

THEATRE HANDBOOK



| CHICO STATE THEATRE

| 2024-25

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



We acknowledge and are mindful that Chico State stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people of this area, the Mechoopda, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land, the flora, the fauna, and the waters that run through campus. We are humbled that our campus resides upon sacred lands that since time immemorial have sustained the Mechoopda people and continue to do so today.

WELCOME

Welcome to the CSU Chico Department of Music, Theatre, and Dance. This handbook will provide you with an overview of the department, its various subject areas, and common procedures and policies that will impact your time at CSU Chico. Updated regularly, the handbook reflects any changes in our faculty, degree programs, and performance opportunities.

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MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

The mission of the Musical Theatre and Theatre programs at California State University, Chico is to provide students with an anti-racist, inclusive and balanced undergraduate education in the practice, theory, and history of theatre. Chico State Theatre is committed to excellence in instruction and artistic example in all arenas of contact with students. Our mission is to be student-centered, to empower students to take charge of their own artistry and advocate for themselves, and to inspire students to embrace the growth-mindset to fall in love with the work and not the result.

The focus of our mission is aimed at four pillars: Liberal Arts Education, Professional Training, Student's Individual Growth, and Equity and Inclusion.

LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

Teaching is the central task of the programs. The faculty believes that study and practical involvement in theatre promotes and achieves the goals of a well-rounded liberal arts education, foremost among which are the abilities to reason clearly, imagine creatively, and express oneself effectively. The department seeks to cultivate in all students who pass through its doors a measure of the artistic, intellectual, and interpersonal skills that can broaden their horizons, sharpen their perceptions, and add grace to their interactions.

INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

The faculty recognizes that each student is unique and in possession of individual gifts and aspirations. Thus, the department is committed to help all majors and minors gain a clear perspective of their life and career goals, and to focus their energies and time at Chico State toward the most personally productive and fulfilling use of a theatre education. The Theatre and Musical Theatre faculty believe in a student-centered approach to teaching, and strive to nurture and unlock each student's individual goals and potential.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

In addition to offering a strong liberal arts education, the Chico State Theatre is committed to providing students with the tools and resources to pursue the professional career of their choosing. What students choose to do with that training is up to them, as the program does not have one cookie-cutter measure of success. While professional training includes mentorship, advanced courses to refine skills, and a laboratory to apply learning; it also contains the lesson that artists are only accountable to themselves.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Chico State Theatre is committed to creating and fostering an environment that is inclusive and equitable. We welcome all skill levels, disabilities, races, gender-identities, religions, body types, and sexualities in our community. Furthermore, we are committed to encouraging allyship, and creating a brave space for members of these groups. An example of this is the THEA 180- Social Justice for Theatre course, which is required for all theatre and musical theatre majors. The curriculum of this course provides students with language to communicate effectively. This focus on Equity and Inclusion is ongoing and evolving, and that commitment is unwavering. Faculty members have voluntarily participated in Equity and Inclusion trainings with such organizations as: Arts in Color, Anti-Racist Theatre, Theatrical Intimacy Educators, and Musical Theatre Educators' Alliance. Similarly, curriculum will continue to be updated to reflect our progress and growth.



CODE OF CONDUCT

Theatre is a unique and powerful art form that requires exposing one's essence while fearlessly taking risks and working in close **collaboration with others**. This intimate working environment requires a shared **respect and trust amongst peers**, and Chico State Theatre expects students to interact with one another in a way that fosters a **positive working environment** and community in which students can learn, grow, and thrive.

By participating in a Chico State Theatre major, course and/or production, students commit to supporting their class/castmates in a **positive manner**, and not engaging in gossip or negative behavior that could lead to others feeling unsafe in the class/rehearsal room. This commitment to maintaining a positive atmosphere extends beyond campus activities and includes life off-campus and online. Students are encouraged to hold one another accountable, and be proactive about "calling people in" and stopping destructive behavior.

Students commit to **respecting peers** who are working in leadership roles, and to avoiding blame when things go wrong. Instead, shifting focus to fixing the issue at hand, and then focusing on how to improve in the future is a healthier and more productive approach.

Likewise, Chico State Theatre faculty commits to **supporting student learning** by working to create a safe/brave space for its students and their voices. The faculty commits to creating opportunities for students to be heard, while maintaining respectful interactions that honor students' boundaries and identities.

The faculty acknowledges that **intention does not always equal impact**, and commits to repairing harm when it is caused.

By participating in a Chico State Theatre major, course, and/or production, students commit to **being prepared, working hard, and prioritizing their physical and emotional health**. This includes but is not limited to being ready to work at the given time, respecting all of the spaces we work in, checking school email at least once a day, and practicing self-care of all forms. Students also **commit to curiosity and growth**, by listening to understand not just to respond.

Likewise, Chico State Theatre faculty commits to providing students with a list of resources to facilitate student **wellbeing and safety**. The faculty recognizes their own unique privilege and how it affects the space, and is committed to **listening to understand, not just to respond**.

Additionally, with the department mainstage productions, the Chico State Theatre faculty commits to creating a real-life laboratory for students to apply the techniques that they are learning in the classroom. While a quality show/production is a byproduct, **student learning is the centerpiece of our productions**.

Finally, students and the **Chico State Theatre faculty commit to each other to always do their absolute best, to trust that one another are operating in good faith, and to be true collaborators in the students' learning**.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

While specific grading requirements may vary from class to class, the general theatre attendance policy adopted by our faculty is the following.

Student attendance is crucial to your success. Cell phones must be off, and students must arrive on time.

In accordance with the University Catalog, students are expected to attend classes regularly and should discuss absences with instructors. Students may report an absence of more than a week's duration to the Office of Advising and Orientation when it results from circumstances beyond their control, such as illness or accident. Instructors can, if they choose, drop you from a course for non-attendance.

Students are allowed the equivalent of one week of excused absences without penalty and are solely responsible for arranging any make-up arrangements with the instructor prior to the actual absence. If an assignment requires accompaniment, the student may be responsible to hire their own accompanist.

PRODUCTION AUDITIONS

Twice yearly general auditions serve two functions for the department: 1) to cast the mainstage productions of the season and 2) to provide a yearly opportunity for the faculty to assess and comment on the growth and development of performance and audition skills of theatre arts and musical theatre students.

For each of the fall and spring auditions, please prepare one of the following standard, memorized audition packages:

two contrasting monologues, or
one monologue and one contrasting song

The maximum time for any of these options is 2 minutes. You will be timed and stopped if you exceed the two-minute time limit.

After one week of equivalent absences, the student is allowed the equivalent of a second week of absences for emergencies, sickness, and extraordinary circumstances. The penalty for these absences, whether excused or unexcused, is half a letter deduction from their final grade. Any absence beyond two weeks, regardless of the circumstances, is considered too excessive for successful completion of the course. Students that exceed the allowable absences will receive a grade of "F," "NC" or "WU," at the discretion of the instructor. In extreme situations, with serious and compelling reasons, a student may arrange with the instructor to receive a grade of "I," but this dispensation by the instructor must be pre-arranged and must have a completed plan for completion of the course requirements within a reasonable time frame. Students should not assume that an Incomplete is automatic.

Students are responsible for all materials, announcements, and information given in lecture and discussions. As class time is valuable, please note that coming late to class will impact your absences. Every two late classes equal one absence.

An accompanist will be provided. If you plan to sing, bring sheet music in your key, clearly marked. No taped accompaniment and no acapella, please. Sign-up sheets for specific audition appointments are posted on the MTAD Department webpage approximately one week prior to auditions, which normally begin the Sunday prior to the first day of the semester's classes.

The gathering place to receive instructions from the stage managers is in the Green Room. Please show up well in advance of your group's call time so you can complete the audition paperwork. Callbacks for these shows are posted in the mornings for that evening. Cast lists are posted by the end of the first week of class.

CASTING POLICY

Our main stage productions are a laboratory for students to apply the tools learned in the classroom on a full production. Productions use professional best-practices to ensure that students are fully prepared for the professional world. To this end, Chico State Theatre gives first consideration for roles, and design and crew assignments, to theatre and musical theatre majors followed by minors and then other students who audition. On occasion, we will cast guest artists, faculty members and/or community members to provide additional educational experiences to our students.

Chico State Theatre is dedicated to creating opportunities designed to promote a positive model of diversity and inclusion. We are committed to casting characters intended to be of the Global Majority, with actors who identify as members of the Global Majority community. Characters not written to be a particular race or ethnicity will be cast in a fair and equitable manner. The program also recognizes the fluidity of gender identity and is committed to casting actors appropriate to how they identify. Actors will have the opportunity to self-identify on their audition forms to ensure that those casting can cast them appropriately. Students who audition may express a preference as to which roles they wish to be considered.

Students cast in CSU Chico productions will be enrolled in a 1-unit section of THEA 301 (Theatre Rehearsal) or 302 (Musical Theatre Rehearsal) accordingly.

To avoid scheduling conflicts, students must bring complete semester calendars of their commitments to auditions or interviews. At the time of audition students will be given the opportunity to opt out of the casting pool for a production or specific role. If cast in a role that was not opted out of it is expected that a student follows through with that commitment. In the very rare case that a student's boundaries shift or schedule changes and they are not able to follow through with the casting assignment, students are asked to withdraw prior to the first rehearsal so that an appropriate replacement can be identified without impacting the production. Students are not permitted to reject an assignment simply because they do not "like it." Students leaving a production without compelling reasons will not be permitted to be cast the following semester.

The department values participation in mainstage productions and their value to student's educational experience while at CSU Chico. Each semester students are required to audition for department productions or present design/tech portfolios. Any student who wishes not to participate in production work in any given semester are required to consult with their advisor program coordinator prior to auditions.

Students who are not cast or are not on a crew in a given semester and wish to participate in off-campus theatrical productions are highly encouraged to meet with their program coordinator prior to auditioning and/or accepting the position.



TECH/DESIGN PORTFOLIO REVIEW

Students who are interested in pursuing a leadership position in tech or design need to participate in a tech interview and portfolio review. These annual interviews and reviews allow an opportunity for the faculty to see and respond to students' growth during the year, and their professional development toward their desired careers. These meetings also allow the faculty to hear what positions you are interested in applying for in the following academic year. Being a designer on a production does usually mean that you cannot be cast in that production. Students that would like to prioritize performance roles in a production but would still be interested in a tech position depending on the casting, should make this preference known during the interview. Design and Tech positions will vary every year depending upon the shows in the season, and the positions not currently held by staff, faculty, or outside designers. Students can usually anticipate being able to interview for positions as:

- **Assistant Directors**
- **Assistant Choreographers**
- **Stage Managers**
- **Assistant Stage Managers**
- **Scenic Charge Artists**
- **Assistant Charge Artists**
- **Props Leads**
- **Makeup Designers**
- **Assistant Makeup Designers**
- **Sound Designers**
- **Assistant Sound Designers**
- **Lighting Designers**
- **Assistant Lighting Designers**
- **Costume Designers**
- **Assistant Costume Designers**
- **Scenic Designers**
- **Assistant Scenic Designers, and more**

Design/ Tech interviews and portfolio reviews take place in the spring semester, and will typically be the week before Spring Break. Students will need to sign up prior to this by filling out the form that will be emailed out prior to the portfolio reviews.

By signing up, students not only schedule a time for their interviews, but they also reserve half of a folding table that students can use to display their portfolios and any additional work. The design/tech interviews and portfolio reviews will take place over a couple days. Students should be prepared to load in their materials the day prior to their presentation, and then present the following day. Students should come to load in their work, prepared with an updated resume for the position(s) they are applying for, as well as a portfolio of work that showcases their skills and abilities that pertain

to the positions they are interested in. Portfolio content will vary based on shows and positions, but may include anything from: Production photos, process photos, sketches, renderings, draftings, research, models, budgeting, schedules, rehearsal/ show reports, prompt books, garments, props, classwork & unrealized designs, notes from classes, and much more. These can be presented in a hard portfolio, three ring binder, trifold display on the table, or even body forms or any other supplementary materials needed. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Mueller.

Students that do serve in a leadership position should plan on signing up for one credit of THEA 306 for each production they are working on. Each show is unique, and therefore each show assignment is different. The director, creative team, and faculty mentor will help clarify what is needed for each show. Generally speaking, students can refer to the list [HERE](#) of tech/ design positions and an idea of what to expect

CREW EXPECTATIONS

Chico State Theatre supports all students in the pursuit of theatrical education. Crew members are a necessary and vital part of every production. Any student participating in a production is expected to fulfill their responsibilities to the production and their fellow classmates. In order to ensure their success, they must prioritize their mental and physical health. Since the crew is not brought in until technical rehearsals begin, it can feel very stressful and overwhelming at times. The Instructor, Cast, and Stage Manager are there to support them with whatever they may need.

Students interested in working on a crew are encouraged to sign up for a credit of either THEA 204 (Costume Practice 1) or THEA 205 (Scene/ Lighting Practice 1). You do not need to have any previous experience running a show before, as this is an introductory course, and you will be taught what is needed during the course. Within the first couple weeks of the semester, there will be a meeting with everyone who has signed up for crew. During this, the instructor will explain expectations and time commitments for each production. This is also an opportunity for students to express what productions and areas of theatre they are interested in working in. Once the instructor has placed students into the assigned areas, students will initial that they accept these positions. Just like being cast in a show, at this point, you are committing to the production and will be expected to follow through on these assigned duties. Everyone on a

production is relying on each member to fulfil their assigned duties, and if you are not there, the whole production feels it.

Attendance for crew work is mandatory. It is expected that Crew members arrive and sign in before their call time so they are ready to work at their call time, and there is enough time for them to do their pre-show duties (which will be explained during crew training for the production). At five minutes from the specified call time, if someone still has not arrived, Stage Management will begin making calls to reach out to anyone who isn't there to make sure they are okay and will be arriving soon. If someone is late for any particular reason, they will receive a write up. Write ups are a means of documentation for the course and may affect the grade in the course. Please refer to the course syllabus for more detail. It is important to inform Stage Management prior to your arrival if you will be late, so they can begin planning accordingly. Anyone who fails to inform Stage Management of their late arrival will receive an additional write up.

Crew and cast members work very closely with each other and are brought together in what can be a very stressful time. Because of this, it is vital that both parties have great respect for each other and assume everyone involved in a production is working in good faith. The success of the production depends on the



CREW EXPECTATIONS (CONT)

harmonious work done both on and off stage. Working on a show with other people is a great way to make friends and learn from each other's work, so it is necessary to respect your job and everyone else's. It is not acceptable to give another person a note. If there are issues with how something is done, Crew members may contact the Stage Manager, who will then handle the situation.

A reminder that everyone, no matter their role, is operating in good faith and doing their best. Please also be sure to review the Code of Conduct for our department expectations. Tech and practicum is an opportunity to learn skills you may have not known before, and with that comes a learning curve. Give yourself and others grace as you take up this fun and exciting learning opportunity.

SPECIAL THEATRE REQUIREMENTS

All musical theatre majors are required to audition at the beginning of each semester regardless of their intention to participate in a production. Chico State Theatre believes in the educational value in going through the audition process as often as possible.

All theatre arts majors are required either to a) audition at the beginning of each semester, or b) present a portfolio of technical, design, or stage management experience every spring.

Any student with an interest in technical production, design, or stage management as well as performance may choose to participate in both portfolio reviews and auditions.

Any major who does not wish to participate in a department production during any given semester must notify their program coordinator ahead of auditions or interviews, however, she or he must still participate in the audition or interview process.

Students who are not participating in a department production and wish to perform in, design, or crew an off-campus production are expected to meet with their program coordinator before auditioning and/or accepting the position. This provides the faculty the opportunity to mentor students through the process and consider the potential impact on their required coursework.

USITT

USITT is the United States Institute of Theatre Technology's annual conference. Theaters, graduate schools, and industry leaders gather every year, in a different location around the country, to share ideas, new technology, methods, and materials, and to network. It is imperative for our students to be a part of these firsthand experiences in order to gain a competitive edge in their chosen industry. Attendees have unique opportunities to network with peers and professionals while seeing many other theatrical career paths they may not have been aware of outside of this conference. In addition to professional companies and graduate schools conducting interviews, it is a collaborative space for innovative research to be presented, where our students will be at the forefront learning and gaining insight.

In Spring 2024, we were able to take 8 BA/BFA theatre students to the annual conference in Seattle, Washington. Students attended classes taught by professionals throughout the industry, met with companies to learn about the latest technology being used today, networked, and made connections with other students and professionals around the nation, and were able to interview with graduate schools and companies looking to hire directly out of school. Of the students that attended, over half received an offer for either graduate school or work. According to some of our past conference attendees:

"I was astounded by the diversity of speakers at the conference. I was happy to get all this knowledge from people I can associate to"

"It has really empowered me to keep going. The repetitive nature of school can get draining, so being able to explore future opportunities really emboldens me moving forward"

Chico State is also committed to limiting the financial impact on students to attend these types of events. To this point, we will hold fundraising events throughout the school year to help raise funds to finance students' travel expenses, conference fees, and other expenses for the conference. Students will still be expected to pay some portion of the trip, but it is the intent to make this as minimal as possible. In order to do this, students planning on attending the conference will be required to help with this fundraising. This includes not only helping prep materials and run events, but to also helping to come up with fundraising options and being proactive in creating these opportunities.

This conference is open to anyone that is a BA/ BFA theatre track. Theatre minors may be considered on a case-by-case situation. You do not need to be graduating in order to attend, although if you are graduating and pursuing technical theatre, it is highly encouraged that you consider this opportunity. If you are interested learning more, please reach out to either Chris Mueller or Lizzy Davis.

THEATRICAL INTIMACY

While the university's policy on academic freedom allows instructors to oversee all areas of their course content, all Chico State Theatre performance instructors have been trained in Best Practices by Theatrical Intimacy Education. For more information about TIE visit <https://www.theatricalintimacyed.com/>

The faculty has adopted TIE's statement, "Your boundaries are perfect exactly where they are," and supports students in setting their own personal boundaries. Audition disclosures will be shared with student actors prior to auditions, and actors will always be permitted to opt out of consideration for material outside of their boundaries. When physical intimacy is part of a production, an Intimacy Choreographer will stage those sections, utilizing the methods of TIE.

As TIE co-founder Laura Rikard says, "Theatre is not meant to be comfortable. We don't write theatre about comfortable situations." Honoring personal boundaries, however, are integral to creating a brave space where everyone can thrive.

In production, if you have a concern regarding theatrical intimacy or instructional touch, speak with your instructor or another faculty or staff member associated with the production (i.e.: Director, Choreographer, Music Director, Assistant Production Manager/Stage Management Coordinator, Production Manager, or Department Chair).

In pursuit of creating a consent-based space our program recommends students always use an "ask before you touch" policy. Please always honor your peers' boundaries. In addition, when rehearsing outside of the classroom, designated spaces, not living spaces are recommended/preferred, and keep a log of meetings. For course related scenework, it is recommended that students never attempt to stage physical intimacy or stage combat themselves unless they have had the proper training and have a third-party present.

In non-production coursework, address your concerns to the instructor or the faculty trained TIE Education Advocate, Jami Witt Miller.



SEASON SELECTION PROCESS

FALL SEMESTER

September:

Meeting with committee about rotation and general priorities for the season.

October:

Assemble a long list of productions.

-Student class representatives meet with their constituencies to gather ideas.

-Faculty and staff committee members contribute ideas to the discussion.

-Titles, authors, cast size, royalties organization, and unique theatrical demands are entered into a spread sheet by committee chair.

November:

Committee meets to discuss the large list and shortens each production slot to top three titles. The committee gathers and distributes scripts to read.

Fall Break:

Review and read all scripts

December:

Meet to discuss the reading list and shorten each spot to the first and second choices.

-If the chair is music faculty, the Associate Chair presents the list to the Department Chair for approval.

-If a consensus cannot be made on the show selections, the active committee members will vote using a ranking system to determine the first and second choices. Each member of the committee will rank their first choice (which will receive five points), second choice (which will receive three points), and third choice (which will receive one point), for each production slot. **Please note that the Department Chair can veto a title if there are logistical or pedagogical concerns that would make it impossible for the director to conceive a production under the department's constraints**

SPRING SEMESTER

January:

Department applies for rights for selected productions.

February:

Announce final season to the students

May:

Announce season to the public

Theatre Season Committee

Tenured/Tenure-Track Theatre faculty

-Megan Glynn Zollinger

-Matthew Teague Miller

Contracted Lecturer

-Chris Mueller

HFA Production Manager

-Carmen Gomez

Elected Student Class Representatives

-Freshman Rep

-Sophomore Rep

-Junior Rep

-Senior Rep

Invited Members of the Committee

Invited Members of the Committee are encouraged to participate if their schedules allow, but not required. If a person below is not available to attend regular meetings and chooses not to be an official member of the committee, they will be consulted by committee members so that their voices are included. If invited members choose to participate, it is asked that they attend meetings to engage in the discussions.

Theatre Lecturer Faculty

-John Crosthwaite

-Erin Horst

-Jami Miller

-Dara Scholz

-Andrew Zollinger

SOTA Staff heads who work on productions

-Lizzie Davis (Costumes)

-Pete Austin (Scenic Construction)

-Jeremy Votava (Electrics/Props)

THEATRE SEASON ROTATION

This list is meant to serve as a springboard. Student learning is always the most important aspect of the decision making process.

2025-2026

- Unity in Motion
- Musical Theatre: Musical TYA (theatre for young audiences)
- Musical Theatre: Rock
- Play: Shakespeare or other classical heightened language
- Play: Comedy or Farce or Satire

2026-2027

- Directing One-Acts
- Musical Theatre: Revue
- Musical Theatre: Disney-Style or Mega-Musical
- Play: Restoration Comedy
- Play: Contemporary Play by BIPOC writer

2027-2028

- Unity in Motion
- Musical Theatre: Traditional Book
- Musical Theatre: New Work
- Play: Shakespeare
- Play: TYA (theatre for young audiences)

2028-2029

- Directing One-Acts
- Musical Theatre: Concept
- Musical Theatre: Jukebox
- Play: Devised Play (with stipulations)
- Play: Realism

Chico State Theatre is committed to diversity, inclusivity, and anti-racism. As such, we pledge to continue to reimagine new approaches to both contemporary and classical works, as well as increase the representation of BIPOC, LGBTQ, and women theatre practitioners, along with members of other marginalized and/or minoritized groups in our main stage season. No less than 50% of our season will have relevant themes and/or creators from these communities.



CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

Following the first Theatre Community Meeting of the academic year, faculty accepts student nominations for class representatives. Nominations and voting take place via email for each class, by the students of each class. Class standing will be determined by the year students began at Chico State — not the total number of units — with Freshman being first year students, Sophomores being second year students, Juniors being third year students, and Seniors being any student in their fourth year or later.

Class representatives are elected student leaders who serve the students of their class. They speak for the needs of, address issues within, and make decisions on behalf of their class. When acting as a class representative, students will maintain communication with their classmates, and put the needs and interests of their classmates first/over their own. Additionally, class representatives serve on the season selection committee for the following mainstage season

CHAIN OF CONCERNS

When any concern or issue arises, students are encouraged to bring it to the attention of the production team or department. If a student is not comfortable speaking to a person on this list, or if they have spoken to them and are not satisfied with the resolution, students are strongly encouraged to bring it to the next person listed.

Please note, Chico State Theatre aspires to be an inclusive and safe/brave space for everyone. Do not hesitate to bring issues forward; no retaliation will be tolerated



STAGE MANAGER
(when appropriate)

INSTRUCTOR

FACULTY OUTSIDE OF CLASS

ASSOCIATE CHAIR OF MTAD

MTAD DEPARTMENT CHAIR

ASSOCIATE DEAN OF HFA

DEAN OF HFA

CHICO STATE PROVOST

CHICO STATE PRESIDENT

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A PROFESSOR'S GUIDE TO A BETTER THEATRE WORLD

TEN KEYS TO BECOMING A STRONG MEMBER OF AND CONTRIBUTOR TO THE THEATRE COMMUNITY

By Matthew Teague Miller

Originally published on onstageblog.com on May 13, 2019

1) **If you're not growing, you're dying.**

Theatre is a living, breathing thing and history has proven that the need to evolve drives our ability to survive. Commitment to personal growth and improvement is an obligation to our craft and our industry. The minute that one thinks that they know all that there is to know, they have fallen behind. The moment that one thinks they have gotten as strong as they are going to get, they have grown a bit weaker. As artists it is our responsibility to be fueled by the growth-mindset, so that we are constantly looking for ways to improve, ways to innovate and ways to grow.

2) **Never get the same note twice.**

Every time a Director stops to write down a note, they are missing a section of the play or focusing their energy on your performance or design rather than the rest of the company's. Thus, when a Director gives you note multiple times other collaborators are missing their opportunity to receive valuable feedback. Directors will understandably get frustrated when they have to give the same note multiple times and sometimes it is even interpreted as a sign of disrespect. Want to be seen as a strong member of the theatre community? Take a note the first time is given.

3) **Leave the drama on the stage and allow other people to define their own character.**

There are some people who are more comfortable when things are uncomfortable and seek out drama, gossip and negativity. Sometimes people are so drawn to drama they will create it and even pour gasoline on other people's fires. Sometimes it is created by criticizing other people's choices. Focus on your own character and strive to be the best version of yourself that you can be.

4) **Know your job and do it without telling others how to do theirs.**

Leave the "giving notes" to the Directors and Stage Managers. Directors, inspire your team with concepts, ideas and conversations... let them do the actual designing.

5) **We are on the same team and you are not the umpire.**

It seems that we are living in one of the most divided times in our cultural history. But in theatre we are all on the same team, working tirelessly on an art that we love and are desperate to share with others. Theatre companies in the same area are not in competition with one another but rather working with one another to cultivate an active theatre-going community. Theatre students in the same school should not think of the other students as competition but rather as other people who they can learn from. In the theatre community we are all on the same team and in each mini-theatre community it is especially important to prop each other up rather than trying to tear each other down. There are enough competing factors trying to destroy the theatre (competing "free" entertainment, cuts in our donor bases and a general decrease in interest in our craft), we don't need to add to our uphill battle by compounding the negativity ourselves. Let's let other people judge as opposed to judging each other.

6) **Always say "thank you" and when people ask for help... show up.**

Actors, when a wardrobe person helps you with a quick change say "thank you." When a crew member pages a curtain, thank them too. Directors, when a designer brings in a great idea, a "thanks" is in order. Yes, we all have jobs and expectations in the theatre but that doesn't mean that a good old-fashioned "thank you" doesn't feel good when you are busting your hump. Also, union rules notwithstanding, if your collaborator and teammate puts out a desperate call for a last-minute paint session because they have fallen behind, be there to help. If someone needs help with a scene change, be the first person to volunteer. People who say "thank you" and help when others are in need, are the bedrock of the theatre community.

7) **Being early is actually "on time."**

This is not an expression I can take credit for, but I don't know how to site my source on this one. If a production meeting is scheduled to start at 1pm, that is when it starts. Not when you have finished filling up your coffee, gotten out your script or finished updating the app on your phone. If choreography rehearsal starts at 10am, that is not when the "warm up" begins. Do not waste other people's time by asking them to wait for you to get ready.

8) **Be the most positive energy in the room and have the courage to stand-up to toxicity.**

The world is steeped in toxicity. Do you want to be a strong contributor to the theatre community? Walk in to every conversation with the goal of being positive. Be kind to the people with whom you interact. Be the person who learns other people's names and say "hi" and wave when you see them. Contribute to the theatre community by having an open heart. Even more difficult, when you are faced with someone who is being negative or talking-trash about people not in the room, have the strength to speak up. Tell them, "I'm not comfortable with what you are saying." Or at the very least, walk away. The time to stand-up to bullies and stop the bad-mouthing is now.

9) **Run towards the fear, not away from it.**

If a creative project scares you, it is exactly the creative project you should accept. One way to have the growth-mindset and be committed to constant improvement is by taking on the creative project that frightens you the most.

PROFESSIONALISM

Chico State Theatre acknowledges the problematic use of "professionalism" in the past, and strives to redefine the term. While it has been used to be synonymous with "white" in regards to looks, speech, etcetera, at Chico State Theatre, it means nothing of the sort.

Professionalism implies reliability and responsibility. It means good will and genuine effort to give one's best to any project to which one commits. To behave professionally in the theatre is to care more about the overall good of the show than about one's own agenda, convenience, or applause. Professionalism does not imply a refusal or inability to question or criticize; but it does mean to do so in a respectful manner. It also demands that one refrains from insult, innuendo, gossip, or any other negative behavior that serves to demean any individual classmate, castmate, staff, or faculty member. This type of negativity undermines the hard work of all and, ultimately, the quality of the theatrical experience for the audience. The professionalism of this department, then, depends on the commitment of each individual in it -- faculty, staff and student -- to behave according to a personal code of conduct that helps to enhance the experience of everyone else here and to uphold the ideals that brought us all together in the first place.

10) **The theatre is a safe place where all are welcome.**

This is it, I am throwing down the gauntlet. The Theatre is, and always has been, a place where everyone is welcome. It does not matter your race, sexuality, religion, gender-identity, gender-expression, age, education, disability or any other matter... you are welcome in our community. The only people who are not welcome, are those who make others feel unwelcome. We are one family/one tribe, and anyone who makes others feel unsafe in our house will be asked to leave. To do good work, we need a safe non-judgmental space. Regardless of bad breakups or missteps. Regardless of who you plan on voting for in the next election. Theaters are a place of love. Sometimes we fight. Sometimes we disagree. But we are allowed to apologize and move forward as one. We may challenge our audiences and, God forbid, even do bad work from time to time. But we give each other the benefit of the doubt and heal. We embrace the things that make us different because it is those differences that provide us with the perspectives to tell incredible stories and touch our audience's hearts.

MUSICAL THEATRE SENIOR SHOWCASE

Each Spring, the senior musical theatre class is provided with the opportunity to travel to a major maret (New York City, Los Angeles, or Chicago) and participate in an industry showcase.

This is a potentially life-changing experience for students to meet, perform for, and receive feedback from professional agents and casting directors currently in the industry. For a career driven student looking to getting their foot in the door with networking opportunities, this is a project is a "can't miss." It is not designed for students who are looking to go straight to grad school, take a hiatus from performing, or moving to a smaller market.

Chico State Theatre is committed to equity and inclusion, a student's financial status will NOT prevent them from going on this trip. After every student has contributed the amount they can, students and faculty work together to raise the remaining funds so that every student who chooses to participate can attend.

This senior showcase is an amazing chance for musical theatre seniors to kick start their theatre careers right before they graduate.

HELPFUL STUDENT RESOURCES

Below is a selection of student resources. This list is not comprehensive, and students should visit the Chico State website for more.

[Basic Needs Project](#)

In addition to the Wildcat Food Pantry, Basic Needs provides case managed benefits support, basic needs grants, shelter and rapid re-housing services for students facing unexpected financial crisis, disaster or homelessness.

basicneeds@csuchico.edu | 530-898-4098

[Cal Fresh Outreach](#)

CalFresh (food stamps) makes it easier to get healthy food by adding to your food budget to putting healthy and nutritious food on the table. The program issues monthly electronic benefits that can be used to buy most foods at many markets and food stores.

calfresh@csuchico.edu | 530-898-4098

[Community Legal Information Center \(CLIC\)](#)

Provides free legal information to students and community members, and paralegal internship opportunities for students.

clic@csuchico.edu | 530-898-4354

[Dream Center](#)

Serves as a student success, resource and advocacy center for the undocumented students and students from mixed-status immigrant families. Services include advising, computer lab and study space, empowerment and wellness activities, state and federal policy updates, etc. The Center facilitates free immigration legal services and trainings for the campus community.

dreamcenter@csuchico.edu | 530-898-5818

[Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office](#)

Provides information, referrals, advocacy, coordination and support for equity, diversity and inclusion-related events, activities, initiatives and courageous conversations.

diversityoffice@csuchico.edu | 530-898-4764

Kendall Hall, Room 109

[Gender & Sexuality Equity Coalition](#)

Empowers all students through its three student-led programs: the Women's Program, the Queer Program, and the Trans Program.

icross3@csuchico.edu | 530-898-4774

[Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry](#)

Open weekdays throughout the year, provides supplemental food, fresh produce, hygiene products and Cal-Fresh food assistance to Chico State students, staff and their families.

basicneeds@csuchico.edu | 530-898-4098

Student Services Center, Room 196

[Immigration Legal Services](#)

Chico State students, faculty, staff and their immediate family members are eligible for free immigration legal services through our partnership with legal service provider, the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA). Appointments are available twice a month between 9 am and 4 pm and can be scheduled directly through CHIRLA.

dreamcenter@csuchico.edu | 530-898-5818

[Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States

800-273-8255

[Student Conduct, Rights, and Responsibilities](#)

Protects the rights of students, staff, and faculty and ensures due process.

scrr@csuchico.edu | 530-898-6897

[Tribal Relations](#)

Serves as the connection point for the Chico State campus to provide access and social, emotional, and academic support for our Native American students.

tribalrelations@csuchico.edu | 530-898-6241

[WellCat Counseling Center](#)

Supports you in a variety of ways including group counseling, short-term individual counseling, short-term couples counseling, referral to a workshop or presentation on a specific topic, or referral to counseling services in the community.

counselingcenter@csuchico.edu | 530-898-6345

[WellCat Health Center](#)

Provides medical care including the treatment of acute conditions, injuries, and illnesses.

healthcenter@csuchico.edu | 530-898-5241

[WellCat Prevention](#)

Provides educational programs and services that raise awareness about alcohol and drug misuse.

prevention@csuchico.edu | 530-898-6450

[WellCat Safe Place](#)

Provides confidential support services to individuals impacted by traumatic experiences.

safeplace@csuchico.edu | 530-898-3030

SCHOLARSHIPS

Auditions and Interviews remain the primary avenue of access to employment and educational opportunities in the performing arts. To aid our own production and program and to help our students acquire the poised, presentational skills necessary for job hunting in the profession, we have designed an annual system of auditions, portfolio review/interviews and evaluations.

Students wishing to apply for a theatre scholarship should visit the Department of Music and Theatre website. Or by clicking [here](#).

Students applying for a program specific scholarship must still fill out the Wildcat Scholarship Application which you can find [here](#).

Any theatre scholarship student, in addition to the basic audition/portfolio requirements, must participate as cast or crew in at least one department production each semester they receive an award from the Theatre Department. Please refer to the Casting/Crewing policy for more information.



2024 CHICO STATE THEATRE HANDBOOK COMMITTEE

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Chris Mueller
Matthew Teague Miller
Elisabeth Nini
Carol Ritzenthaler
Raven Tompkins
Claire Vandeman