

Las Vegas Academy Theatre FAQ

(Academy Theatre Student/Parent Handbook 2017-18)

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Mission and Objectives of Academy Theatre

The mission of the Las Vegas Academy Theatre Department is to provide the opportunities and nurturing environment so that students may pursue individual and collective goals in the study, understanding and achievement of skills in theatre, musical theatre and theatre technologies, and develop an appreciation of the art form as an enjoyment and enrichment in the students' lives.

The objectives of the Las Vegas Academy Theatre are:

- ☞ To promote, uphold and advocate for the study and understanding of the discipline of theatre
- ☞ To develop a positive work ethic
- ☞ To develop a sense of good professional behavior
- ☞ To promote a well-rounded sense of self that includes academic, intellectual and artistic balance
- ☞ To promote good relationships between the department and other departments, other schools and the community at large
- ☞ To promote a safe, nurturing, diverse, and hate-free environment in which to learn and work
- ☞ To build bridges to the future that include networking, college preparation and realistic work experiences
- ☞ To learn about theatre in a way that students will develop a life-long understanding of, and appreciation for, the art and craft of theatre.

Las Vegas Academy Academics and Behavior

What is a “block” class?

The Academy utilizes a modified block schedule that provides an extended period of 84 minutes a day for instruction in a student’s selected course of study (Conservatory).

What is a major and minor at the Academy?

A major at the Academy is an arrangement wherein a student can select a specific and required course of study within the disciplines of performing, visual and industrial arts. The Academy major can be compared to a major in college; one must do well in both general academia and major course classes.

It is possible for a student at the Academy to “minor,” which means that the student can have two blocks a day in two different departments at the Academy. The minor allows the student to develop a deeper understanding of another field of study. To avoid having to make hard choices between the two, the major will take precedence. While this may prove to be extremely challenging, for some students it is a way to maximize the Academy experience. Majoring/minoring is available beginning the student’s junior year.

What is the Academy’s academic standard?

All students at the Academy must maintain a MINIMUM 2.0 grade point average, and maintain a C average in major courses. If a student’s GPA falls below 2.0, or receives less than a C for the semester, s/he may be placed on academic probation for up to one semester. The student must then bring his/her cumulative GPA above 2.0 in order to remain at the Academy. Those who do not pass their block with at least a C may not be allowed to return to the Academy.

What is the Academy’s behavioral standard?

The Academy follows the CCSD standards for behavior. In addition, the Academy believes that attendance at LVA is a privilege that can be revoked due to behavior that disrupts the academic process at the Academy. *These disruptions include public displays of affection and any other sexually explicit behavior, substance and alcohol use on campus, weapons possession, assault/battery on a teacher or student, habitual truancy (including leaving campus during the school day), etc.*

Special emphasis is placed on leaving campus without written permission during the school day, which brings an automatic suspension and a disciplinary plan.

What does it mean to be “academically eligible?”

In order for a student to be eligible to participate in after school/extra-curricular activities, the student must have sound academics. Failure in academic or major courses may result in a student being removed from a production, or prevented from participating in productions and other school/department activities.

If an academic teacher has a concern about a student’s progress, s/he will discuss it with that student’s major teacher of record (TOR), and they will work together to help that student, utilizing lunch period detentions to return the student to eligibility. All instructors want their students to be successful; however, **academic and behavioral eligibility is ultimately the responsibility of the student and the parent(s).**

Grading, Casting, Participation and Policies for Academy Theatre

What is the department's behavioral standard?

The Academy Theatre Rules for Conduct

Be on time. On time is early (but not too early). Instructors will enforce the LVA tardy policy.

Dress appropriately and be prepared to work. (See Department Dress Code)

Know your limitations and how/when to say "no."

Utilize your time wisely, and keep up on your academics. **Do your homework the day it is assigned.**

Do your best to eat healthy, drink plenty of WATER, and get plenty of rest.

Live a healthy lifestyle. Stay away from tobacco use, alcohol and illegal substances. If you have already developed bad habits, there are resources that can help you.

Treat others—teachers and staff, administrators, and other students—with respect and kindness. Foul, abusive, subversive, or disrespectful language will not be tolerated, whether in school or while accessing social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc) and communication technology.

Each student has a responsibility to the **ensemble**—the classroom ensemble, the cast/crew ensemble, the club ensemble, and the departmental ensemble. An ensemble is created only when every member "buys in" to the concept.

What is the Theatre Hours policy and how does it work?

The theatre department has a **co-curricular participation program** called Theatre Hours. Approximately 20% of a student's grade is based on this participation. A student can obtain required hours by participating in any department-sanctioned after-school activity. The activity must be approved by the faculty, and must be related to the instructional or developmental goals of the school and the theatre department.

Students must log their hours utilizing the method laid out by their TOR in order to receive credit. All time must be logged appropriately to count toward that student's grade.

Hours can be obtained by working on a crew (either for a department show, another department's approved show, or for the theater managers), being a cast member, ushering, working in the box office, participating in Thespian service or fundraising activities, or otherwise working for faculty, staff or administration in the business of the performing arts at LVA.

Academy Theatre requires total commitment, alongside school and family. However, service projects, volunteering in the community, or working for a community theatre are valuable life experiences, and can also be used to obtain hours. Students can only participate in activities outside LVA by submitting a **Community Hours Application** form to the faculty. This form is available from theatre faculty, and must be submitted **prior to committing** to the outside organization. Permission will be granted only after the student has not been cast or selected for a crew position for the current production(s).

Students who work for an approved community theatre company may earn all their hours for **one** quarter in a school year. This will be approved upon application, and considered case-by-case.

Theatre Hours Requirements

Acting Students:

- Theatre I (Introduction to Theatre Performance) — please see the course syllabus
- Theatre II — 30 hours/qtr
- Theatre III — 40 hours/qtr

- Theatre IV— 40 hours/qtr

Technical Theatre Students:

- Technical Theatre I (Introduction to Theatre Production) — please see the course syllabus
- Technical Theatre II — 30 hours/qtr
- Technical Theatre III — 40 hours/qtr
- Technical Theatre IV— 40 hours/qtr

*30% of a student's hours, or hours from **one quarter**, can be obtained outside of the department on approved projects.*

What are the basics of casting/crew selection?

The faculty is committed to fair casting/crew selection. Fair casting means **we cast the best person for the role**. Fair crew selection means **we select the best person for the crew position**. There are not enough roles/positions for everyone to have a part every time. However, we are also committed to providing as many opportunities as possible. *It is important to remember that no one is guaranteed a role or position.*

- ☞ Those students who fall below a C in their block class may not be eligible through the next grading period, and must prove eligibility before they will be considered for cast or running crew.
- ☞ All Theatre Acting Majors are required to audition for departmental shows. **Required auditions may also be considered as a class assignment or grade at the instructor's discretion.** Production Hours will be granted for participation in the audition process for all students in all grade levels regardless of whether the audition is required or not.
- ☞ *What are the rules if I get cast or selected as a crew member?*
- ☞ All cast and crew and their parents must sign a **performance or crew agreement** outlining each production's expectations.
- ☞ Cast and crew are **required** to attend ALL dress/technical rehearsals. Medical/dental appointments should not be scheduled during these times unless it is an emergency.
- ☞ Make all rehearsals and crew calls. There will always be an accurate rehearsal schedule for at least a week in advance.
- ☞ Cast and crew members are required to attend a FULL DAY of school on rehearsal and performance days, unless their absence is officially excused through the Deans' Office before 8am.
- ☞ Those cast in any mainstage show will be assessed a costume dry-cleaning fee of \$20, unless the PFA has been paid.
- ☞ If you drop out of a show without legitimate cause you **will be placed on show probation**, and may not be considered for the next production(s).

What if I cannot attend school or rehearsal due to illness or emergency?

You must call or email your *instructor **and/or** director **prior to 7 am*** on the day you are to be absent. You would have to call in to your employer; we as faculty and staff expect no less courtesy and respect. For now, school *is* your job.

What does it cost to participate in Academy Theatre?

Students whose families choose to pay the **Parent Funding Agreement** do not have to pay any conservatory fees; however, there may be materials fees for non-conservatory elective courses. LVA is a CCSD public school; so all eligible students may participate in the program free of charge, except for the following fees:

Up to a \$40 lab fee may be assessed in each block class. (All fees directly benefit the student in the classroom)

Shows may require a dry cleaning fee of \$20

Acting students are required to furnish basic character shoes and their own basic makeup

All students must have appropriate attire for working safely.

What about issues regarding transportation?

Our staff should be able to leave work when their duties are completed for the evening. The district policy regarding picking up students after rehearsals and performances insists that **all students are to be picked up within 30 minutes of the end of the event**. Those students that are not picked up within that time may be placed at Child Haven, and their parents/guardians may be subject to further disciplinary proceedings through the Office of Child Protective Services and/or the Dean's office.

There will be times when cast/crew members will need to find their own transportation. There is a 4pm activity bus that will take students to their neighborhood drop-off points. However, rehearsals and crew calls will begin by 2:25pm, and will often extend beyond that late bus time. Rehearsal will end between 4:30pm and 5:30pm except for the final week, when they may run as late as 8:30pm. There may also be weekend calls. Mandatory rehearsals, performances and work calls will not be held on Sundays (except lighting crews). Late rehearsals will be scheduled in advance, and often include a meal organized by the Family Network. We do not hold rehearsals or calls after 830pm.

Teachers cannot arrange for students' transportation, set up carpools, or transport any student in their personal vehicles; however, parents and students are encouraged to work together to get students to and from rehearsals and calls.

How do I earn a Theatre or Tech Theatre Honor Cord?

In order to earn the Theatre or Tech Theatre Honor Cord, the graduating senior must have:

- ☞ Full four-year participation in the program
- ☞ **No semester grade below a B in a major class**
- ☞ Never been placed on academic probation
- ☞ Never been suspended

If a student changes major, s/he will receive the cord for his/her current major only. Students who carry a major and minor for two years will receive both cords.

Students can apply for an exception to the four-year rule by proving Meritorious Dedication to the Department. The onus will be on the student to provide solid proof for this exception, in writing, to the theatre faculty, *one month prior* to graduation.

What if my parent/guardian wants to help out?

Our parent support system is called the Las Vegas Academy Theatre Parent Network. Please email **lvatfn@gmail.com** for more information, to contribute, or to otherwise get involved.

Departmental Dress Codes

The **Departmental Dress Code** will be strictly enforced. This applies to all genders. All clothing is expected to be maintained, clean and free of body odor.

Your instructor will have additional individual classroom rules pertaining to dress and deportment.

Acting Class (Dressing Out)

We recommend having at least three sets of dress out clothing.

- ☞ Black sweats or black jazz pants — No shorts
- ☞ Shirts are to be unmodified, loose fitting, crew neck BLACK T's with no slogans or writing of any kind — show shirts by permission of your TOR
- ☞ Athletic shoes or jazz shoes with socks
- ☞ All Theatre Class dress-out clothing, including shoes, **MUST** be labeled clearly on the inside with student's name.
- ☞ No bare or stocking feet, open-toed shoes, flip-flops or shoes with thick and/or hard soles: socks strongly recommended
- ☞ All acting students are required to keep and maintain comfortable black character shoes in good repair.
- ☞ Hair must be neat and off the face (use elastic bands, hair ties, bobby pins, etc. if necessary)

Technical Theatre Class/Shop/Backstage

- ☞ Pants that are free of holes and neat in appearance (Shorts are not recommended.)
- ☞ Comfortable, close-toed footwear **with socks** (Leather upper athletic shoes at minimum)
- ☞ NO flip-flops, sandals, "clunky" shoes, or open-toed shoes of any kind—EVER
- ☞ Long hair must be kept neat and tied back.
- ☞ No dangling or loose-fitting jewelry or clothing
- ☞ No "elephant leg" (extreme flared) pants
- ☞ No sagging
- ☞ No derogatory slogans or innuendo may be worn.
- ☞ **Students are required to keep and maintain approved safety glasses, and to wear them in the shop at all times.**
- ☞ Appropriate safety gear (harnesses and fall protection, ear/eye protection, etc.) must be utilized as the situation/instructor requires.

Performance

Actors

- ☞ All performers must wear appropriate undergarments whenever wearing stage costumes.
- ☞ All performers are expected to keep their bodies clean while wearing stage costumes.
- ☞ All performers are expected to happily wear the costume they have been assigned by the designer/director.
- ☞ All costumes and accessories must be checked out and in for every performance.
- ☞ All costumes and accessories must be left with the costume crew during the run of a production.

- ☞ All actors are required to furnish their basic stage makeup kit (Your theatre teacher can recommend a suitable kit).

Technicians/Backstage Crew

- ☞ Clean black clothing
- ☞ **Black** pants, slacks or jeans, no shorts, pants must be clean and in good condition — No flares, no sagging
- ☞ **Black** long-sleeved shirt, no slogans except for designated show shirts (The **departmental crew shirt** is recommended.)
- ☞ **Black** shoes with **black** socks: soft-soled black athletic shoes are recommended. No clunky boots can be worn during technical rehearsals or performances, except for safety reasons.

Ushers, Box Office and Concessions — *This applies to both male and female students.*

- ☞ **Black** dress slacks
- ☞ **Black**, collared dress shirt (Academy Theatre provides the tie.)
- ☞ Comfortable and conservative dress footwear
- ☞ Neat and tidy appearance—You are the first person the patron sees.

Hygiene

Part of respecting yourself and others is to keep your body, clothing and footwear neat, clean and free from strong body odors, especially when you are wearing costumes. You are expected to practice good hygiene.

Hair/Piercings/Tattoos

Those students who are serious about their education and experiences at LVA and in the theatre in general keep their appearance neutral. As an actor assumes a role mentally and emotionally, so does the actor assume a physical appearance. Tattoos, body piercings and unusual hair color are discouraged for these reasons. In addition, body piercings, *especially in the tongue and mouth*, are extremely prone to infection and get in the way of good diction.

Tongue adornments (studs, rings, etc.) are not allowed during rehearsals and performances, or in the Tech Studio or Scene Shop. Other piercings are to be removed, or tattoos covered, at your expense and time, if they are visible and incongruous with the director's/designer's concepts, or pose a hazard backstage or in the shops.