

Saint Paul Conservatory
FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS

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Student Handbook
THEATRE & MUSICAL THEATRE
DEPARTMENTS
2019 - 2020

Joey Clark, Musical Theatre Department Chair
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THEATRE AND MUSICAL THEATRE DEPARTMENTS STUDENT HANDBOOK

This resource is intended for use by students and parents/guardians as it contains much of the information regarding our departmental policies and grading practices that govern the classes and program activities in the Theatre/Musical Theatre program. All classes within Theatre/Musical Theatre abide by all school-wide policies, in addition to those covered in this document. Additional information may be found in the SPCPA Student Handbook. Contents are subject to change.

SPCPA's CORE ARTS VALUES

The following are the Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists' (SPCPA) core arts values. These values help guide the Program in Dance and Movement Artistry's instructional and programmatic activities.

- ❖ *TRAIN*: SPCPA educates and trains future practitioners of the arts.
- ❖ *DISCOVER*: SPCPA promotes individual discovery within the collaborative spirit of the performing arts.
- ❖ *LEARN*: SPCPA stimulates and sustains interest in dance, music, and theatre as a source of truth and insight into the human condition.
- ❖ *CREATE*: SPCPA constructs a creative environment where artistic risks may be safely taken and where creators take responsibility for their vision.
- ❖ *EXPLORE*: SPCPA encourages students to use their physical, sensory and intellectual potential to explore ideas and raise questions.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

SPCPA's Theatre/Musical Theatre Department offers students training geared toward the serious aspiring theatre artist. Using a wide variety of both traditional and cutting-edge techniques and methods, students are guided in their education by working artists who help them realize their potential. SPCPA's training is modeled on college-level BFA theatre programs, and as such, graduates form our Theatre/Musical Theatre Department transition easily into arts programs at post-secondary institutions. Theatre/Musical Theatre students prescribe to a practice of self-discipline and artistry, and maintain the highest respect for themselves, their peers, their instructors, their school and their art.

CURRICULUM

In the Freshman and Sophomore years every semester, every student takes an acting class, which focuses on their overall training and growth. An additional four courses: voice, singing, movement and dance, address the development of the student's vocal and physical instrument. Every student also takes a Theatre Studies class, which includes theatre history, dramatic literature and music theory. On Fridays, students take classes aimed at imparting special supplemental skills that are not in the core curriculum. At the end of Sophomore year, students declare a "major": Theatre or Musical Theatre. In the Junior and Senior years, the curriculum is tailored to the students major.

DEPARTMENTAL EXPECTATIONS

It is the expectation of the school that students enroll because they are serious about Theatre/Musical Theatre. We do not expect our students to be extraordinarily skilled, but we do expect them to be extraordinarily passionate about, and committed to their art form. SPCPA is not for everybody, but students that have a love for Theatre or Musical Theatre, and possess the dedication to do what it takes to grow and improve, have found the perfect place. It is not our expectation that each student will go on to pursue the performing arts after high school, but we will treat each student as if they will, because we are dedicated to providing our students with the training they need to succeed beyond these walls.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Theatre and Musical Theatre students are placed according to grade and ability. This allows students with like

abilities to be grouped together in order to receive the most specific and beneficial instruction possible. Each discipline within the department is addressed individually. (e.g. A student may be in Level 3 Acting and Level 1 Dance Tech.) In the Junior and Senior year some classes are not separated by ability, rather students are grouped as the class requires. A student's placement is fluid and students regularly move at the end of each semester according to their progress or artistic needs. Please note that a student's Academic scheduling needs/restrictions may also be factored into class placement.

DEPARTMENT DRESS CODE

SPCPA Theatre/Musical Theatre students are expected to present themselves in respectful and appropriate ways both within the school environment and the downtown St. Paul community. If students do not adhere to their arts instructor's specific dress requests for their class, the student's grade will be jeopardized. Students will be given ample time and an appropriate location to change for class. It is imperative that the clothes students wear in their arts classes allow them to do the work they are being asked to do. The arts dress code is as follows:

- sweatpants, yoga pants or leggings (no jeans - no matter how stretchy)
- leggings or tights for dance class
- loose fitting tops for acting/movement/voice (layering advised)
- form fitting tops for dance and singing classes (layering advised)
- removal of dangly jewelry
- hair pulled back from face
- dance shoes for dance classes

The dance instructors will provide information to students on where and how to purchase quality dance shoes at sensible prices. Students on Educational Benefits may contact Ms. Patty Hall at the Wilkins Administrative Desk about purchasing dance shoes.

FACILITY USE POLICIES: Theaters, Classrooms, Studios

Theatre/Musical Theatre students are expected to abide by the following rules with respect to the theatre, classroom and dance studio spaces.

- Water in a sealable, not-shattering bottle is the ONLY drink allowed in class.
- There is no food or eating allowed in class.
- Students will pick up after themselves, including clothing, papers and writing utensils.
- Students will respect the space by not defacing the floor, walls, furniture or restrooms.
- Students will return the classroom to its original state at the end of each class.
- Students will not wear street shoes on the dance studio floors.
- Students may not move or use the pianos without permission from and supervision by faculty/staff.
- Students may not use the dance studio sound equipment without permission from and supervision by faculty/staff.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Theatre and Musical Theatre programs follow all SPCPA school policies regarding attendance and tardiness. For more information on school policies, please see the SPCPA Student Handbook.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in class, on time, and on a regular basis. If students miss class due to: illness, doctor, dentist, physical therapy, college visit or college audition, they are considered excused, and must complete a make up assignment. A parent or guardian must call the attendance hotline in order for the student to be marked excused. Students who have been excused due to Arts Absences are *generally* exempt from the 10-absence rule. Please note that arts-related absences are handled on a case-by-case basis (see details below in ARTS ABSENCES).

More than 10 Excused or Unexcused Absences will result in no credit for the class.

PREPAREDNESS & PARTICIPATION

A student's training can be physically and mentally taxing. Students should make every effort to come to class fully prepared to work and engage and wearing appropriate attire. Participation in class activities is not voluntary or at a student's discretion. It is EXPECTED that students will engage and participate in all of their classes with equal enthusiasm and effort. Sitting out or observing class is not allowed except in extenuating circumstances and/or with parent/guardian permission. Outside coursework/homework may not be worked on during students' arts classes.

THEATRE/MUSICAL THEATRE PROGRAM TARDY POLICY

Students arriving late to class must get a Tardy Pass from the attendance clerk before going to class. Students arriving late to class will lose 1 point off of their Daily Five. Students arriving with a pass from a teacher still need to check in at the attendance desk and will receive an excused tardy. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late to class may be required to complete a make up assignment.

ARTS ABSENCES

We accommodate many absences due to arts performance opportunities on a case-by-case basis. **Students are required to meet with Suzy or Joey prior to accepting a role that will result in a Predicted Extended Arts Absence (PEAA) contract.** Should the student accept the role, there is paperwork that must be completed and approved before your absence begins. If approved, the student will receive their Daily Five on days they are gone, but may still be required to complete assignments/projects at the discretion of the teacher. Students are responsible for making up their academic work.

EARLY RELEASES

Students leaving with more than one-half hour left of class time for an excused reason may be responsible for completing make-up work to receive full Daily 5 points for that day.

ILLNESS

It is expected that if students are in attendance at school, they will be participating in their arts classes. Students who are too ill to participate in their arts classes even with modifications will be asked to go to the Lowry main desk to make arrangements to return home.

INJURY

It is a priority for the SPCPA Theatre/Musical Theatre Program that actors/singers/dancers learn to take good care of their bodies and voices, and that they are proactive when injuries occur. If an injury requires you to sit out, please bring a note from a doctor and work with your teacher to make up your participation.

GRADING

Students receive a grade in each of their Theatre/Musical Theatre classes that is reflected in their GPA. The Theatre/Musical Theatre Program does everything it can to ensure that grades are given in an objective manner, although theatre is a form that does lend itself to some amount of subjectivity. Students will be graded in the following manner in all theatre/musical theatre classes:

1. **Daily Five**

Every day, each student has the opportunity to earn five points:

1 pt. for **Attendance**: Student is present, mentally and physically, in class.

1 pt. for **Punctuality**: Student is on time, and ready to work when class begins.

1 pt. for **Preparedness**: Student is dressed appropriately for class, has all of the required materials, and has completed all assignments.

1 pt. for **Participation and Engagement**: Student demonstrates effort and attentiveness, participates fully in all aspects of class, and takes responsibility for their learning.

1 pt. **Collaboration:** Student works generously and cooperatively with others, and is accountable to their classmates.

The Daily Five is a major component of the student's grade. In the event of a student's *Excused Absence*, the student will be allowed to make up their missed points according to the policies and procedures set forth by the instructor. *Unexcused Absences* cannot be made up. Student with approved *Arts Absences* or on an approved *PEAA Contract* will earn an automatic 5 points for their artistic enrichment outside of the classroom.

2. Performance Grades

Over the course of the semester, students will receive a handful of grades that provide an honest representation of the student's skill level demonstrated in a performance, project, test or quiz. Performance grades will be determined according to the Performance and Jury Rubrics.

MAKE UP ASSIGNMENTS

The bulk of a student's grade is comprised of their participation and effort made in each of their classes every day. However, students are eligible to complete a make-up assignment for excused absences from their classes to recover Daily 5 points. Students can find make-up assignment instructions on the following URL: <https://sites.google.com/view/spcpathmt/> and/or ask their instructor. Students have two weeks from date of absence to turn in a make up assignment for credit. ASSIGNMENTS TURNED IN AFTER THIS TWO-WEEK PERIOD WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. All make-ups will be graded. Please be sure you are following the directions and correct make-up assignment instructions outlined by your teacher.

Please note that assignments cannot be replicated to cover more than one class. Please be sure to indicate your name, the date of the class(es) you missed, and the name of the class(es) you missed. As with any written assignment, plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be addressed according to the Student Handbook.

Daily points that are lost due to unexcused and/or unknown absences are not eligible to be made up.

GRADE SCALE

The following grading scale will be used to assign a letter grade at the end of the term:

A	93-100%	= 4.00	C	73-76.9%	= 2.00
A-	90-92.9%	= 3.66	C-	70-72.9%	= 1.66
B+	87-89.9%	= 3.33	D+	67-69.9%	= 1.33
B	83-86.9%	= 3.00	D	63-66.9%	= 1.00
B-	80-82.9%	= 2.66	D-	60-62.9%	= 0.66
C+	77-79.9%	= 2.33	F	Below 60%	= 0

ARTISTIC CONTENT

PLAGIARISM, VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING

Videotaping, recording or taking photographs in class is strictly prohibited. Your teacher's materials/work product are their intellectual and creative property and will be treated as such. As with any written (or moved in the case of dance classes) work, plagiarism will not be tolerated. No videotaping, recording or taking photographs of your teacher or classmates is allowed unless you have their explicit consent/permission or it is covered under formal accommodations as part of an instructional plan such as an IEP.

MUSIC

Music played while in class, for a specific theatrical project, in common spaces, or that can generally be heard by others should be free of derogatory or disparaging terms. Additionally, music/lyrics cannot allude to or condone violence, drugs, or sexual acts.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Movement/Content created and/or used for choreographic purposes (e.g. for dancing for a musical) should be of an appropriate content. In addition, costumes must be in alignment with the Department Dress Code. If you have questions, please consult your teacher(s).

PLAYWRITING

Written works created and/or used for theatrical purposes (e.g. scenes, lyrics for songs, plays) should also be of an appropriate content. If you have questions, please consult your teacher(s).

J-TERM

For 3 weeks in January academics go on hiatus and students are immersed in rehearsals for an arts performance project. These rehearsals culminate in public performances. J-Term replicates the professional experience and engages students in the artistic energy of various professional rehearsal and performance venues. J-Term is a part of SPCPA training. It is required as part of the school year and earns a full credit for successful participation. Grades are Pass/No Credit. There are no academic classes during J-Term.

JURIES

SPCPA Theatre/Musical Theatre students must participate in Juries. Juries give students the opportunity to demonstrate the application of the skills they have learned in class.

Below are the Jury requirements for the current school year:

Freshmen

- Prepare and perform a 1-minute monologue
- Dance Combo

Sophomores

- Prepare and perform a 1-minute monologue
- Dance Combo
- Perform 1 16-32 bar cut of a Golden Age musical theater song

Junior Theatre

- Prepare and perform a 1-minute classical or contemporary monologue

Senior Theatre

- Prepare and perform a 3-5 minute scene with a peer(s)

Junior Musical Theatre

- Prepare and perform a 1-minute classical or Shakespearean monologue
- Dance Combo
- Perform 2 16-32 bar cuts of a musical theater song and an alternate genre song

Senior Musical Theatre

- Prepare and perform a 3-5 minute musical theater scene with a peer(s)
- Dance Combo

Juries will be presented in front of the Theatre/Musical Theatre faculty. Most Juries are in the Spring, however, students that have their singing or dance classes in the Fall will complete their Juries in those areas in December. Students will be evaluated on a variety of categories that align with the Performance Rubrics. Students will also get feedback on their performance in a conference with a teacher.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CALL BOARD

Department events and activities as well as outside audition or educational opportunities will be posted on the Theatre and Musical Theatre Call Boards.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to facilitating a positive learning experience and we will do our best to communicate important information to students and families. Email is the best and most efficient way of contacting teachers.

- For Students: Please talk with your teacher and let us know what is going on if you are having difficulties in class—we want to hear from you! If you need to get in contact with a parent/guardian during the school day, please make arrangements with your teacher to go to the Lowry Main Office.
- For Parents/Guardians: Parents and guardians in need of getting in contact with their student should make arrangements through the SPCPA school directory service. Please avoid texting and calling your student on their mobile devices during class time. Students will still be penalized for using their phones during class even if the call/text is from their parent/guardian.
- We use the **Remind App** to communicate via text messages when important information needs to be delivered. To join your appropriate group, please text to the number **81010** your class/group code:

Freshmen Code: **@theatremtf**
Sophomore Code: **@theatremts**
Theatre Jrs Code: **@theatrejrs**
Theatre Srs Code: **@spcpathsrs**
MT Jrs Code: **@mtjrs**
MT Srs Code: **@mtsrs**

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If the student chooses to ignore the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, the following consequences may occur (not limited to just one action):

- Verbal/Nonverbal reminder from instructor
- Loss of Daily Points/Negative consequence for grade
- Contact with home
- Student meetings with Teachers and/or Director(s) and/or Deans
- Write up and referral to administration

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phone or tablet use (texting, making a phone call, Snapchat, etc. etc. etc.) during class without permission will result in the loss of all of a student's Daily 5 points for that class period. Faculty/Staff reserve the right to confiscate any electronic device at their discretion. Students needing to contact their parents/guardians should ask permission from their instructor. Parents/guardians needing to contact their student must contact their student through formal SPCPA channels.

FIELD TRIPS

All SPCPA students are excused one time per semester from their academic classes in order to attend an arts-based field trip. Students are required to make-up any academic work that is missed for this purpose. **In order to attend, students need to submit a signed permission slip and funds (if applicable) to Nancy Galatowitsch by the given deadline.** Students on Educational Benefits will be exempt from the cost of the trip though a signed permission slip will still be required. *All students are greatly encouraged to attend these field trips; seeing and critiquing live professional theatrical performance is a vital part of our training.*

WHO DO I SPEAK WITH?

Please talk to your teacher with questions about:

- ◆ Your grade
- ◆ What to wear for class
- ◆ What to call your teacher
- ◆ How to make up classes for excused absences

Please talk to the Department Chair with questions about:

- ◆ Juries
- ◆ J-Term
- ◆ Departmental policies and procedures
- ◆ Curriculum
- ◆ Placement

Please talk to an Administrative Assistant with questions about:

- ◆ Signing in/out of the building
- ◆ Early Releases
- ◆ Needing a Tardy Pass

If your concern/question does not fall into any of the categories listed above, please contact your department chair and that person can help direct your question to the appropriate person/parties.

THEATRE AND MUSICAL THEATRE FACULTY

Email is the best and quickest way to reach us.

Genevieve Bennett	bennettg@spcpa.org
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Joe Tran	tranj@spcpa.org



THEATRE & MUSICAL THEATRE HANDBOOK
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The student is expected to share the **Theatre & Musical Theatre Handbook** with their parent(s)/guardian(s). The handbook is available in print or can be downloaded at the **SPCPA website** [<https://www.spcpa.org/conservatory/music-theatre/>] or [<https://www.spcpa.org/conservatory/theatre/>]. It can also be seen on the **Theatre/Musical Theatre Departments' Google Site** where assignments, department calendar, and resources are available [<https://sites.google.com/view/spcpathmt>].

By signing below, student and parent(s)/guardian(s) are acknowledging that they have read and understand the described departmental policies, procedures, expectations and responsibilities.

Any violation of the policies and guidelines contained herein may result in immediate disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, detention, losing privileges to use equipment or the facilities, and requiring a student to pay for replacing/repairing damaged property.

Please use ink, not pencil, to complete this form. Thank you.

Student Name Printed: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____