Welcome to the School of Theater and congratulations on being awarded a teaching assistantship! Whether you are supervising labs, conducting discussion sections, or carry the full load of instruction as the teacher of record in a course, you are a vital member of the teaching staff. We want you to know that you are very appreciated and help prepare you for the legal and professional expectations of your job. The red sections below indicate OU’s formal policy on topics that impact the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty.

**TA versus Instructor Of Record duties for SOT classes**

Grad students can serve either as Instructors of Record or Teaching Assistants to an instructor. Students work closely with appropriate faculty to define their job duties and the course material that must be covered to fit within catalog, programmatic, and NAST accreditation guidelines.

**Instructor of Record Class Duties**

Grad students serve as the primary instructor and hold final grade book responsibility for the following:

- General theater classes:
  - THAR 1710 The Theatrical Experience
- Performance area classes:
  - THAR1110 Fundamentals of Performance I
  - 1111 Fundamentals of Performance II
  - 1130 Acting Fundamentals I
  - 2130 Acting Fundamentals II
  - 2180 Voice/Speech Training
- Playwriting area classes:
  - THAR 1730 Play Analysis and Writing
  - 2510 Intro to Playwriting
- Production Design and Technology classes:
  - THAR 2390 Design Skills: Text & Concept
  - THAR 3387 Stage Make Up
  - THAR 2350 Stagecraft: Scenery
  - THAR 2360 Stagecraft: Costumes

As an instructor of record you are responsible for overseeing all aspects of the class. You will work with your faculty mentor to develop the syllabi, order textbooks and materials, deliver course instruction and arrangement for (and often execution of) tech support. Maintenance of accurate class records is critical. These include: enrollment list, dated attendance records, the syllabus, assignment descriptions, the final grade book; and the submission of all class records to the SOT office upon completion of the course.
OU Policy requires INSTRUCTORS of RECORD to:

1) Keep accurate course records
2) Support a minimum of 3 office hours a week
3) Follow OU guidelines for information that must be included on the syllabi
4) Require an exam or final project presentation on the final exam date for the class
5) Support federal equal opportunity guidelines for nondiscrimination on the basis of race, creed, disability, or political beliefs
6) Support federal guidelines for both freedom of information and protection of an individual’s privacy
7) Refrain from sexual harassment of any kind as outlined in detail in the Graduate College’s TA Handbook Section on Policies for Sexual Harassment. Pp. 15-16

THAR 1110, 1111, 1130, 2110, 2130 instructors meet with Shelly Delaney for course information and guidelines. The faculty mentor must be copied or blind-copied on all student email correspondence concerning any behavioral issues or educational failings. The faculty mentor talks with the TAs several times a quarter to discuss the progress in the classroom and to check in regarding concerns and the delivery of the syllabus as stated. Faculty member will visit and observe class when scheduling permits, and with a particular effort made for majors classes (1110, 1111, 2110). If the TA is going to be continuing to teach (the current course or another), concerns that come up in student course evaluations are discussed and monitored.

THAR 1710, 1730, and 2510 instructors meet with Erik Ramsey to develop their syllabi, discuss teaching and workshop technique, and discuss the goals and outcomes for the classes. Erik gets copied or blind-copied on all student email correspondence concerning any behavioral issues or educational failings. Erik talks with the TAs several times a quarter to discuss the progress in the classroom. For the 1730 and 2510 classes he and the instructors also discuss which students seem to be excelling and heading for application to the BFA playwriting program.

THAR 2180 instructors meet with Laura Parotti for course information and guidelines

THAR 2360 instructors meet with Kjersten Lester-Moratzka to develop course syllabi and objectives, discuss supply ordering, construction standards, grading methodologies and teaching techniques for the class.

THAR 2390 instructors meet with David Russell for course information and guidelines

THAR 3387 instructors meet with Renee Garcia to develop course syllabi and objectives, discuss supply and textbook ordering and safety issues, discuss make up standards and techniques, and discuss teaching techniques for the class.

Teaching Assistant Class Duties

Grad students serve as Teaching Assistants for the following:

- General theater classes:
  - 1710 The Theatrical Experience
  - 1730 Play Analysis & Writing
• Theater History classes:
  o THAR 2710, 2711

• Production Design and Technology classes:
  o THAR 1390 Stage Design Principles
  o 1391 Fundamentals of Scenery and Costumes
  o 1392 Fundamentals of Lighting/Sound and Management
  o 2350 Stagecraft: Scenery
  o 3319 Stagecraft: Lighting
  o 3310 Lighting Design 1
  o 3393 Vectorworks for the Theatre

• Directing class: THAR 4210 Intermediate Directing

**Teaching assistants** can be responsible for instruction and grading in lab sections of classes and can provide support for the instructor of record through help with attendance and grading records, research, audio visual tech support, and/or Blackboard site maintenance for the class. A TA may be required to attend all lecture sections of the class in addition to their other duties. Every TA needs to confer with the teacher of record on their individual duties and support expectations and develop a work contract so that the TA is clear on the duties and hourly expectations of the job.

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**THAR 1720** SOT faculty often rotate in and out of instruction of this class. TAs keep attendance records and work with instructors to develop their individual support duties.

**THAR 1391 & 1392 series** – has sections in the scene shop, electrics, costume shops and stage management

For the costume shop TA responsibilities include:

• Assist in training students in skills: hand-sewing, machine sewing, using sewing machines, sergers, industrial irons, and construction processes

• monitor students as they assist in production: assigning and keeping them on task, enforce safety protocols, demonstrate and enforce professional behavior

• Provide feedback at the end of the quarter to instructor for grading

**THAR 1710 TAs** attend all class meetings, keep attendance records and help grade papers, quizzes and tests. They maintain course materials and grade sheets on Blackboard
as needed and provide technical support for lectures.

**THAR 1730 TAs** This is a large section class. TAs must:
1. Attend all class meetings
2. Be prepared to keep grades online in Blackboard and to operate announcements and other elements of Blackboard
3. Be prepared to tutor or offer additional instruction in dramatic structure
4. Be prepared to grade papers, quizzes, and tests both by hand and scantron
5. Be prepared to lecture on any given play or theory assigned by Erik for a single class session.

**THAR 2710 series TAs** work with Angie Ahlgren, who meets with the assistants on a weekly basis to discuss the goals and strategies of their pedagogical work, as well as the logistics of course administration (grade books, blackboard, etc.). MA Theater History majors also register for a more academically rigorous course in pedagogy, THAR 690 that includes readings, written self-evaluations, etc. TA duties include:
1. Leading discussion sections (this takes ample preparation)
2. Giving a guest lecture (also requires preparation)
3. Grading quizzes, exams, research presentations and papers (includes written feedback for each student)
4. Leading exam review sessions
5. Keeping attendance records and grade spread sheets
6. Maintaining course materials and grades on Blackboard
7. Providing technical support for lectures

Estimates are that this work requires approximately 15 hours per week including:
4 Hours in class
5 Hours of reading/preparation
2 Hours of assignment grading
1 Hour of exam grading
1 Hour of administrative work
1 Hour of pedagogy meeting
1 Hour Guest lecture prep

**THAR 1390 labs** are taught by grads. While mostly unsupervised, guidelines are given by each design professor for the class assignments. TAs must be available to answer questions about projects from their lab section students and can facilitate this through posting email and mailbox contact information and office hours.

**THAR 1391 labs** are taught by PD&T technical faculty and grads in lighting, scenic technology, and costume technology. Labs are frequently unsupervised but guidelines are given by each faculty instructor of record for the assignments. TAs must be available to answer questions from their lab section students and can facilitate this through posting email and mailbox contact information and office hours.

**THAR 2350 TAs** attend and support Dan Denhart in course instruction, grading, and preparation for lectures.
THAR 3319 TAs attend and support Lowell Jacobs in course instruction, grading, and preparation for all lectures.

THAR 3310/5310 TAs teach labs related to equipment and attend classes designated by the lighting professor to help with drafting and general questions.

THAR 5393 TAs teach specific sections of Vectorworks designated by the lighting professor and at other times function as another resource to answer student questions.

**Office hour solutions for instructors without offices**

University policy requires instructors to provide office hours where students can seek one-on-one help on class issues. Unfortunately there are not enough office spaces available to student instructors in Kantner or Putnam to accommodate each instructor holding 3 private office hours each week. Our compromise on the office space problem is to require each student instructor who teaches a class or lab to:

- Post 3 office hours a week, in the syllabus and through BLACKBOARD for the class, indicating that student conferences are “by appointment only” with meetings held in a specific place in the Learning Commons of Alden Library during the posted hours;
  
  If the student requests a fully private conference, a room can be reserved in the Faculty Commons through Lorraine Wochna. If the appointment needs to be held after 5:00 the TA/Instructor will need to arrange access to the Faculty Commons through Lorraine Wochna.

- Provide a weekly sign up sheet for your students on BLACKBOARD with half hour slots during your office hours. Post the sign up sheet at the same time each week so the students will know when they can sign up. Tell the students in your class when you post the sign up sheet each week;

- After a student signs up confirm the appointment location through email;

- Meet with each student at the appointed hour and location;

- Monitor each week’s appointment slots through BLACKBOARD.

**Class record requirements for TAs and Instructors of Record**

**Syllabi & project information guidelines**

The syllabus for a class is as important an official class record as the grade sheet or the class registration list. It is seen as a kind of contract with the student, delineating the requirements of the class, the course objectives, and the basis for grading. In any grade appeal or complaint case about course load or project requirements the syllabus for a course will be examined, potentially at many levels within the university judiciary structure. A syllabus does not have to list the details of every class assignment - but written, detailed descriptions of all class assignments and their grading policies are very desirable to your students, and a significant help to you if your grading is brought into question. A listing of expected **Learning Outcomes** on each syllabus are required by university policy and the Ohio Board of Regents as a means of helping official transfer equations. See your faculty course mentor for help developing your statement of
Learning Outcomes and its relationship to the descriptions of assignments.

If you are an instructor of record: To meet catalog, programmatic, and NAST (National Association of Schools of Theater) guidelines your advisor must approve your syllabus. He/she should be able to provide sample syllabi from past offerings to help you. The Graduate College’s TA Handbook has some excellent guidelines syllabus information that should be included. (See pp. 3 and 25).

If you are a TA you will be given the syllabus for the course, but you may be personally responsible for leading lab sessions and as such provide a key source for your students. You must be prepared to answer questions involving assignments and syllabi information, and you should be fully familiar with class discussions and lecture material to do the job well. You must maintain attendance and grading records for your lab and turn them in to the instructor of record when requested. A teacher of record has the right to ask you to attend all lecture sessions, to review the required readings, and to provide support during or in preparation for the lecture class. If you wish to generate any handouts or additional project guidelines for your lab you must get approval from the instructor of record. First and second year undergraduates tend to generate many questions on grading policies so you must be particularly clear on your understanding of project objectives, requirements, and grading policies.

- Rules on duplication and distribution of syllabi

**OU/SOT policy:** As an instructor of record you are required to **distribute your syllabus on the first day of class,** as it forms a kind of contract between you and your students to let them know what you expect of them and what they can expect of you. You must also submit a copy of your syllabus and course records to the School of Theater main office. If a student wishes to protest a grade the syllabus for the course will be examined closely for the clarity of its grading policy and its relationship to your application of these practices.

As an alternative to a hard-copy syllabus you can group email your syllabi to your class through your faculty class list website that you can link to through the OU website’s Faculty/Staff link. Or you can set up a Blackboard website for your class and post information there. Blackboard information is available at: [http://www.ohio.edu/blackboard/](http://www.ohio.edu/blackboard/). Training workshop schedules are posted at that site.
• Syllabus content requirements

*For Instructors of Record:*

You can avoid many misunderstandings through a well-developed syllabus. It need not be lengthy, but should be complete.

The Faculty Handbook lists the following as requirements on your syllabus:

1. **The instructor’s name and contact information including office hours**
   The department provides grad student mailboxes on the third floor of Kantner Hall and email addresses for student contact. See page 4 “Office Hour Solutions for Instructors Without Offices.”

2. **The call number, descriptive title, and catalog number of the course**
   The course title and catalog number refer to how the course appears in the university bulletin, such as *The Theatrical Experience*, whose catalog number is THAR 1710 Section 101. The course number is a four-digit number assigned to your class, such as 3482. There may be more than one section bearing your catalog number, but only your class has the course number listed in the schedule of classes. Grading records should also include course numbers to facilitate retrieval for special grade reports (in the case of incompletes) or student grade appeals are lodged.

3. **The basis for grading in the course including a statement of expected Learning Outcomes**

4. **An exam or final project presentation set on the exam date for the class**
   Final exams may not be given at any time prior to the regularly scheduled examination time without prior approval of the dean. The same goes for final projects assigned in lieu of an exam.

5. **A statement of the instructor’s attendance policy**

6. **A statement of the penalty for academic dishonesty**

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<th>The SOT also requires:</th>
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<td>- A statement of course content, or a course outline with assignment objectives</td>
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<td>- An equal opportunity policy statement</td>
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<td>- A listing of any required materials or textbooks with approximate text fees.</td>
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On the topic of academic dishonesty the university suggests including a statement like: “Academic integrity and honesty are basic values of Ohio University. Students are expected to follow standards of academic integrity and honesty. Academic misconduct is a violation of the OU Student Code of Conduct and is subject to a maximum sanction of disciplinary suspension or expulsion as well as a grade penalty in the course.”

<table>
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<th>The OU Student Handbook defines “academic misconduct” as:</th>
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<td>Dishonesty or deception in fulfilling academic requirements. It includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, un-permitted collaboration, forged attendance (when attendance is required), fabrication (e.g., use of invented information or falsification of research or other findings), using advantages not approved by the instructor (e.g., unauthorized review of a copy of an exam ahead of time), knowingly permitting another student to plagiarize or cheat from one's work, or submitting the same assignment in different courses without consent of the instructor.</td>
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Dishonesty: Conduct covered by this offense includes but is not limited to:
Furnishing false information to the university by forgery, alteration, or misuse of
documents or records; furnishing to the university a written or oral false statement;
furnishing false identification to a university or civic official.

OU guidelines for faculty and staff posted at the University Judiciaries site on Academic
Misconduct state:
Cheating is defined as any attempt by a student to answer questions on a test, quiz,
or assignment by means other than his or her own knowledge.
Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of the ideas or the writing of someone else
as one's own.

Class lists and official enrollment policies
Instructors and TAs are expected to keep accurate class enrollment and attendance
records for 2 reasons:

1. As a double check on accurate registration. Within the SOT we have had rare
occasions where students attended and did all the work for a class but were never
officially registered and could not receive a grade for their work. You must check
ggrading records against class enrollment records to make sure all the students are
officially registered for the class. Class list updates are distributed through your
email from the registrar’s office. If you have questions about whether a particular
student is enrolled in your class, call the registrar’s office at 593-4191 after you
have checked the registrar’s website listing.

2. To support accurate grading records, add/drop procedures, class withdrawal
procedures, grade appeal procedures, and information requests the university
makes in tracking student progress of veterans and academically at risk students.

- Add/Drop policies
  If your class is full:
  If you are teaching a very popular course, or one required for graduation, you may
face a number of students who want to take the course after it has filled. There can be
great desperation in their pleas; and in fact the individual might be a great addition to the
class.

  You have 2 alternatives: let them in if you/the instructor of record can handle the
overload (the instructor of record must have final approval in such a case); or if a student
who has officially registered for the class has not come to the first class meeting you can
officially drop them from the class and accept the student who wants entry. The Graduate
College’s TA Handbook states:

Once a student has missed the first two hours of class, he/she can be dropped from the
course. If your course meets for an hour, this will be after the second class session. If it
meets for 2 hours or longer, this will be after the first class session. The dropped student
is officially responsible for processing the drop slip. You simply have the right to deny
the student permission to continue to attend the class.

  SOT policy requires you to email any student you drop from a course for this
reason within the first week of classes; and make a record of your notification to be
turned in with your grade book to the SOT office at the end of the quarter.
Many students do not understand their paperwork responsibilities if they have been dropped from a class this way and your email should state the reason the student must drop the class and his/her responsibility for processing the drop slip.

**If your class is not full:**

Students can officially add your class during the first 14 days of the quarter. To add or drop a class officially a student must use TRIPS and must have your signature on an Add/Drop slip that they will take to the registrar.

As an instructor you must provide the opportunity for the latecomer who adds the class to make up the course work they have missed, but if the projects are extremely difficult to accomplish after a certain point in the first 2 weeks (e.g. a collaborative project involving other students) you can arrange to have a “block” placed on registration through TRIPS which would require the student to obtain a signed permission slip from you to finish registration.

Students who wish to enter the class but have not taken the prerequisites must obtain a class permission slip from you to register for the class.

**Drop procedures.**

A student can drop a class through the fifth week of the quarter, but after the 13th day of the quarter the instructor will be required to assign a progress grade (WP withdraw passing or WF withdraw failing).

In exceptional circumstances a student can petition the dean to drop a class after the 5th week.

- **Processing dropouts**

To officially drop a class a student needs to go through Add/Drop processing with the Registrars office. (Discussed above) On occasion students disappear and fail to go through the administrative hoops. On your grade sheet you might find some mystery names you do not (or barely) recognize and you must officially assign these class dropouts a grade of FN (failure, never attended) or FS (failure, stopped attending) on the final grade sheet for the quarter. A FS grade must also indicate the date on which the student stopped attending; therefore you must keep a daily record of class attendance for all of your students to be able to provide this information.

**Grading Record Requirements**

- **OU rules on grading attendance**

You are required to announce your attendance policy the first day of class by including it on the syllabus. You are not required to have attendance count as part of the grade for the class, but many SOT classes do so. You should define what “excused” absences are allowed in your class following the OU guidelines listed in the next section and you should provide grading and make up work policies for excused and unexcused absences. As an instructor you are allowed to establish a policy of lowering grades for excessive absences (e.g. 3 absences: 1/3 of the grade, 4 absences: a full grade, 5 or more: course failure).
• Make up work for absentees
The Faculty Handbook states:

Students returning to a class after a legitimate absence can expect their instructor's assistance within the limits of the instructor's established attendance policy. In cases of legitimate absence-such as illness, death in the immediate family, religious observance, jury duty, involvement in University-sponsored activities-some accommodation (makeup work, excused absences, change of grade computation) will be arranged subject to previously announced limitations. There are occasions where the size or nature of the course makes it necessary to set limits on the number of excused absences or the availability of makeup work, particularly for exams or special events such as field trips or outside speakers. Such limitations will be explained in the instructor's statement of attendance policy at the beginning of each course. Students with scheduled activities must check with the instructor as early as possible to clarify that there will be no conflict with the policy.

Student instructors should discuss make up project options and ideas with their faculty class mentor.

• Official policy on granting incompletes

The grade of I stands for incomplete, and should be given only in cases where emergencies prevent the student from completing the course. For example: serious illness or death in the immediate family. Students have until the sixth week of the subsequent quarter to complete the work for a course, although you may want to work out an earlier deadline when you agree to assign an I. The grade automatically turns into an F if a new grade isn’t turned in by the sixth week. Note: Grades of I assigned in spring quarter may be completed by the sixth week of fall quarter.

If you refuse to grant the student an incomplete he/she may take his/her appeal on to the chair, and then to the dean. If the dean thinks there are sufficient grounds for the appeal he will appoint a five-member faculty committee (including the Director of the SOT) to examine the case. This committee can authorize the registrar to change the grade if they rule in the student’s favor.

If the student is granted an incomplete and submits the work by the sixth week deadline of the following quarter (the specific date is listed on the OU Academic calendar website) you must then grade the project, calculate the grade, fill out and turn in a Special Grade Report form to Barbara in the SOT office by 5pm of the incomplete deadline date for that quarter, or make special arrangements for the class mentor to turn in the grade for you.

It is not unusual for students to take up until the last moment to turn in their work by the deadline so you may want to prepare for the event by filling in most of the information on the form in advance to facilitate quick submission. As an instructor if you miss the grade submission deadline after the student has turned in the work you will cause both the student and the registrar a great many problems changing the automatic F to the correct letter grade - the student could lose scholarship funding through such negligence.
• **Grade record requirements for TAs and Instructors of Record**

The Faculty Handbook requires you to retain grades, tests and assignments as well as any other material you use in determining students’ grades for at least one academic quarter (or until the end of the fall quarter following spring quarter classes).

The reason for this policy is that the retention of the materials gives you the greatest legal coverage if a student brings a complaint against your grading policy or an academic misconduct case is raised. In practice many faculty run the risk of legal vulnerability by returning class projects or papers during the quarter of instruction.

For student instructors the School of Theater chooses to retain all official class records (the enrollment list, attendance records, syllabus, grade book, and any descriptions of class projects given to class members) in the theater office at the end of each quarter.

If you leave Ohio University for any reason (like an illness or internship), you must leave student records with the chair of your department.

One reason for this is that any incomplete grades or grade challenges that must be dealt with in your absence require your grade records.

• **Grade challenge issues and grade changing policies**

Assignments that require a subjective element for their grading may lead some students to ask you to explain why you gave a C to what was clearly a brilliant paper/performance/design worthy of a Pulitzer Prize/Tony award. The receiver of an A versus an A can even be sharply critical of your grading policies. Students are very concerned about understanding the exact criteria you will employ in grading their work. You may ease their concerns by clearly stating your expectations, and the learning objectives, with each assignment you make. A subjective grade on an assignment is vulnerable to criticism, but unavoidable in many classes.

In general we have found that we get fewer questions when we attach comments to the papers or projects when we return them or **provide a rubric/grading breakdown** that gives numeric or letter grades to multiple factors. When you are conducting a class with multiple projects which require subjective judgments (e.g. first acting or design assignments) providing a grading rubric also helps you as a teacher keep centered on each progressive assignment’s objectives and priorities. Very large classes exacerbate the problem of subjective grading even further; so a grading rubric can be a good friend in any class over 20.

At the end of the quarter your responsibility is to turn in the most accurate grade you can for each student. If a student later challenges the grade and you wish to change it you could face difficulties with the registrar’s office.

The official policy on changing the final letter grade for a course is that an instructor cannot change the grade (except for an Incomplete) unless a calculation error was made in its determination.

If you have made an error, the departmental secretary can give you a Change of Grade form. Fill in the required information and send the form to the Office of Student Records in Chubb Hall. You will be required to explain the reason for the change of grade on the form itself. If your reason is not acceptable, the registrar’s office will deny the change request. It is not acceptable for you to change a grade because a student convinces you dire things will happen if you don’t (such as loss of a scholarship, getting dropped from
Grade appeal processes.
Any student who feels strongly that their grade is unfair may appeal for a change of grade. Class records and student projects should be used to provide proof of the validity of the grade.

The official appeal mechanism is similar to the process for a student petitioning for an incomplete:
1) A complaint to the instructor.
2) An appeal to the Director of the School.
3) An appeal to the dean.
If the dean thinks there is no reason to pursue the matter further, that is the end of the appeal. If he judges that the student has official grounds for the appeal he’ll appoint a five-member faculty committee (including the Director of the SOT) to look into it. If they judge in favor of the student they can authorize the registrar to change the grade.

Cheating and plagiarism.
Both are legitimate reasons for failure on a project or a class and can be grounds for expulsion from the university. Cheating has cropped up in the school of theater before including falsifying Practicum work records, technical projects for classes that were built by moms, design projects that were done by buddies, to name only a few of the incidents that were clumsy and easy to spot. Suspicion of cheating is not sufficient grounds to raise a formal complaint. You need proof and direct observation if possible. You must be very careful not to make accusations of cheating unless you are absolutely sure of the facts and can build a very strong case. To avoid issues of libel you must be very discreet. Discuss the incident with the class’s faculty mentor and the Director of the School. Do not discuss it with other students or other faculty.

The official definition of academic dishonesty can be found in the OU Student Handbook:

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: permitting another student to plagiarize or cheat from your work, submitting an academic exercise (written work, printing, sculpture, computer program) that has been prepared totally or in part by another, acquiring improper knowledge of the contents of an exam, using unauthorized material during an exam, submitting the same paper in two different courses without knowledge and consent of professors, or submitting a forged grade change slip.

Direct observation of cheating during an examination is a much simpler case than questionable papers, tech projects, or design class submissions from students who have been missing class a lot. The official stance is: if you think the student has turned in another’s work, make no accusation until you can document the plagiarism. You can ask the student to meet you during your office hours to privately (or witnessed by the class’s faculty mentor) test their ability to paraphrase test questions or the key points of a paper or prove technical or drawing skills; but even in these cases you must be very careful in your discussion of why you are asking the student for more proof of their work - you must have a legitimate reason to question the change in their class performance.
If you plan to fail the student in the project or the course, or refer them to disciplinary measures (referral to judiciaries in cases that can lead to expulsion) you must confront the student with your suspicions and intended action shortly after the incident. Failure to intervene or give proper notice at the first sign of cheating could limit your options to do something about the cheating later on.

Supporting documentation for your case should include a written statement from the instructor who observed the incident (or received the project), an account of the steps taken to resolve the incident, any crib notes, tests, reports, or projects involved in the case; and written statements by the accused student and any witnesses (including the name, address, and telephone numbers).

Discuss any potential report of cheating with the course director or Director of the School; then call the Office of University Judiciaries, 593-2626, for further advice. There is valuable detailed advice in Appendix B of the Graduate College’s TA Handbook pp. 30-33 on various, and in some cases ingenious, ways to discourage cheating and promote honesty in class activities, procedures for faculty to follow when misconduct is suspected, and the procedures followed in the judiciary process for academic dishonesty cases.

**OU and SOT Policies for Issues On Course Instruction**

These policies focus on protecting the student, facilitating communication, and protecting you from student misunderstanding or complaints.

- **Missing a class as an instructor**

  If you are a TA, notify the instructor of record. If you are an instructor of record, notify the faculty class mentor or department chair. If you can anticipate your absence, discuss possible arrangements for a substitute or alternative activity.

- **Changing the Time/Place of a Class**

  Such changes require approval of the department chair and/or course director. If you wish to move the class temporarily to a new space for a particular project, field trip, or required event you must make arrangements to reserve the new space and post information to all class members on the new arrangements. If the event involves a different class meeting time you must provide make-up assignments for students with time conflicts. Classroom/rehearsal space in all SOT spaces is limited. You must reserve space with Barbara Fiocchi. Note that undergrads have many class commitments outside of the School of Theater. It can be a logistical nightmare to find a alternate time when all can meet.

  Moving the meeting time or location of your class permanently is very problematic and requires the approval of the department chair, a new course number issued by the registrar’s office, and the re-registration of every student in the class. Early morning classes are particularly prone to attempts to diminish or switch meeting times. Some instructors have been known to try to circumvent the official class change process by taking a vote on alternate time arrangements in the first class session. There are two problems with this:

  1) Shortening a class means that the student is not getting the promised instructional value for the cost of the class they’ve paid for.

  2) Unless the vote is a unanimous secret ballot vote it is a form of intimidation for the
student who may have schedule conflicts or prefer to keep the class where it has been officially scheduled.
The meeting time and place of the class is part of the official contract with the student. It indicates when and where the valuable instruction will take place.

• **The student’s right to privacy: Grade sharing issues**
  Many of our classes conduct public critique of the students’ performance as a means of instruction. This is a valid form of instruction but should be explained in the syllabus as part of the instructional methodology of the class. Public presentations, artwork critiques, and oral reports can be a very emotional issue for some students. They should know up front what kind of performance will be expected in the class and how the work will be critiqued.
  Revealing a student’s grade to other class members, or to their own parents, can subject them to criticism by others and is seen as an invasion of their privacy.

  Posting grades publicly is valid but anonymity must be preserved by using only the student’s OU ID number on the form.
  Federal regulations do not allow an instructor to reveal a student’s grade to others including family members.

• **Deportment issues**
  OU policy for conduct required to support federal guidelines for harassment involving Equal Opportunity and behavior that equivocates Sexual Harassment states:

No male or female member of the Ohio University community, including faculty, contract staff, classified staff and students, may harass any other member of the community… Ohio University is committed to maintaining an environment in which every individual can work, study and live without being harassed. Harassment may lead to sanctions up to and including termination of employment or student status.
  Harassment is defined as any conduct that has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s or group’s educational, living or work environment. Harassment includes conduct relating to race, color, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin or veteran status. In addition, sexual harassment includes unwanted advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including:
  1. When submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or of a student’s status in a course, program, or activity.
  2. When submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting the individual.
  3. When such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual’s work, performance, or educational experience.
  4. When such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for work or learning.
Nonsexual verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility toward another because of the person’s gender can be the basis for a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment claim.
Gender-based conduct can take the form of abusive written or graphic material; epiteths;
sexist slurs; negative stereotyping; jokes; or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts.

OU has a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to harassment. Student complaints require reporting procedures to the proper authorized representatives. OU policy states:

Any grad instructor, faculty or staff member who is not authorized but is approached about concerns or complaints regarding harassment must direct the complaint to an authorized employee. A list of authorized employees is available from the Office for Institutional Equity and the Office of Legal Affairs.

Harassment complaint procedures and enforcement policies are explicitly detailed in the Grad College’s TA Handbook pp.15-16

• Establishing appropriate and constructive boundaries with students
The university wants us to care for our students and to connect with them, but they want us to keep the relationship within proper professional boundaries. In the School of Theater those boundaries concern these factors:

1. Intellectual duties vs. emotional support
Your intellectual duties as a teacher are more important to your students' growth and welfare than the emotional support you can provide as a friend. Your primary duties are:
   A) To help students to think and grow intellectually.
   B) To stimulate them with new ideas.
   C) To give them guidance on the profession they wish to enter.
   D) To help them attain standards and craftsmanship that meets professional standards.

When you are teaching beginners you provide a window on the standards and practices of a profession that they have never experienced before. You are an ambassador for the field and therefore provide a new and valuable perspective on field practices.

2. Caring vs. Confidante behavior
You are not parents or buddies for your students. You should not try to provide the emotional support that these connections provide for them.

Students need emotional distance from their teachers, in part to help them synthesize and observe the value of your instruction. They need the room to accept or reject your ideas without the baggage of emotional connections that they may observe or experience through contact with you.

As a teacher you also need emotional separation from your students so you can accurately observe and assess their achievements.

In this era of electronic social networking it is too easy to cross boundaries and cause misunderstandings through Facebook, Twitter, texting and other digital outlets.

A friendly written message can be misinterpreted to imply flirtation; a quick note may seem curt or abrupt; all caps can feel like shouting. The context of communicating through a social network vs. email or Blackboard sets a different tone to the student-teacher professional relationship and can open up a world of misinterpretation. Non-professional conduct is to be avoided under all circumstances including in cell phone conversations. Any conversations should exclusively focus on class work issues.
A social network can be a way to stay in touch with former students. It is School of Theater’s policy that while a student is a member of your class it is not appropriate to contact or converse with students through a digital social network site. All digital communication should be through email or on Blackboard.

The School of theater advises all instructors to maintain a level of professionalism in these communications. Please remember that by mandated “sunshine laws” email and other forms of written communication provide records of your interactions with students. The SOT believes these written interactions should reflect your professional engagement with the subject and the student.

If you are invited to join a student’s site through a social network while he/she is in your class you should decline the invitation. If you have already accepted an invitation from a student before the class begins you should send a message to him/her indicating that by SOT policy you will not be able to communicate with him/her using that social network for the period of time in which he/she is a member of your class.

- **Behavior that provokes student criticism**
  Students formally review their teachers at the end of each quarter judging the teacher’s performance vis-à-vis clarity, organization and preparation.
  The Graduate College’s TA Handbook states that the following behaviors provoke student criticism:
  1) Defensiveness on course matters, particularly grading
  2) Missing appointments and office hours
  3) Changing the date for final exams, even thru a class “vote”
  4) Vague standards of grading
  5) Disorganization in the classroom
  6) Denigration or abuse of the course evaluation process

The SOT also believes that personal politics or religious beliefs should not be imposed on the classroom.

- **Teaching style issues that inhibit learning**
  Teaching methodologies, which can help you, find a route to your teaching style are discussed in the Graduate College’s TA Handbook on pp. 17-20. It takes awhile to hit your stride as a teacher and find out what really works in the classroom environment. A syllabus gives a sense of the arc of information and skills building that will be explored in the classroom. The day to day work of delivering the information and creating a learning environment is closely tied to the style and methods used by the instructor. Work with your faculty mentor to explore different ways to deliver the information if you feel students are not achieving good quality in their work.

  Humor, energy, and passion are very powerful teaching tools when combined with your ability to get concepts and standards clarified for your students. Students will forgive many teacher fallibilities if the teacher can truly help them learn and grow. But some behaviors that can crop up in a classroom or in private teacher-student conferences
can offend, alienate, or worse, threaten or embarrass students. The trust needed in the student-teacher relationship then becomes threatened; respect that is needed can be lost.

As a professional you need to provide a safe zone for your students where the focus is learning, not entertainment; where anger and frustration do not become personal weapons to score points off the students; where the style of the lecture does not alienate the audience. It is a professional challenge to mask or diffuse frustration and negative emotions when job pressures are high or illness or exhaustion impose. It is a challenge to remain emotionally detached when confronted by belligerent or defensive students. It is a challenge to resist sarcasm when confronted by selfish or stupid behaviors that can waste your time.

Teaching college-age students is wonderfully liberating in many ways because most are open and hungry to learn; but it also comes with the age group that they are often narrow in focus and variable in maturity. You are there to catch their interest and broaden their outlook. Less mature students test authority boundaries and rules; more mature students judge the information you offer and your performance. Both can be a tough audience. Energy spent on communicating well is a lot more fun than policing the rules or cleaning up - but all of these elements come with the job and must be handled with as much grace as you can muster.

Classroom behaviors that can inhibit learning include:

**Arrogance and monomania** - confusing “authority” with “power”
- Falling in love with your own voice and aesthetic.
- You need to leave room for the student’s needs and interests in your teaching.

**Cynicism** – a little sarcasm goes a long way
- Humorous negative criticism can be clever and delicious to devise and popular with an audience, but it can also embarrass or humiliate the student.
- You must function as an ambassador for the program and create a positive environment for learning. Constructive criticism, impersonal critique, and positive reinforcement are more successful teaching methodologies than the easy humor of sarcasm.

**Damaging criticism** - Humiliation of the student
- Such behavior is considered out of control and unacceptable in a public forum to the School of Theater. In a private meeting criticism that deliberately humiliates the student is also unacceptable. We realize that finding a means to delivering difficult or harsh criticism without embarrassing a student can be a challenge, but there is an important distinction to be made between criticism that a student could find embarrassing by their personal standards and criticism that is deliberately humiliating. Deliberately humiliating a student in the classroom causes discomfort in the whole audience. Style dominates over content in these instances – how the teacher is criticizing leaves a stronger impression than what he/she is saying. Deliberately humiliating a student in a private conference can be equally damaging and reveals the immaturity of the teacher more than it makes an effective teaching tool.
- As teachers we have many difficult things we may need to say to our students to help them understand the standards and practices of the field. Criticism is not easy to hear and can feel deeply personal to a student who has difficulties separating criticism of their performance with a personal attack on their standards and values. It is a teaching challenge to find a way for the student to see the validity of your criticism and their own routes to a better performance. There are a number of good tips on...
turning criticism into constructive criticism in the Graduate College’s TA Handbook on p. 27 and there is good advice on ways to assess your students’ understanding of course material on p. 26.

Unprofessional behavior

**Anger**

Anger does not win arguments; it does the opposite. Logic wins arguments.

**Bad language**

Swearing is so common in popular entertainment that we can take for granted that it is not strongly offensive. In fact it can be very offensive to some. Students and parents have the right to object to bad language in the classroom. As a public servant you need to honor your audience’s right to object to the use of offensive language.

**Gossip/criticizing students or other faculty members**

Gossiping or criticizing another student’s behavior in a public or private setting with a student is perceived by students as a violation of the privacy of the student-teacher relationship. If however, the student has come to you to report behavioral problems of another class member that are impacting a collaborative project you can provide guidance for collaboration alternatives or solutions for grading and project alternatives to allay their grading fears. Teaching students to collaborate in a positive manner and to navigate the stumbling blocks in work collaborations to a positive effect is a vital part of training for the theater.

Gossiping or criticizing fellow grad teaching associates or the instructor of record for the class in a public or private setting with a student is considered inappropriate and unprofessional.

### Classroom Support

**Support for student tutoring and learning problems**

Students who are struggling with your class work may be having difficulties with reading, writing, research, math, research or computer skills for which the university can provide consultation and tutoring support.

As a teacher you can suggest privately to a student that based on your observation of X classroom behavior or Y assignment difficulty that the student may wish to seek tutoring support or study habit advising through any of the offices listed below. But legally you cannot imply or treat the student as if you assume the student has a learning disability. Students with learning disabilities are not required to share this information with you and legal policy guidelines established by the Disability office within Institutional Equity dictate that **you may not ask a student if he/she has a disability or directly tell a student that you suspect that he/she may have a learning disability.** Only a licensed professional can do that.

**Alden Library**

Lorraine Wochna provides workshops on research processes using ALICE, OHIO LINK and Internet resources.

**AAC, the Academic Advancement Center (part of University College)**

Provides tutoring, study skill consulting, and a computer-learning lab. Also offers courses or tutoring in speed reading, learning strategies (note taking, time management, test prep), basic computing skills (Office, Internet research, multimedia software) and writing and math skills through the following areas:
The Computer Learning Lab (part of AAC)
Offering one on one tutoring and classes in computer literacy and general information on technology developments. [www.ohiou.edu/aac/lab](http://www.ohiou.edu/aac/lab).

**CAP (College Adjustment Program)** – For CAP eligible students only:
Provides intensive support for students in these categories:
1) On probation
2) Low ACT or SAT scores
3) Low high school GPA
4) Economically disadvantaged students from low-income families
5) First generation college student
6) Documented disability and are US citizens

Courses are available in academic, reading and computing skills; advising, individual tutoring and instructional computer lab.

**SWC Student Writing Center** – student tutoring in writing skills

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**Support for classroom behavioral or physical problems and crises**
The Graduate College’s TA Handbook pp. 33-36 lists a quick reference guide for support sources available for guidance on a variety of behavioral or physical student problems and crises including:

- OUPD 593 1911 for disruptive behavioral crises and dangerous situations
- Medical/fire/police emergency – 911
- Medical problems: Campus Care 593-1660
- Counseling and Psychological Services, Campus Care 593-1616
- Legal advice:
  - Student Legal Services 594-8093
  - Office of Community Standards and Student Responsibility 593-2629
- Harassment issues – faculty mentor of the class, Director of the School
- Institutional Equity 593-9132
- Legal Affairs 593-2626

The SOT has many different kinds of student projects where a student’s physical agility, strength, and stamina are tested; there is also coursework that can tap and trigger student emotions. **Handicapped students and students with registered physical disabilities or learning disabilities legally require additional support and accommodation for their limitations.** The Disability office within the Institutional Equity department can give you guidelines for adjustments you may need to make on class assignments. A student with a disability is not required to tell you their condition and you cannot ask a student if they have a disability; but the Disability office will notify faculty of a student’s registered disability if the student has given them permission to do so.

You may want to offer advice on support that is available on campus for students exhibiting physical distress or troubling behaviors. You must be cautious in your assumptions of what is causing the behavior; health problems and medications can cause effects that can be mistaken for substance abuse. Students’ emotional crises can present a broad range of physical symptoms easily mistaken for health problems.

**There are clear university guidelines for crises involving a student who:**
1) Collapses or is injured during the class
2) Appears to have an emotional breakdown
3) Exhibits disruptive or threatening behavior

The Graduate College’s TA Handbook describes procedures for dealing with disruptive or threatening student behavior on pp. 37-38. It also provides contact numbers for health emergencies and crisis intervention. University guidelines on procedures for responding to harassment problems, either as a recipient or as an advisor to an affected student are also clearly laid out in the Graduate College’s TA Handbook.

**Options for a student who is feeling ill:**
1) Send them home
2) Take them to Campus Care in Hudson Hall
3) Have them taken to the Emergency Room at O’Blenness Hospital

Get advice from Campus Care if you are not sure which course to take. The head of nursing at Campus Care advises if a student has fainted, fallen or passed out try to raise the feet to help blood rush back to the head and allow them to slowly come back to consciousness. Do not douse the student with water or provide a sugary drink or edible. If the student has neck pain upon re-awakening or if they remain unconscious, do not move them and contact Campus Care or call for an ambulance.

If an injury happens you must be cautious of the type of first aid you can provide unless you have had formal first aid training. Hydrogen peroxide and a pressure bandage can be applied to cuts or cold packs can be applied to sprains. First aid kits are available in each shop and the stage management office.

- **For students with behavioral problems** affecting their work but not causing disruption or danger in the classroom, privately share your observation and suggest that the student discuss the problem with a valued friend or advisor or get professional advice.
- **For self-destructive behavior** get guidance from Campus Care counselors and/or University Judiciaries before giving any advice to the individual.
- **For behavior endangering other students** contact the OU Police.

**Teacher Training support**

- **Alden Library** – Lorraine Wochna can provide tours for students and orientation to library research processes and reserve guidelines. Alden can also provide alternate meeting spaces for some class sessions.
- **BLACKBOARD** training is provided through the Office for Information Technology (OIT). Workshops, self-guided tutorials through the website, some one-on-one tutorial support.
- **Microsoft Office** training is available through the Academic Advancement Center’s Computer lab.
- **Center for Academic Technology** citl@ohio.edu and www.citl.ohiou.edu
  With the Center for Teaching and Learning & the Center for Writing Excellence co-sponsors the Academic Technology Studio where program training, web services, Digital Media Services & the Laptop Loan Program are based. See their website for the specific program training and services.
- **Center for Writing Excellence** (CWE) works with faculty and TAs to integrate writing into course curricula. It provides workshops, seminars, consultations, and student tutoring at the **Student Writing Center** (SWC).
• **Center for Teaching and Learning** (CTL) provides workshops for faculty and TAs on teaching topics like developing teaching portfolios, assessment techniques, presentation styles, syllabus construction, discussion strategies, etc. www.ohio.edu/ctl

**Audio/Video/Photo support options**

SOT “smart classrooms” with AV carts that support projection from a laptop, DVD/VCR players, CD disks, and Internet links are located in:
- Kantner 044, 108 and the Putnam 204 design studio.
- Rolling carts with a television monitor and VCR/DVD player are available in Putnam (through Laura Parotti) and in Kantner through Barb Fiocchi or Lowell Jacobs.
- The Baker Theater has a digital projector and computer for presentations, but it can be slow and fussy to work with. Contact Lowell Jacobs if you need it.
- Digital projectors, slide projectors, camcorders & audiovisual equipment are available at the Aesthetics Technology Lab, and through OIT.
- Films, videocassettes and DVDs are available through the Alden & SOM Media Libraries and the Telecommunications Center in RTV

**Creation of slides, video cassettes, DVDs and CD-ROMS** are available through Media Production 3-2673 and the Telecommunications Center in RTV see tcom.ohiou.edu/edutv

Scanning services, video-streaming services, filming services, Skye services are Available through:

**Classroom Supplies**

• **Printing services**
  
  Typing services are not available but you may use the school’s Xerox machine in the basement. Obtain copy codes and instructions from Barbara Fiocchi. Using the SOT Xerox machine as a means of supplying multiple course readings is not encouraged because it is costly to the department supply and Xerox machine maintenance budget. You can create a packet of readings or research material for your class and have Kinko’s provide copies of your packet (if there is no material that infringes on copyrights) or have the class make their own copies of your packet at Kinko’s (if there is copyrighted material in the packet.) Arrangements with Kinko’s should be made in advance of the first day of class if possible.

  Alternatively, if your class materials are extensive, you may scan them and post them to your course Blackboard site.

  The playwright’s office in RTV has its own laser printer but ink and paper are supplied by the playwriting students.

  The Kantner photo office can provide color printer and scanning services and disks of production archive photos for modest fees.

  The Aesthetics Technology Lab, Kantner 44 and the TD office in the scene shop have plotters for printing technical drawings and oversize photos.

• **Blackboard & Dry Erase boards & supplies**
  
  Blackboards available in:
  - Kantner 044, the Baker and Forum Theaters
  - Kantner 044, the Baker and Forum Theaters
Putnam 202 and 204 classrooms have rolling blackboards, 204 has a dry erase board as well.

Kantner 108 has a dry erase board.

Chalk, erasers, dry-erase markers and eraser are available through Barb Fiocchi

- **Acting class supplies – mats, props, costumes**
  306 is considered a movement classroom and as such it is supplied with mats and chairs but does not support the use of props or costumes.
  Kantner 203 and 308 are acting/directing classrooms with cubes for scene work and storage closets for hand props and costume pieces
  Props or costumes are not supplied for undergrad classes.

**Design and technology class supplies**

Kantner 44 has swatch and magazine collections and limited model making equipment open for student usage

Putnam 204 has drafting equipment

The Aesthetics Technology lab has a Mac classroom and Mac/IBM lab
  Space both of which have digital projection capability

The costume shop, prop shop, and scene shop are all teaching classrooms providing equipment and supported by class fees for class consumable supplies.

- **Makeup class supplies** are stored in the make up room and in the Laundry room of the costume craft shop

- **Playwriting class supplies** – a laser printer is available through the Playwriting Office in the basement of the RTV building.

**Textbook and course material options and ordering procedures**

Some SOT classes use textbooks, some use packets of readings, and some use kits of supplies. Textbooks are usually ordered through one or all of the bookstores (very small classes usually order the texts from one source), please note that new regulations require all textbooks to be posted on the registrar’s website for students. Reading packets can be set up through Kinko’s (but you are urged to post your reading materials on Blackboard.) Art supplies can be ordered through the College Book Store. Make-up kits can be ordered through Specialty Books.

There is an official policy you must follow as an instructor of record for textbook and supply ordering procedures that informs the class schedule listings of text and supply requirements and relative costs for each class.

Books, art materials, and kits can be ordered through one or all of these sources simultaneously: Follett’s University Bookstore, College Book Store and Little Professor. (Large book or supply orders should be broken up through the three large bookstores.) Materials should be ordered by the mid-term before the class starts to assure that materials will be available on the first day of class.

The departmental office may have a copy of the textbook for your class. If not, they can help get one for you from the publisher at no charge. In the meantime you can buy a copy from one of the bookstores and then return it when the publisher sends a desk copy
to you. Explain to the bookstore manager what you are doing, and the manager will probably be cooperative.

If you are the only person teaching the course, you may be able to change or add textbooks or require new supplies to be purchased for the class but there are several factors that impact if or when you can add or change a text:

1. You cannot change texts if you are one among several persons offering the course.
2. Usually textbook or supply orders through bookstores have to be placed far in advance of the quarter’s beginning date, so late changes cannot be supported by the local bookstores.
3. Any textbook, packet, or supply requirement changes for a course need the approval of the faculty course mentor.