

**The College of Wooster
Department of Theatre & Dance
Production Handbook**

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Choosing Productions

Main Stage: Typically, theatre productions are proposed in the spring semester of the preceding academic year by an individual faculty member or guest director to the department faculty and production staff. Productions run in a four-year cycle of two theatre productions and two dance concerts a year, with faculty and staff making every attempt to include the following within each cycle:

Classic
Contemporary (20th century)
New (21st century)
Premier (when possible seek to stage a world premier)
Non-canonical US
Global

We will also keep in mind various styles and institutional needs and try to offer a variety of plays within any four-year cycle, including Comic, Current event/local interest, and risk-taking works.

I.S. Productions: Senior Independent Study productions are proposed by students no later than the spring of their junior year. All proposals must be reviewed and approved by department faculty and production staff. (See the section on I.S. productions in the *Theatre and Dance Department Guidelines*).

Design Assignments

Main Stage: Students may petition to design on the main stage as part of their Senior I.S. project. Design projects are proposed by students in the spring of their junior year and are subject to approval of the faculty designers and technical director. Beyond the Senior I.S. design projects, a student may petition the department to design scenery, costumes, or lighting for a main stage production. Final approval of the petition will be decided by the appropriate faculty and the Technical Director.

I.S. Productions: Designers for Independent Study productions are assigned in two ways:

1. A director can request a specific designer with whom to work, pending approval of the faculty and production staff; or
2. Designers will be assigned based on merit by the production faculty, in agreement with the student director.

In either case, prospective designers must be in good academic standing.

Auditions

Any College of Wooster student enrolled and in good academic standing as defined by the college catalogue is encouraged to audition.

Pre-casting is prohibited.

I.S. auditions will be determined by the individual senior in consultation with their advisor.

At least one week prior to auditions, copies of the script should be made available for students to read. These should be left with the department administrative coordinator and available to be checked out.

Cast lists should be posted on the call board across the hall from the theatre office.

Replacing a Cast Member

Directors and choreographers have the right to replace an actor or dancer who does not take their commitment to or responsibility for a production seriously. For an I.S. production replacements will be made by the student director in consultation with the advisor and Department Chair.

Rehearsal Locations

There are several spaces around campus where rehearsals may take place. Rehearsal spaces may be signed out for a maximum three-hour block. Departmental production season work and rehearsals and Senior I.S. projects have preference over other student rehearsals or any outside groups.

Wishart 105 (Conference Room) may be reserved through the department administrative coordinator.

James N. Wise Studio – see guidelines below or see department administrative coordinator.

Shoolroy Theatre (blackbox) – reserved through the technical director.

Freedlander Theatre – reserved through the technical director (access very limited).

The Dance Studio (Wishart 201) may be reserved through the dance professor or placing your name on the studio sign-up sheet located on the door of the dance studio.

Other spaces, such as the Wishart classrooms, need to be reserved using the online address: <http://calendar.wooster.edu/>

Please note the following policy and procedures, which apply to all students, faculty and staff who wish to utilize the James N. Wise Studio (also known as Under Freed):

1. Anyone wishing to use the space must make a reservation in the "Schedule Book" located in the Wise Studio.
2. All group or individual reservations should not exceed a three-hour time limit per day.
3. Class related activities (e.g. acting or directing scenes) and current season productions, including IS productions, will receive priority in the use of the space.
4. If no class related activity or production has reserved the space, departmental extra/co-curricular activities may be scheduled (e.g. Irene Ryan rehearsals, audition preps).
5. If no class related activity, production, or departmental extra/co-curricular activity has reserved the space, non-departmental extra/co-curricular activity may be scheduled (e.g. Irish or Scottish Dancers).
6. All groups and individuals using a theatre space are responsible for cleaning the space and ensuring it is in proper condition for classroom and rehearsal purposes. Do not store any items (furniture, costumes, props) without the permission of the faculty. Failure to follow these rules will prevent you from using the space in the future.

Faculty and staff members reserve the right to take precedence over any previously scheduled rehearsal.

Rehearsal Length

Except for dance, I.S. productions may rehearse a maximum of six times a week for three hours a day, with a five-week rehearsal period (including performances) or a total of 30 rehearsal blocks. Main stage productions will rehearse as needed.

All rehearsals must end by 11:00 p.m. (dance studio), including technical and dress rehearsals.

Rehearsal schedules must be typed and posted on the call board at the beginning of each week. Any changes must be posted before 10:00 am on the morning of the change. Dance rehearsals will be determined by the choreographers and dancers.

Theatre rehearsal breaks should be allowed five minutes on the hour or ten minutes on the hour and a half. Breaks should be kept track of and called by the stage manager.

If a production is in rehearsal while another is in performance, schedules need to be arranged so that at least one day off from rehearsal is allowed so that all students have an opportunity to see the performance.

Director/choreographer and stage manager are responsible for calling Campus Security to notify them of the rehearsal days/times and to ensure that a security vehicle can be parked by the building for rehearsals getting out after dark. This ensures the safety of all involved in departmental activities. Please do this with advanced notice.

Stage Managers

All main stage and I.S. productions must have a stage manager. To be approved by the department as a stage manager for a main stage production, a student must have been an assistant stage manager, a production assistant, or involved as a crew member for a main stage production. (Note: All students intending to do a production I.S. must serve as an assistant director, assistant stage manager, stage manager, and/or production design assistant. Please refer to the Theatre and Dance Guidelines for specific requirements.)

It is recommended that all IS production stage managers be approved by the technical director to verify the student has enough training and to verify the student is available.

Stage Managers will be assigned by the department faculty and staff following assessment of required written applications distributed and collected by the Technical Director.

Stage manager duties are thoroughly outlined in the Stage Management Handbook, which should be picked up from the office of the Technical Director.

Programs

Main Stage Productions: Program information needs to be given to the administrative coordinator no less than two weeks before the opening of a production.

I.S. Productions: Program information needs to be approved by the faculty advisor(s) before it is sent to copy services. This information needs to be turned in to the department administrative coordinator no less than two weeks before the opening of a production.

All I.S. programs and posters must be approved by the faculty advisor and include:

- Title, date, and year. Also include, "Presented in partial fulfillment of Senior Independent Study, Supported by the Department of Theatre and Dance and the Copeland Fund" (if applicable).
- Faculty Advisor
- Cast and production credits, including box office staff and poster/program design acknowledgments.
- Technical staff, designers, costume staff.
- Director, stage manager, assistant stage manager.

- Director notes if desired.
- Upcoming theatre events.
- Announcement that photos, video recordings, or other recordings are prohibited.

Posters

Posters should be in place one week prior to opening, at the same time that tickets go on sale.

I.S. students are responsible for the creation of their own posters, however, the department will provide funding for 20 copies used for advertising purposes.

I.S. Productions

To accommodate our growing student population within the department, the faculty and staff have agreed to the following:

1. There will be one or two weekends set aside each semester for I.S. productions. Each weekend will accommodate 2-3 student projects, totaling 4-6 per semester (8-12 per year).
2. Each weekend will consist of two to three evenings of performance per I.S., running either in repertory with other performances or as a Friday/Saturday evening of shows.
3. As a result, students will be required to choose materials that can accommodate no more than a one-hour time slot if the productions stand alone and 20-30 minutes if run in repertory with no more than an eight-member cast. This is true of acting recitals, staged readings, directing projects and devised pieces.
4. As has always been the case, students will be granted permission for their projects based on faculty approval.
5. Dance majors must consult with the Professor of Dance if they intend to propose that their I.S. be included in a dance concert.
6. The department will provide the following for I.S. productions: royalty fees, expenses for posters and programs, pulled costumes, a limited number of hours of shop labor within a 1-2 week time period (see below), set up, strike, and clean up of space, and limited use of scenic materials with permission of the technical director.
7. The staged reading of a playwriting I.S. serves as means for the playwright to hear their work being read and to revise it accordingly. The staged reading typically includes 6-8 rehearsals, and is produced with simple light cues, using chairs or stools and music stands. Props and or costume pieces may be used in consultation with the student's advisor, the Technical Director, and the Costume Shop Supervisor

Funding

The Henry Copeland Fund may be available for the development of certain I.S. projects requiring travel for research, research supplies, transcription etc. Copeland funding is not provided for production needs (props, costumes, etc.).

Suggested Deadlines

Choose designers and stage managers the semester before production.

No later than 7 academic weeks prior to tech (8 weeks prior to opening) - meet with the technical director to determine/create a production calendar for your production to include deadlines for designs, initial technical rehearsal schedule. Please bring your stage manager and names of your designers to this meeting. (Note: it is recommended you meet with the TD prior to starting any design process, so if you need to meet earlier to give designers more time, do so). All scenic, costume, and lighting designs must be approved by faculty designers and/or the staff technical director and presented no less than two weeks before build time.

The initial light plot should be presented three weeks before hang. The final light plot should be ready one week before hang.

Final scenic drawings and costume renderings are due a week before shop time.

A date beyond which nothing new can be added to the show should be set for one week before technical rehearsals.

Shop Time

The limited number of shop labor hours within the 1-2 week time period of shop time devoted to I.S. productions each semester are primarily for elements shared by all productions: seating and lighting. The bulk of the time will be used for hanging, focusing, and cueing lights. Any remaining time will be given over to individual productions. All design drawings must be approved by the department before work may begin. Priority will be given based on how much scenery needs to be built for a given production and when the production opens. All props and set pieces must be checked out with the technical director's approval prior to use. The shop's normal operating hours are from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. If work on I.S. productions needs to be done outside of this time, approval must be provided by the Technical Director with appropriate arrangements. Additionally, permission must be obtained from the Technical Director at least two days in advance of any extra work calls. For safety reasons, the Technical Director must be present at any extra calls.

Lighting & Sound

IS Productions are generally produced in repertory. This means your lighting options will be limited and generally must be shared by all productions. It is recommended that all designers (scenery & lighting) discuss audience/stage arrangement with the technical director so that lighting designer(s) can establish a shared festival plot. A small budget is put towards all IS productions to cover lamp/gel maintenance only. Depending on calendar placement of IS production, lighting instrument inventory may vary but generally any instrument not being used by Freedlander Theatre is available. LED & Special FX units may require use of the Ion console, which will rarely be available.

The technical director and/or faculty mentor will assist the lighting designer in planning the lighting plot, including planning the design to work within repertory. All other duties (such as design drawings/sketches, lighting hang & focus, cue programming, etc.) fall to the designer to implement during shop hours provided.

Sound operation may be done via CD or computer. It is recommended that you have a burned CD tested prior to first technical rehearsal to verify your CD can play properly in the CD players. If computer operation is desired, it is recommended that you utilize Q-Lab for reliability and cue placement to avoid issues with other software players. Q-lab runs on Mac computers and the free version will work for most sound designs.

Scenery & Properties

IS Productions are generally produced in repertory. This means your scenery requirements will be limited to only what can be shared by all performances or what can be changed out between productions during a short intermission (assume 10 mins or less). It is recommended that all designers (scenery & lighting) discuss audience/stage arrangement with the technical director. Do not expect to be provided with crew required to change a massive amount. With some exceptions & with permission from the technical director you may use any furniture, stock flats & platforms and props for your production. Any alterations to stock must be approved. A small budget is put towards all IS productions to cover small amounts of stock paint and scrap lumber replacement. This budget generally will not cover major construction, prop purchases, special fx or major scenic painting.

The technical director and/or faculty mentor will assist the scenic designer in planning any construction & rigging requirements, including planning the design to work within repertory & budget limitations. All other duties (such as design drawings/sketches, scenic painting, props, etc.) fall to the designer to implement during shop hours provided.

When planning your scenic design, all fire egress and code requirements must be followed; scenic elements must be structurally sound and safe and any rigging must be approved & overseen by the technical director. Any prop pulled from storage should be documented and checked out.

Projection/Projection design: This requires special consideration both in terms of planning and technology requirements. This should be discussed very early in your

design process as it will affect audience/stage configuration, scene shop operation and other complications.

Run Crew

Your run crew will consist of your Stage Manager & an ASM. The technical director will assist you in acquiring a board op, if needed. If your production requires more crew, you can seek guidance from the technical director to determine your options. Any students operating technology in the control booth should be approved by the TD.

Costume Shop

The Costume Shop will be available for use six weeks prior to a mainstage production and five days prior to an IS production. This schedule is subject to change depending on the specific costuming needs of an IS production.

The Costume Shop's normal operating hours are Monday through Friday 12:00pm to 4:00pm. Shop employees may work on IS productions outside of these operating hours with prior approval of the Costume Shop Supervisor but may not be paid for the extra hours.

Rehearsal Costumes:

Rehearsal costumes will be determined and arranged through discussion with the Director, Stage Management, and the Costume Designer/Costume Shop Supervisor. Actors will be asked to provide basic dress shoes/character shoes and staple clothing items for rehearsal as needed for character development. Show shoes can be worn for rehearsal by the discretion of the Costume Designer/Costume Shop Supervisor and only after they have been fitted.

Costume Fittings:

Costume fittings are arranged through Stage Management with a minimum of 24 hours of notice. Actors should plan on arriving 5 minutes early to all fittings. Any actor arriving 15 minutes late for a fitting must reschedule; the Costume Shop Supervisor will notify Stage Management to reschedule the fitting within 24 hours. For Dance, Choreographers must be present for the first fittings of the costumes for their dance.

Wardrobe:

All Theatre and Dance productions will have a Wardrobe Crew. Crew size will be determined based on the size of the acting company and the technical needs of the production. The Wardrobe Crew will be responsible for the checking in and out all costume items for the productions, the proper maintenance and care for all the costumes, the collecting and washing of laundry, any and all costume changes during the

performance, assisting actors/dancers in preparing for each performance, and aiding in the strike of the production.

IS Costume Design:

Each IS production will have a designer—chosen by IS director or assigned by the production faculty as stated above. Each designer will be responsible for researching period, doing renderings/collages, pulling and fitting garments, and communicating with the Costume Shop Supervisor.

Use of the CoW hair and makeup supplies must be approved by the Costume Shop Supervisor. The Costume Designer for the IS production will also serve as Wardrobe Crew for the production, with additional crew enlisted as needed for scale of the production.

Costume design roughs must be presented no less than two weeks before allotted shop time and final costume renderings/collages are due in the Costume Shop one week before shop time. A list of rehearsal costumes should be arranged with the Costume Shop Supervisor prior to the first rehearsal.

Costume Rental:

Costume items may be borrowed from the College of Wooster Costume Stock in accordance with the Rental Policy. Rentals can be arranged by appointment with the Costume Shop Supervisor. Items that may be borrowed are determined by the Costume Shop Supervisor. All items must be returned properly laundered and in the condition in which they left.

Box Office Policies

The box office will be open and electronic tickets will be available on the Monday prior to the opening of each I.S. Production.

It is important that the following information be established and communicated to the Box Office Manager no later than one week prior to the opening of the box office.

1. Confirmation of performance dates and time.
2. A written description of the performance, author, etc. that is adequate and informative for box office staff to convey to all patrons, including the use of potentially hazardous special effects such as strobe lights, fog machines, pyrotechnics, etc. The description should also indicate any nudity, explicit language, smoking, and the suitability of the performance for children.
3. The number of seats available for each production, as determined in consultation with the technical director.
4. The number and location of seats needed for cast/performance that are not to be given to patrons, along with reserved and special seating requests, etc.

5. A list of cast and crew members, which the box office staff will use in order to obtain names and signatures for complimentary tickets.

Cast and crew members are able to reserve up to two complimentary tickets for each production (not each performance), which *does not include their own ticket* to be issued with a valid College of Wooster student ID. Names for all comps are to be given to the Box Office when making the reservations.

IMPORTANT: All comp patrons must arrive to the theatre no less than 30 minutes prior to performance, after which the Box Office reserves the right to distribute all unclaimed seats to waiting-list patrons.

Receptions are to be held at the expense of the individual students presenting their I.S. production. Details, however, are to be discussed with the house manager, and the request for a table, coat racks, etc. are to be given to the house manager.

Policy Regarding Use of Stage Weapons

Blank firing stage weapons and the **ammunition** are kept either by the staff technical director or a designated faculty member. Before each use, Campus Security must be notified of the times the weapon will be used. If the weapon is to be discharged during school hours, personnel in the east end of Wishart Hall should also be notified. Blank firing weapons are not to be used in either Shoolroy Theatre or the Wise Acting Studio. Either the technical director, designated faculty member, student stage manager, or designated gun wrangler must inspect the weapon before it is handed over to an actor. This check is to make certain the pistol is centered over an empty chamber, and that there has been no attempt to jam a live round into the cylinder or chamber. If the shot is fired off stage, the stage manager or designated gun wrangler does it. If the actor fires on stage, all actors are rehearsed in its safe use, the pistol is aimed up and off stage, and the scene is rehearsed under supervision, with actors wearing ear protection. The weapon must be returned to the stage manager or designated gun wrangler immediately after use and locked away.

If shots are fired during the performance, a notice must be posted in the program and a sign placed in the lobby and at the box office. A live announcement before the production begins might also be considered.

Blank firing weapons pose two types of risk factors: one, the immediate safety and well being of cast, crew and audience, and equally critical, the potential for overreaction and panic on the part of individuals in the surrounding buildings or on campus who might hear the shot and not be aware that it is part of a production.

Disarmed weapons used as props. A production may require the use of a disarmed weapon as a stage prop. All the procedures mentioned above still apply. Additionally, someone on the staff or a qualified firearms expert needs to confirm that the weapon is

incapable of firing. For example, the bolt or firing pin from a rifle has been removed, or the barrel or receiver welded shut. In no case is the prop weapon to leave the stage area.

Edged weapons. Swords, knives, daggers, and similar weapons are to be secured by the stage manager. The weapons must be dulled down and stored in a scabbard, sheath or suitable container that protects the handler from the edge. Stage combat must be strictly supervised and rehearsed by a trained fight coach.