**
- 3) Dancers**
- 4) Techs**

A FEW WORDS ABOUT PERFORMANCE TIME

PUNCTUALITY

Rehearsals begin at the time noted on the schedule. A 6:00 pm call means you are to arrive at the rehearsal or performance area by that time; and be ready to warm up.

GUESTS AT REHEARSALS

Only people involved in the production will be allowed to attend rehearsals. The rule of thumb is "eliminate everything which does not contribute to the production." Outside distractions waste time, effort and energy.

TECHNICAL REHEARSALS

Tech rehearsals are more for the benefit of the production staff and crews, and the show may not run intact the first few times. The tech director may wish to cut from one dance to another, out of sequence, in a progression that may be confusing to the dancers, but may fulfill the staff's needs. At that time, the performers must keep full concentration and give complete cooperation.

FOOD. DRINKS. SMOKING

Don't leave (for snacks, fresh air, etc.) without informing the director, stage manager, or choreographer of your whereabouts and for how long you'll be gone. Find out if you may bring food or drink into the theatre or studio; rules may vary from one space to another. Do not eat, drink, or smoke backstage. No food, drink, or lit cigarettes near gels, props, costumes, lights, etc.

CHOREOGRAPHERS

- 1) Check the callboard and bulletin "board for messages from the director, designers, and dancers.
- 2) Give the dancers the confirmed rehearsal schedule for working in the theatre as soon as possible.
- 3) Sign in on the callboard even if you're not dancing; let people know you've arrived and are available.
- 4) Communicate with your dancers, the director, and the costume and lighting designers; make them aware of problems as they arise and listen to what they may have to say. You must attend all tech runs and performances, and give notes at the end of each.
- 5) You are included in helping with strike on closing night. No one is exempt unless by permission of the director.
- 6) Opening night gifts (flowers, cards, etc.) to your dancers, the director, the designers, and the crew are traditional and much appreciated, but not mandatory.

DANCERS

- 1) Check with your director for the confirmed tech and performance schedule at least a month ahead of time.
- 2) The callboard must be signed as you enter the theatre, and notes on the board must be read every night. Let the stage manager and the choreographer know you've arrived.
- 3) On tech nights, take company warmup, stay warm, and be ready to do whatever is required of you during the evening.
- 4) On performance evenings, take the company warmup, then finish your makeup and put on your costume. Listen for your call; be ready. Never go out in the House in your costume.
- 5) Keep your things together (makeup, etc.); keep them neat, clean, and put away. Besides being able to find what you need, this practice also cuts down your chances of always being the one who supplies the cast with their deficiencies. Everyone should be responsible for checking out and in supplies. There will be makeup artists available to help you select the proper makeup and help you apply it if necessary.
- 6) Check your costumes, props, etc. if they must be placed in a quick-change area. Make sure everything is there before the show starts. Pick up your things (all pieces and parts) after the performance and return them to the costume shop. You, alone, are responsible for them.
- 7) When returning costumes, wigs, etc., make sure they are handed back to the costume crew the same way they were given to you. If your costume requires mending, write a note to the crew on the gripe sheet next to the check-out window.
- 8) Verbal "thank-you's" are appreciated (for props, dressers, costume crew, makeup lenders, techs, etc.) every night to every helper.
- 9) Traditional theatre rituals:
 - A) Thank the asst. stage manager each time he/she gives you the courtesy of letting you know how much time you have before you go on.
 - B) Never whistle backstage.
 - C) Concentration is paramount while you are backstage or in the dressing room. Keep the craziness to a minimum.
- 10) Get to your place on time; the rule of thumb is to be there 5 minutes before your cue.
- 11) Wait quietly by the teaser for your cue to go on; this is not the place to hold conversations with the tech crew or other dancers.

12) No jewelry, glasses, hair in face, or gum in mouth is permitted on stage unless it's part of the dance.

13) No extraneous people should be backstage in the way of the crew; if your presence is not needed it will not be appreciated.

14) Communicate with the tech crew in a calm manner when problems arise. Be prepared for some compromise.

15) Have your guests wait outside the stage door for you after the performance. No one but cast and crew is permitted backstage, except in the green room after the show.

16) Everyone helps strike on closing night. There are no exceptions.

17) Opening night gifts to your choreographer, the director, the designers, and crews are traditional and appreciated, but not mandatory.

TECHS

- 1) Check the callboard and "bulletin "board for messages on a daily basis. Begin checking the crew bulletin board about a month ahead of time.
- 2) Sign in on the callboard when you arrive. Let your supervisor know you are there, and find out what needs to be done.
- 3) There should be at least one tech in the costume shop at all times for emergency mendings.
- 4) Props should be checked before each performance to insure their proper condition and place, and they should be double-checked after each performance for wear and tear.
- 5) Never move a prop once it's been set. A prop out of place can negate weeks of work.
- 6) Dress in dark (preferably black) clothing so you can't be seen moving around backstage.
- 7) Talking backstage during a performance should be kept to a minimum.
- 8) Respect the dancers:
 - A) Keep communication open; speak to them calmly and constructively. Take what they say with a grain of salt; remember, they are under pressure.
 - B) Pay attention to the dancers' entrances and exits; stay out of their way.
 - C) Mark dancers' pathways clearly (consult tech director).
- 9) Communicate with the stage manager when problems arise.
- 10) Pay attention to notes at the end of a tech run; they may affect you.
- 11) Everyone helps strike on closing night. No exceptions.
- 12) Opening night gifts (cards, flowers, etc.) to your supervisor (costume designer, stage manager, etc.), the dancers, and the director are traditional and appreciated, but not mandatory.