

Brigham Young University
Interdisciplinary Music Dance Theatre Program
Policies on Professionalism and Casting

MUSIC DANCE THEATRE PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

Objective: BYU students will operate with integrity in the professional world of musical theatre, treating others in the industry with a professionalism based on the principles of charity.

1. Policy: Any MDT student found in violation of the University Honor Code, especially with regard to cheating and plagiarism, will receive a zero for the assignment involved, may receive an E in the course and will be referred to the Honor Code Office. Execution of this policy will be at the instructor's discretion.

2. Policy: Students who demonstrate consistently unprofessional behavior in class or rehearsal will be dropped from the MDT program. Examples of unprofessional behavior include, but are not limited to:

- *Unexcused absences in class or rehearsal*
- *Disruptive behavior of any kind in class or rehearsal*
- *Chronic tardiness*
- *Failure to honor memorization and preparation deadlines in class or production*
- *Failure to be present in class when scheduled to perform*
- *Reading non-course material during class*
- *Sleeping during class*
- *Playing computer games, texting, checking e-mail, etc. during class*
- *Use of cell phone or text-messaging during class*
- *Regularly leaving class or rehearsal early without making arrangements with the instructor or director*
- *Eating in class*
- *Disturbances or distractions during student performances in class or rehearsal*
- *Creating distractions of any kind during classroom lectures or discussions*
- *Consistent failure to meet with performance partners and/or accompanists for scheduled rehearsals*
- *Failure to attend required proficiency examinations*
- *Failing scores in proficiency examinations*
- *Any improper use of electronic devices during class or rehearsal*

3. Policy: At the end of the first and second year in the Music Dance Theatre program, each student will meet with members of the Steering Committee to review their individual progress. During these interviews, specific goals and objectives will be outlined and reviewed. At the end of the second year, a determination will be made as to whether or not the student should continue in the MDT major. Students whose overall progress is not sufficient, will be strongly encouraged to change their major and enter another field of study. In the case of continuing and transfer students, this determination may be made at the end of the first year in the program.

PROFESSIONALISM POLICY ENFORCEMENT

If an instructor feels a student is in violation of this policy, the following protocol should be followed:

- First warning: A meeting between the student and the instructor will be conducted to resolve the issues of unprofessional behavior. *(If the violation is extreme or recurring, the Music Dance Theatre Steering Committee will be notified).* Following a consultation between the professor and student, a signed letter describing the problem and subsequent steps toward resolution will be drafted. The instructor will place this letter in the student's file.

- Second warning: The student will be reviewed by the MDT Steering Committee for potential removal from the program. All pertinent information will be presented, considered, and a decision will follow deliberation. A letter containing the decision will be signed by the members of the committee and placed in the student's file.
- Appeal: First appeal will be to the MDT Steering Committee. Second appeal will be to the Chair of Theatre and Media Arts, the Director of the School of Music, or the Chair of the Dance Department. Final appeal will be to the Music Dance Theatre Executive Committee, which consists of MDT faculty representatives, the three chairs and a representative from the Dean's office of the College of Fine Arts and Communications.

MUSIC DANCE THEATRE PROGRAM CASTING POLICY

Objective: More fully integrate the on-campus musical theatre performance experience into the pedagogy of the Music Dance Theatre Program.

1. Policy: All currently enrolled Music Dance Theatre students are required to audition for MDT sponsored on-campus musical theatre productions. Students are required to participate in all preliminary and callback auditions inclusive of acting, music, and dance calls. **Students who fail to audition will have a registration hold placed on their student records until they meet with the MDT Steering Committee and will be ineligible to receive MDT Talent Awards for one year following the policy infraction.** To accommodate the participation in a BYU sponsored musical required of MDT students, one large-scale musical is presented in the de Jong concert hall in January followed by a season with one Pardoe musical near Christmas. An additional musical is produced every other year in the winter semester of the same academic year as the Pardoe musical. This second musical is presented in an appropriate and available campus venue and emphasizes new musicals. *Justification:* The audition process itself is a vital training tool that prepares young performers for the challenges and rigors of auditioning in the professional world of musical theatre. It also provides MDT faculty the opportunity to observe the student's performance skills and techniques in an audition setting. In addition, the shared audition experience provides an opportunity for all students within the MDT program to observe one another, and encourages discussion of the work. A pre-professional BFA program in musical theatre with approximately 65 students must provide adequate laboratory performance opportunities. Experiencing musical theatre productions in a variety of venues with varying levels of technical support are essential to the training of young performers.

2. Policy: Students will audition for the main stage musicals one semester in advance.

Justification: Auditioning for fall semester productions the previous winter will allow students to plan appropriately for class load, work schedules, and the opportunity for off-campus performance experiences. Auditions for the musical will be coordinated with other audition schedules to maximize the opportunity for students just entering the MDT program as well as students returning from Church service and longer term professional engagements.

3. Policy: All students enrolled in their first year of participation in the Music Dance Theatre program that are cast in the BYU musical will play "as cast". This means they are required to accept the role they are assigned. All MDT students will perform as a member of the ensemble of a BYU musical during their training in the MDT program. *Justification:* All Music Dance Theatre students will learn from the vital experience of performing as members of the singing and dancing ensemble of a main stage musical with full-time BYU faculty acting as stage directors, music directors and choreographers. Furthermore, employment opportunities in the ensemble of professional musical theatre productions have proven to be especially vital for Music Dance Theatre alumni.

4. Policy: During de Jong and Pardoe musicals, all major roles will have an understudy assigned from the ensemble. It is expected that understudies will thoroughly learn the role inclusive of lines, blocking, music, and choreography and be ready step into the role at any time. One 'put-in' rehearsal will take place at the discretion of the director. During this rehearsal, all cast members will be called. Understudies will execute

the roles they have been assigned to ‘cover’ during this rehearsal. This is NOT a performance and is not open to the public. NO costumes or make-up will be used during the rehearsal. Sets, lights, props, projections etc. will be used at the discretion of the director and stage management. The orchestra will not be called for this rehearsal. *Justification:* Understudy assignments in Broadway and national touring shows are mandatory for almost all ensemble tracks. Students need the experience of understudying at least one role while maintaining their own ensemble track in preparation for the professional world of music theatre.

5. Policy: All currently enrolled Music Dance Theatre students are obligated to participate in BYU main stage musicals as a priority over off-campus performance opportunities. *Justification:* Main stage musicals are the “laboratory” for the Music Dance Theatre program where students have the opportunity to put skills and techniques introduced in the classroom into practice. Participation by MDT students in the BYU musicals also provides for numerous mentoring opportunities with MDT faculty. Main stage musicals at BYU represent the Music Dance Theatre program to the university community, and should, therefore, be staffed wherever possible by currently enrolled MDT students.

6. Policy: Music Dance Theatre students are required to clear all off-campus performance opportunities with the MDT Steering Committee. Application forms for participation clearance in off-campus productions are available online at mdt.byu.edu and in the MDT office. Forms must be completed, submitted and approved in an MDT Steering Committee meeting prior to casting. *Justification:* Performance experience is a vital component of the training process within the MDT program. Faculty supervised performance experiences add to student learning through monitoring of the rehearsal and performance process where specific pedagogical concerns can be addressed by faculty well acquainted with the student’s work. The MDT faculty also recognizes the significant benefit of off-campus performance experiences. Both on-campus and off-campus performance requirements exist for completion of the MDT curriculum. Off-campus performance experiences are encouraged, especially during spring and summer when MDT courses are not offered and productions are not scheduled.

Student Signature

Upon admittance into the Music Dance Theatre program, each student will sign a copy of this policy document, acknowledging they understand and accept the Professionalism and Casting Policies and are prepared to conduct themselves within the established framework. Students will be provided with a signed copy of the policy statement for future reference.

I _____ understand and accept the Professionalism and Casting Policies of the Music Dance Theatre Program at Brigham Young University and will conduct myself according to the standards outlined in the document at all times.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

The MDT program gratefully acknowledges the Department of Communications *Statement on Professionalism* as a template for this document.

* Please visit <http://learningoutcomes.byu.edu> and follow the prompts to the College of Fine Arts and Communications. Then click on Music and go to the posting of the Music Dance Theatre Learning Outcomes to view the MDT document in its entirety.