



SPCPA Student Handbook

Theatre & Musical Theatre Departments

2020-2021

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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 for the aspiring theatre artist. Using a wide variety of techniques and approaches, 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 from our Theatre/Musical Theatre Department transition easily into arts programs at post-secondary institutions. Using critical exploration, creativity and rigorous study, students examine the world around them and develop their own artistic voice.

ANTI-RACIST THEATER STATEMENT

We, the Musical Theatre & Theatre faculty, are committed to creating an Anti-Racist Theatre training program. We acknowledge that racism exists in the theater industry and theater training, and that whiteness has been centered in both for far too long. We recognize that some on our faculty are newer to this work and for some, anti-racist theater has been their life's mission and work. We are excited to shift our training from preparing you for the theater of today, to providing the tools and space for you to reimagine and transform the theater of the future.

CURRICULUM

In the Freshman and Sophomore years students take a course in each the following key areas: Acting, Dance/Movement, Voice/Singing, and Theatre Studies. Additionally students also take two Friday electives which are an opportunity for students to expand their knowledge of theater styles or try something completely new. 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 passionate about Theatre/Musical Theatre. We do not expect our students to be extraordinarily skilled, but we do expect them to be curious about and committed to their art form. SPCPA is for students who have a love for Theatre or Musical Theatre, and possess the dedication to grow and improve. We are dedicated to providing students with the Arts training they need to succeed beyond these walls, whether on stage or off.

DEPARTMENT DRESS CODE

For the 2020-2021 school year, please come to school in your arts clothes. Because of COVID, students are asked to not change at school. It’s important that students can move during arts classes.

For acting, singing/voice and theater studies classes, please wear:

- a mask (required throughout school)
- sweatpants, yoga pants or leggings (no jeans - no matter how stretchy)
- loose fitting tops for acting/movement/voice (layering advised)
- For classes in Wilkins: socks with grip or dance shoes

For dance:

- a mask (required throughout school)
 - sweatpants, yoga pants or leggings (no jeans - no matter how stretchy)
 - tops that are comfortable, allow athletic movement, and freedom of breathing (layering advised)
- Please note:** crop tops should not be worn for dance class.
- Dance shoes or socks

Please also:

- remove all dangly jewelry
- pull hair back from face
- avoid wearing or spraying strong-smelling perfumes or colognes
- no hats are to be worn in dance classes unless approved by the teacher. Note that religious headwear is always acceptable in class

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 the Administrative Assistant at the Wilkins Administrative Desk about purchasing dance shoes.

FACILITY USE POLICIES: Theaters, Classrooms, Studios

These are the expectation for Theatre/Musical Theatre students with respect to the theatre, classroom and dance studio spaces.

- Students will follow all COVID 19 safety protocols.
- 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 the Theater Department Chair or one of the Musical Theater department chairs 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. Students 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.

NEW FOR 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR: For Mon/Wed and Tue/Thu classes, students will not have to do a make up assignment for their first three absences (they are "freebies"). However, once they are absent for a fourth time, they will need to complete a make-up assignment. They will receive this make up assignment from their instructor. That make up assignment will then cover all four absences. For Friday classes, students will receive one "freebie" and then will be required to do a make up assignment on the second absence.

Daily 5 points that are lost due to unexcused and/or unknown absences are not eligible to be made up.

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.

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 (usually in January, but in June for 2020-2021 school year), 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 the fall semester. 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

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:	@spcpatmtf
Sophomore Code:	@spcpatmts
Theatre Jrs Code:	@spcpathjr
Theatre Srs Code:	@spcpathsr
MT Jrs & Srs Code:	@spcpamtu

Communication Regarding the Policies & Procedures

If a student isn't following the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, any of following may be used to address the situation:

- 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

Food Pantry

It is our goal that no SPCPA student or family goes hungry. This year the food pantry has one location right next to the 3rd floor desk. Any student can get food items for lunch during early and late lunch. Also, overnight and weekend food bags available during lunches (daily) as well as Thursday and Friday after school.

Electronic Devices

The distraction of cell phones is the number one barrier to students developing their artistry. Cell phone or tablet use (texting, making a phone call, Snapchat, etc. etc. etc.) during class without permission may 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. We encourage parents/guardians to know when your student's lunch is, this is the best time to text them.

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.* We do not know if field trips will be happening in 2020-2021.

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(s) with questions about:

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

Please talk to an Administrative Assistant with questions about:

- ◆ Signing in/out of the building
- ◆ Early Releases
- ◆ Needing a Tardy Pass
- ◆ Educational Benefits (including field trips, dance clothes, etc.)

- ◆ Food pantry needs

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
Aimee Bryant	bryanta@spcpa.org
Jay Eisenberg	eisenbergj@spcpa.org
H. Adam Harris	harrish@spcpa.org
Judith James Ries	jamesriesj@spcpa.org
Suzy Messerole	messeroles@spcpa.org
Shon Parker	parkers@spcpa.org
Aaron Preusse	preussea@spcpa.org
Sara Robinson	robinsons@spcpa.org
Elise Santa	santae@spcpa.org
Justin Spooner	spoonerj@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: _____