**Skidmore College Department of Theater**

**Studio Labs Application and Selection**

The Lab Program affords an opportunity for student directors, actors, stage managers, and, when possible, designers, to work on productions in a controlled studio environment. Department Labs focus on the development of the creative process, not on scenery, lighting, props, projections, costumes, or sound. It is an opportunity to try out ideas, to take risks, to apply aspects of your class work, and, through trial and error, to grow as theater artists – not to complete a high-tech production. An understanding and acceptance of this principle should be clear in each proposal.

Due to the College calendar, class projects, and seminar production schedules, a maximum of three Studio Labs (including approved senior project productions) are selected for Studio A each semester. A fourth Studio Lab that uses Studio B or a site- specific location might be considered for late in the semester. It is sometimes possible that two short Studio Labs can be combined for a single rehearsal and performance period. Some Studio Lab proposals may be selected for limited rehearsal time and performance during a Free Hour Theater period.

Applicants must inform the faculty Studio Lab Program Director by e-mail of their intention to propose a Studio Lab no later than 5:00pm on the Friday of the 7th full week of classes. This must include the title and a brief description of the project. The choice of material should be based upon your research, knowledge, and experience rather than on a last minute rush to find something that could be used to win a Studio Lab opportunity. Ideally, students should discuss ideas with a faculty director before submitting proposals.

Proposals must be clear, concise and carefully written. Proofread the proposal carefully using spelling and grammar checks. Refer to all policies below which should be read carefully. Completed proposals must be submitted to the faculty Studio Lab Program Director via e-mail attachment no later than 5:00pm on the Monday following the 8th full week of classes. A copy of the play text must also be submitted as an e-mail attachment (ideally, as a PDF). If the piece is to be devised, a sample scene and/or a detailed outline of the event must be included.

Oral presentations for the Studio Labs will be given a few weeks before the end of the semester at a date and time to be determined. This is an opportunity to defend the proposal, elaborate upon it, and answer questions posed by faculty members.

Decisions on Studio Lab selections will be made by the faculty and announced at the end of the semester. The criteria for selection include previous courses taken and the quality of course work; additional training, experience and preparation; the quality of the written and oral presentations; consideration of the projects themselves – scale, casting requirements, quality of vision, etc.; and adherence to the policies.

The Department must be selective in reaching decisions about which Studio Labs are chosen. Studio time and space are limited and directors of Studio Labs have a great deal of responsibility in working with student actors. Because Studio Labs are an important part of the directing curriculum, we are always concerned that sufficient opportunities are available for juniors and seniors who are pursuing a directing concentration, therefore most Studio Labs selected for production are generated by students pursuing a directing concentration. However, anyone may propose a Studio Lab. Actors and designers are encouraged to speak with their advisors about generating potential Studio Lab ideas.

**Proposal and Production Policies**

1. Studio Labs might consist of short plays, a portion of a longer work, an adaptation, a program of scenes, or a devised piece created by a group.
2. Studio Labs must not exceed one hour and are limited to a maximum three-week rehearsal period prior to performances. If you are proposing a script with a running time longer than an hour, you must include in your proposal a cut script as well as an explanation of the criteria you used for making those cuts. While the exact cuts you ultimately make may be different than those in your submitted script, you cannot wait until rehearsals start to begin cutting. The rehearsal period should be about working with the actors, not about making the script short enough to be a Studio Lab.
3. Performances are usually scheduled for three consecutive evenings (Sunday through Tuesday, Monday through Wednesday, or Tuesday through Thursday). Performances are at 7:00pm unless permission is secured from the Studio Lab Program Director for a different time.
4. Studio Lab directors are expected to have completed Introduction to Directing (TH140) before directing a Studio Lab. Preference may be given to students who have also completed Intermediate Directing (TH240). Preference is also given to Theater Majors, particularly rising juniors, juniors, rising seniors, and seniors pursuing a Directing Concentration (by taking TH140, TH240, and TH343D, and serving as an assistant to a faculty director.
5. Seniors may propose a Studio Lab as a Senior Project, but it must meet all of the criteria of other Studio Labs and has no priority over other proposals.
6. The proposal should be carefully composed, clear, and descriptive. Rather than simply listing themes present in the play, your point of view about the play should be clearly expressed. If you are proposing an existing script, your point of view must be derived from the intentions of the playwright.
7. Rehearsals must be scheduled for hours between 7:00pm and 11:00pm on weeknights. Weekend rehearsals may be scheduled between 10:00am and 11:00 pm. Total rehearsal time should generally consist of five three-hour rehearsals for each of three weeks. Studios are scheduled using the sheets located outside each studio. Classes, department activities, and the upcoming Studio Lab have priority in scheduling studio space (in that order).
8. Complete rehearsal schedules must be submitted to the Studio Lab Program Director before rehearsals begin.
9. Production elements are to be minimal and must be approved by the Director of the Studio Lab Program and the Technical Director. Studio Labs are an opportunity to try out ideas, to take risks, to apply aspects of your class work, and, through trial and error, to grow as theater artists, not to complete a high-tech production. A meeting will be held at the beginning of the semester to discuss  your physical needs with the Director of the Studio Lab Program and the Department Technical Director. You must include in your proposal why and how you think your script will work in a minimalist environment.
10. Studio Lab directors must meet with the Technical Director to discuss technical matters and to determine that the room arrangement and production choices are in compliance with fire and safety regulations.
11. Studio Lab directors should meet with the Costume Supervisor before the rehearsal period, should any department costume pieces be requested. Keep in mind that the Costume Supervisor is free to deny any and all requests, so a successful Studio Lab application must include an alternative way of procuring or creating costumes if they are necessary to the Studio Lab. Remember that director-originated Studio Labs focus on the development of the creative process, not on tech.
12. No department money will be provided for costumes, sets, or props. This is because department Studio Labs focus on the development of the creative process, not on technical elements. Funding may be available for student projects through the college’s Student Opportunity Funds program.
13. Casting is through the Theater Department General Auditions. Studio Lab directors will attend general auditions. After cast lists for the Seminar Productions have been posted, the Studio Lab and New Works Lab directors will schedule callbacks. After callbacks, Studio Lab and New Works Lab directors meet with each other and the Director of the Studio Lab Program to make final casting decisions. Furthermore:

a) No actors may be cast who have not participated in a formal audition.   
b) If an actor who signed up to audition is not able to make that audition due to

illness or an emergency, the actor must schedule a formal audition through

the Director of the Studio Lab Program.   
c) If a Studio Lab requires an actor of a specific race or ethnicity and the

director was not able to recruit such an actor by the time of the general auditions, an additional formal audition may be arranged through the Studio Lab Program Director. Directors may not cast a white actor in a role written for a person of color.

d) In order to create as many opportunities for as many actors as possible, actors may not be cast in more than one production.

e) Directors are encouraged to consider cross-gender casting when appropriate.

f) Actors should be cast in only one production.

14. After every rehearsal and performance, the Rehearsal Studio must be left ready

for classes. All scenic elements, furniture, props, costumes, etc. must be cleared from the room. Things should be stored carefully and neatly towards the back of the storage closet in the studio.

15. Studio Labs in Studio A have the use of the lighting system. Lighting units can be focused and gelled but may not be moved. Classes need to be able to, if necessary, refocus units. Units will therefore have to be checked before each of the final rehearsals and performances.

16. After the final performance the studio and storage closet must be cleared of all production material, equipment, costumes, etc. Anything from the shop, prop room, or costume area must be returned at that time.

17. Publicity includes notices on the department website and Facebook page, email announcements, 8 1⁄2” x 11” black and white posters, and programs made on the copy machine. Playwrights must be credited on all materials.

18. Studio Lab directors are responsible for making sure that no other performances or rehearsals in the JKB building are disturbed.

19. The Studio Lab Program Director will attend a run through during the final week of rehearsals. Other faculty members may be invited to attend rehearsals as well.

20. Prior to performance, each director will give a presentation at Theatre Company.

1. Company lab presentations will be scheduled by Jared Klein and will appear on the Theater Company schedule.
2. Presentations should be between 15 and 20 minutes long.
3. Ideally, all members of the lab should be present and should be introduced.
4. The director must present a coherent explanation of the project including the

reasons for choosing the project and an overview of the project in terms of

interpretation and conceptual approach,

1. The physical elements should be discussed (i.e.: physical arrangement of the

room and the integration of any technical elements).

1. The director should briefly discuss various rehearsal processes and any

challenges that have been encountered.

1. It is not necessary to perform material from the lab. If anything is performed it

should be meaningful and sufficiently rehearsed.

1. Time should be allotted for questions and answers.

21. Following the closing of each Studio Lab, a critique will be held in Theatre Company.

22. Selected directors must enroll in TH251A, Workshop Productions, for 1 credit. 251A covers topics which include, for example, casting issues, how to engage in meaningful research and apply that research to a production, how to create a rehearsal schedule, how to create a floor plan, and how to engage in constructive critiques with peers, sharing rehearsal experiences, etc.