

Skidmore College Department of Theater Studio Labs Application and Selection

The Lab Program affords an opportunity for student directors, actors, stage managers, playwrights, dramaturgs, stage managers, and designers to work on productions in a process focused studio environment. Department Labs focus on the development of the creative process, collaboration, communication and resourcefulness. The labs are intended to be Low-Fi in terms of design, budget, and time. 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 3-4 Studio Labs (including approved senior project productions) are selected for Studio A each semester. 1-2 additional Playwrights Labs for Studio B may be programmed. Site specific projects may also be considered, but will not necessarily increase the number of Labs programmed.

Application calls for Studio Labs are issued by the Season Selection Committee each semester. Careful attention to all dates is required.

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. 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, or is a play in process, a sample scene and/or a detailed outline of the project must be included.

All lead artists are required to apply for 1, 2, or 3 week processes, scaled appropriately for their project. Two week processes mean a total of 10 rehearsals (including any tech rehearsal or invited dress) and 2 performances; three week processes are 15 rehearsals (including any tech rehearsals or invited dress) and 2 performances; playwrights labs are 4 to 5 rehearsals each week for one to two weeks, and one performance each week. (Generally, playwrights labs are scheduled as two separate weeks, each culminating in a public reading. One week takes place at the top of the semester, and one later, to facilitate rewriting.) Rehearsals may be scheduled from 7-10pm Sunday to Thursday. Any variance to that schedule must be approved by the Workshop Productions Instructor, in consultation with the TD and Chair.

All lead artists must enroll in Workshop Productions and be available to attend Friday Company meetings on a weekly basis (2:30-4pm).

Decisions on the Lab season are completed by the Season Selection Committee in consultation with the technical director and department Chair. 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.

Note that Intro to Directing is required for all lead artists applying as directors. Intermediate Directing and Intro to Design are highly recommended; lead artists may be permitted to take the classes concurrently with a Lab. Lead artists in any other discipline, not applying to direct, should have completed at least introductory coursework in their discipline; intermediate coursework is highly recommended. Lead artists not applying to direct should note in their application who the director is, or if there is some other method of theater making to be employed.

The Department must be selective in reaching decisions about which Studio Labs are chosen. Studio time and space are limited and lead artists of Studio Labs have a great deal of responsibility in working with student collaborators. 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. However, any student may propose a Studio Lab. All students are encouraged to speak with their advisors about generating potential Studio Lab ideas.

Proposal and Production Policies

1. Labs might consist of short plays, a portion of a longer work, an adaptation, a program of scenes, a devised piece created by a group, a new work.
2. Lead artists must familiarize themselves with, and adhere to all department policies on production. See: [Department Policies and Protocols](#) and peruse the following:

Guidelines for Campus Productions

Staging Sexual Content and/or Nudity

Pillars of Intimacy Direction

Rehearsing and Performing Scenes with Violence, Stage Combat and Extreme Physicality

Studio Lab Application Policies and Procedures

Studio Space Sign-Up Policies

Studio Space General Policies

Studio Space Strike Policies

3. All lead artists will work closely with the Workshop Productions instructor. Each lead artist will have at least one pre-production meeting with the Instructor. The instructor will

visit rehearsal 1-3 times (3 times for a 3 week process, 2 times for a two week process, etc), as well as attend one performance.

4. Labs must not exceed 70 minutes. Lead artists are responsible for researching cost of rights and including in their application. Lead artists must adhere to all contractual obligations.
5. All lead artists are required to apply for 1, 2, or 3 week processes, scaled appropriately for their project. Two week processes mean a total of 10 rehearsals (including any tech rehearsal or invited dress) and 2 performances; three week processes are 15 rehearsals (including any tech rehearsals or invited dress) and 2 performances; playwrights labs are 4 to 5 rehearsals each week for one to two weeks, and one performance each week. (Generally, playwrights labs are scheduled as two weeks. One week takes place at the top of the semester, and one later, to facilitate rewriting.) Each lab must schedule a strike; this may take place either after the final performance or the next day. Rehearsals may be scheduled from 7-10pm Sunday to Thursday. Any variance to that schedule must be approved by the Workshop Productions Instructor, in consultations with the TD and Chair. Lead artists are responsible for booking their space, once their rehearsal schedule is approved by Workshop Productions instructor.
6. Performances are scheduled for two consecutive evenings. Performances are at 7:30pm unless permission is secured from Workshop Productions instructor, Chair, and TD.
7. Studio Lab lead artists are expected to have completed Introduction to Directing (TH140) before directing a 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.
8. Seniors may propose a Lab as a Senior Project, but it must meet all of the criteria of other Labs and has no priority over other proposals.
9. 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.
10. Rehearsals must be scheduled for hours between 7:00pm and 10:00pm. Classes, department activities, and the upcoming Lab have priority in scheduling studio space (in that order).
11. Complete rehearsal schedules must be submitted to the Workshop Productions instructor.

12. Production elements are to be minimal and must be approved by the Workshop Productions instructor and the Technical Director.
13. Lab lead artists must meet with the Technical Director, Assistant Technical Director and Costume Shop Manager to discuss technical matters and to determine that the room arrangement and production choices are in compliance with fire and safety regulations. The Workshops Production instructor often schedules a class visit with these colleagues to review processes, including strike.
14. No department money will be provided for costumes, sets, or props. The department will pay for rights, within reason. Funding may be available for student projects through the college's Student Opportunity Funds program.
15. Casting is through the Theater Department General Auditions and casting session.

- 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 Workshop Productions instructor.
- 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 social media, email announcements, twenty 11x17 color posters, and black & white programs made on the copy machine. Playwrights must be credited on all materials. The Visual Manager will design and

order copies of the poster. The Lab ensemble is responsible for poster distribution, making the program, and ticketing.

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

20. Prior to performance, each director will give a presentation at Theatre Company and will be prepared to participate in a post show discussion. Company lab presentations and post show discussions will be scheduled by Company instructor and mentored and attended by Workshop Productions instructor.