Rehearsal and Production I
Rehearsal Expectations Handout

Call time
- Be ready to rehearse (including warmed up) at call time
- If something happens to make you late or missing, contact the stage manager BEFORE your call time
- Make sure you check the callboard, your e-mail, and your voice mail daily for updates

Rehearsal Etiquette
- Arrive ready to work; make sure any personal needs have been attended to
- Bring scripts and a pencil if you have been given one
- Turn off cell phones and other personal electronic devices
- If you are not on stage, do not disrupt the rehearsal process
- If you need to step out for any reason, inform the stage manager
- Follow restrictions on eating and drinking in each rehearsal space (water is allowed everywhere in a closable bottle)
- Keep track and care for costumes and props. Put everything away at the end of rehearsal. If something breaks, notify the stage manager
- Don’t bring valuable items to rehearsal; we cannot be responsible for anything lost or stolen
- Listen for (and respond to appropriately) places calls and other instructions

Rehearsal definitions:

Staging Rehearsals (Theatre)
Staging rehearsals typically run from 7:30-10:30pm Sunday through Friday (except Wednesday) and involve the director, stage manager, and performers. The focus is on the work of the performers, including blocking, timing, and character development (among many other things). Crews are invited to watch the final run-through of the entire script.

Staging Rehearsals (Dance)
Staging rehearsals typically run from 3:45-6:00pm Monday through Thursday in the dance studios and involve the choreographer and dancers. The focus is on the creation of the pieces and the refinement of the dancers’ movements.

Production Meetings
All shows have between 1 and 5 weekly production meetings prior to the “tech” weekend. Production meetings are meant to provide updates on the progress of each technical area as well as work out logistical issues or changes that arise during rehearsals and build. (These are different from design meetings, where designers and directors collaborate to create the designs.) All designers, the director, the stage manager, the technical director, the propsmaster, and all faculty advisors attend these meetings.
**Load-in**
Typically, the Wednesday of the week prior to opening night is devoted to preparing the space for the arrival of performers. The following day and night (one week before opening) are generally devoted to working out spacing on the stage (as well as videoing dance pieces for lighting designers).

**Paper Tech**
This meeting involves the director/choreographer, stage manager, lighting and sound designers, and (occasionally) board operators. The goal of paper tech is to discuss the placement of sound and lighting cues and for the stage manager to record them in the promptbook. These meetings usually occur a day or two before Tech Weekend begins.

**Scene Shift Rehearsal**
As the name implies, this rehearsal focuses exclusively on shifting between scenes and includes the TD, set designer, stage manager, and all crew and cast involved in shifting scenery. This rehearsal will only occur if the TD, set designer, and stage manager determine that the shifts are of sufficient complexity to warrant time devoted exclusively to them. This rehearsal will usually be the first on the Saturday of Tech Weekend.

**Sitzprobe (Musicals and Operas only)**
This rehearsal includes performers and integrates the orchestra for the first time. Normally, this rehearsal will occur on the Saturday or Sunday of tech weekend and take place in the band rehearsal room or a similar venue to allow for technical notes to simultaneously proceed.

**Cue-to-Cue (Q-to-Q)**
This rehearsal is the first integration of all technical elements (save costuming, though the designer may release pieces as available), focusing on lighting, sound, scenery, and major properties (especially furniture). All crew (save makeup, hair, and wardrobe) and performers are called. This will function as a “stop-and-go” rehearsal, with all action between cues skipped over. (Again, if the show or piece is simple enough, this rehearsal may be skipped for a full technical run.) This rehearsal usually occurs on the Saturday before opening.

**Technical (Tech) Run**
This rehearsal incorporates all technical elements (often not including all costumes, though at Western we will include costumes by agreement between the lighting designer and the costume designer), including all action between cues. This is a “stop and go” as well if necessary, with the stage manager empowered to stop the rehearsal to fix problems with timing, major lighting cue issues, or other pieces that need to be run more than once. Wardrobe quick changes will be rehearsed as well. Performers should rehearse all blocking/spacing and lines correctly, but should not work full voice and character as these rehearsals often take many hours and generally will not focus on performing notes.
Dress Rehearsals
These rehearsals begin the Monday before opening and incorporate all technical elements with all action. This includes integrating hair, makeup, and all costume pieces as well as all final props. As much as possible, each dress should become more and more like a performance, culminating in the treatment of Final Dress as if under full performance conditions. From first dress on, the cast and run crew should not be in the house at any time (save for the board ops and stage manager until the light board moves to the booth).

Performance
The final element of our performances is added on Thursday nights, when the audience arrives. All mainstage performances begin at 8:00pm with the exception of Sunday matinees, which begin at 3:00pm. Any decision to hold the start time rests solely with the Stage Manager.

Photo Call
Usually scheduled immediately prior to or immediately following one or more performances, photo call exists to give designers, choreographers, and directors the chance to record visual documentation of previously-determined moments of the production. The stage manager will treat this as a stop-and-go event informing the performers of the next moment and the necessary costume, set, and lighting changes.

Strike
Strike is the process of dismantling scenery, salvaging materials, returning all costumes, props, and other stock to its storage location, and restoring the theatre to its original condition. On a show-by-show basis, the TD (Jeff) and faculty costume supervisor (Shura) will determine the necessary calls for cast and crew members for mainstage performances. Mainstage strikes usually occur the Wednesday following the final performance from 2-5pm and 7:30-10pm, though some strike activities may immediately follow said performance. For all Children’s, Studio, Autumn Dance, and special events (e.g. staged readings), strike will occur immediately following the final performance. All cast and crew will be called and remain until dismissed by the TD. (The TD will supervise all strikes.)
Wardrobe Run Crew Guidelines  
Western Kentucky University  
Department of Theatre and Dance

Objective

The goal of wardrobe is to provide the services needed to keep garments clean and in good repair, maintain the artistic integrity of the costumes as they were designed, and to help create a positive work environment for the actors as well as fellow run crew members.

General Expectations

Wardrobe, like all other crew areas, is expected to arrive on time, prepared to work, and wearing appropriate (conservative black) attire. For larger shows wardrobe crew may need to arrive before their scheduled call in order to complete all of their duties prior to the show. You should also do your best to not bring outside problems to the job so as not to add any additional stress to the lives of those around you. Everyone is very busy and will need to concentrate on their assigned duties. Try to remain positive and respect the work that the actors and other crew members are doing.

Wardrobe Positions

The wardrobe supervisor, also known as the wardrobe crew head, is responsible for all of the duties listed in the following section as well as many others. The wardrobe supervisor reports to the designer and shop manager prior to the show opening and to the stage manager during technical rehearsals and the run. Prior to technical rehearsals the wardrobe supervisor must:

- Read the script
- Determine, with the designer, what additional wardrobe crew will be needed, and make sure these positions are filled
- Attend production meetings as per the Stage Manager’s requests
- Attend at least one run-through, preferably the final one before tech
- Meet with the costume designer the week before tech to go over costume plot, actual costumes, quick changes, laundry needs, and any other concerns
- Set up the dressing room together with the make-up head
● Load in costumes to dressing rooms with the designer and wardrobe crew, and check-in against costume plot to make sure all costume pieces are present

In addition to regular crew duties during the run of the show, the supervisor:
● Attends all tech week events including dress parades, tech in costume, dress rehearsals, quick change rehearsals, performances, and strike

● Checks out the laundry key

● Provides his or her crew with specific dressing and check-in assignments

● Works with the designer and shop staff to determine how laundry should be done and sets laundry schedules

● Posts costume trouble sheets and arranges with the crew or shop to do repairs

● Sets call times for the wardrobe crew at or before calls set by the stage manager and at least a half hour prior to actor calls

● Helps plan and orchestrate quick changes

● Answers questions from crew members

● Maintains communication with the costume designer, costume shop and stage management

● Is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the show as it was designed

**Wardrobe crew** reports to the wardrobe supervisor during the run of the show, but also may need to report to the designer, shop supervisor, and stage management. The duties of all wardrobe crew members are listed in the following section.

**Duties**

In order to meet these goals the following duties must be performed on a daily basis:

● **Attendance** at all technical rehearsals involving costumes, dress rehearsals, performances, and strike is required.

● **Check-in and Check-out lists** must be completed before and after every performance including any technical rehearsal involving costumes.

● **Laundry** must be done following every performance unless you are told otherwise by the designer of the show which you are working. Depending on the size of the show the shop may assist in completing laundry on weekdays.
- **Ironing and steaming** should be completed as determined by the designer. The costume shop staff will make every effort to assist with this on weekdays, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the wardrobe crew to make sure it is completed for every show.

- Wardrobe is responsible for **repairs** during the run of the show. The shop will assist with repairs on weekdays, but the wardrobe crew is responsible for bringing notes and affected garments to the shop and making sure the note was completed prior to the next show. On weekends it is the complete responsibility of the wardrobe crew to do repairs. If a major repair is needed which you are not able to do please contact Shura, Cassandra, or the designer of your show as early as possible so arrangements can be made to complete the necessary work.

- The wardrobe crew must make sure all items needed during the show are **preset** prior to half hour. Wardrobe must be present during any **quick changes** for which assistance is needed. At all other times you must be available to help with **dressing**, emergency repairs, or other costume related needs of the actors.

**Check-In / Check-Out**

The check-in and check-out list is a comprehensive listing of every individual costume item used in a particular show. This list is usually created by the designer with the help of costume shop staff, but the wardrobe supervisor or crew may be required to assist him or her with this process. Every item is listed from larger items such as a dress or suit coat right down to items as small as a single ring. Small items cannot be overlooked or assumed to be there. Every item was specifically selected by the designer and must be present in order to maintain the integrity of the design.

The importance of check-in and check-out cannot be emphasized enough. This is the only way of knowing that every piece of a garment is in place and ready to wear. **Every item must be accounted for at the beginning and end of each performance including all technical rehearsals involving costumes.** Check-in should be done immediately upon your arrival. If for any reason a costume item is missing it is far better to realize this two hours before the show instead of two minutes before or even during a quick change.

If an item is missing you should look for it. Most of the time you will find a “missing” article of clothing can be found in the costume shop, dressing rooms, backstage, the greenroom, or even on the stage. If the missing article still isn’t found you should first determine if it is something easily replaced such as black socks or a handkerchief. If you can replace this type of item please do so. If a substitution is made you should notify the designer as soon as possible so he or she can make any desired adjustments prior to the next performance. If the missing item is a major piece or very specific to the character you should contact the designer immediately to find out how you should handle the situation. All of this takes time which is why it is so important to do check-in immediately upon arrival.

You will be given the costume check-in sheets early in the tech process. You should take the time to review these and familiarize yourself with each costume,
especially if you will be using it for a quick change—remember that knowing where various snaps and buttons are can help a great deal when you are doing a change for the first time in the dark.

**Laundry**

For the majority of shows laundry must be done following every performance. The Department of Theatre and Dance has access to one washing machine and two dryers which are located in the craft room of the costume shop in room 307 of Ivan Wilson.

- Specific lists of what items should be included in particular loads of laundry will be generated by the wardrobe supervisor in conjunction with the designer of the show.

- Do not attempt to wash items which are listed as dry clean only. Washing could destroy the garment. Shout wipes are provided in the wardrobe kit for spot cleaning. If an item becomes very soiled during the run of a show, contact Shura, Cassandra, or the designer of the show to determine what needs to be done.

- Temperature settings will be determined according to what is in each load.

- In most cases an eight minute cycle will be sufficient.

- Laundry detergent and stain removers are found on the shelves in behind the washing machines. Remember to use less detergent for smaller loads.

- Begin filling the machine with water and add liquid or powdered detergent prior to adding clothing to the machine. This helps eliminate the chances of spotting clothing or having detergent clump onto the fabric.

- Wash delicate items in a lingerie bag which can be found on the shelving next to the detergent.

- Use diluted Simple Green (1:30) to remove make-up and other stains. Pre-treat items and allow them to stand for about ten minutes before washing.

- Shout is also provided for stain removal.

- Some items must hang dry, but most articles of clothing can be put in the dryer, using dryer sheets as needed.

- Remember to empty the dryer’s lint trap before starting another load.

- Some items may require hand washing. To do this you should use a plastic hand washing bin located on the shelf behind the washer and dryer, fill it with water, and add a small amount of laundry detergent. Allow items to soak for a few
minutes and then agitate gently using your hands. Pay special attention to stains, underarms, and any other especially smelly areas. Squeeze out as much water as possible and either hang or lay flat to dry.

Ironing and Steaming

The costume shop uses an industrial steam iron, a domestic iron, and a clothes steamer.

The industrial iron is located on the corner of the ironing table and ironing aids including tailor’s hams, sleeve boards, and needle boards are located below. Extra containers of distilled water are stored in the craft room. Never use tap water in the industrial or domestic irons. There are two ironing boards with sleeve board attachments in the costume shop. One is set up for use with the domestic iron and the other can be set up next to the ironing table for use with the industrial iron.

If the iron becomes dirty use the iron cleaner found beneath the ironing table and follow the directions on the tube. Do not continue to press with a dirty iron.

Use the ironing aids which are provided. They make your job a great deal easier and help the garments maintain their shape and look their best. A tailor’s ham should be used to emulate the various curves of the body. The sleeve board is, of course, used to iron sleeves, cuffs, or other narrow areas of a garment. A needle board is used to press velvet. In order to do this place the needle board on the ironing table or board with the needles pointing up and place the velvet to be pressed on the board with the nap of the velvet pointed down into the needles. You can then lightly press the back of the velvet. Pressing velvet without a needle board will crush the nap and ruin the garment.

Many costume items are easier to steam than to press and some pieces should only be steamed. The designer of your show will give you specific information regarding the pressing or steaming needs of each item at the beginning of tech week. Since steaming is used to not only release wrinkles, but also to make a garment appear fresh, steaming should occur no more than a few hours before the show.

The steamer will be set up at a convenient location for your show. When filling the steamer, first check the water level. Never put more water in a steamer than is recommended by the manufacturer! Over filling a steamer will cause it to shoot very hot water from the nozzle. If this happens turn off the steamer and empty the excess water. When re-filling the steamer only use distilled water. Tap water can eventually cause damage to the steamer or irons, and we need to maintain the shop equipment so it will function properly for the people who need to use it next.

To use the steamer make sure it is plugged in and then turn the dial to the on position. It will then take up to two minutes to get steam. In order to steam a garment, hold the nozzle of the steamer directly against the cloth and gently smooth out the wrinkles. You may need to steam some items from the inside of the garment in order to achieve the best results. When the steamer is not in use you need to turn it off. When the steamer begins to smell hot and the steam begins to appear somewhat smoky you are running out of water. Turn the dial to the off position and refill the steamer. The directions for operating the steamer are also posted on the steamer itself.
Repairs

Although every effort is made during the construction and alteration process to provide the actors with garments which can withstand the wear and tear a show brings, minor repairs are almost inevitable. Most of these repairs consist of replacing buttons or hooks and bars, or repairing minor tears in a seam or hem. If you have not worked in the costume shop please take the time to familiarize yourself with its layout and the locations of supplies. A bin of scrap fabrics from your show is available for your use in repairs. In addition to the supplies in the costume shop each show will be provided with a wardrobe run crew kit including things such lint rollers, basic sewing supplies, and replacement buttons for your show. This kit will live in the dressing room for convenient access during shows.

Prior to every performance you will post a sheet in the make-up area to list costume repairs which are needed. Check this list immediately following the performance. Once the show opens you are responsible for completing these repairs prior to the performance. Make sure you leave enough time to complete these notes as well as laundry, check in, and other duties. If there are major repairs needed which you are unable to do contact the designer of your show, Shura, or Cassandra to make other arrangements.

During the Performance

During the performance you must be readily available to help with quick changes, general dressing, emergency repairs, and anything else you can reasonably do to help the actors. It is critical that you stay in the area near the performance while the show is going on. An actor or other crew member should not have to waste valuable time searching for you if you are needed unexpectedly. Emergency repairs do occur, so it is best for you to be prepared. You should have safety pins on you at all times. It is also helpful to have a needle and thread, scissors, and pliers. A flashlight can be especially helpful during quick changes.

The level of difficulty for quick changes varies depending on the show and the costumes involved. The key to successful quick changes is anticipating what needs to happen and in what order it will occur. This anticipation is even more important if you have more than one quick change happening at once. Prior to the beginning of first dress you should find a time to sit down with the actor who you will be assisting during quick changes and talk through your plan of action. This includes when the change occurs, where the change will be done, in what order garments will be removed, and in what order the new costume will be put on. Especially difficult quick changes should be rehearsed with the actor prior to dress rehearsal. Be prepared to run such changes until they are right. Each time you do a change it will get faster and easier. You are responsible for pre-setting any costumes needed for a quick change. Following quick
changes you should take the discarded costume pieces back to the dressing room and hang them up immediately.

When you are not involved in a quick change you should assist any actor who may need your help dressing or do any possible repairs to save time the next day. Remain alert and prepared for anything that may occur. If you have any down time you must stay in the backstage area, but you may work on homework, read, or work on a small project which can be quickly laid aside.

Following the Show

Immediately following the show you should collect laundry and complete the check-out sheet. Some items may need to be sprayed with Febreeze or disinfectant at this time. The inside of all shoes must be sprayed with disinfectant after each performance. After finishing the check-out sheets and getting the laundry to the point the wardrobe supervisor, designer or instructor determined, check out with the stage manager if required, and you are then free to go. Before leaving you should secure the dressing rooms, make sure the irons, steamer, sewing machines, and radio are turned off, and lock the costume shop.

Strike

Attendance at strike is mandatory. Costume strike is a relatively quick process which is usually completed within two to three hours. During strike you will do laundry, separate dry cleaning, spray shoes with disinfectant and restock, return lightly used items to stock, strike hang tags and bags, clean the dressing rooms, and prepare rented items for return. Wardrobe is generally released at the end of costume strike.
To be done on pieces of muslin. Put your name or initials on each finished piece and write the name of the skill(s) on the muslin as well.

MACHINE

*Backstitch all ends, and cut all “googlies”, please.*

**Straight stitch**—“regular” stitching—stitch length 2 ½ to 3

**Seam allowance**—the distance of your seam from the edge of the fabric

1. **Straight seam** two 5”x12” pieces on long edge, 1” seam allowance, and **press open**

   *Serge, overlock, merrow*—to sew with a special machine with three or 4 separate needles and threads. Finishes off the raw edge to keep it from unraveling. Can also be used to sew seams, particularly for stretch fabric.

2. **Serge** each side of the seam allowance from #1, separately. Serge a foot space from the seam.

   **Top stitch**—straight stitching which shows on the outside of a garment. Usually used decoratively and/or to reinforce an edge. Usually about ¼” or one foot space from the edge of the garment or seam.

3. **Top-stitch** on both sides of your pressed open seam #1

   *Zig-zag stitch*—a machine stitch with stitch width larger than zero. Can be used to finish edges, add stretch to a seam, attach trim, or as decorative topstitching.

4. On folded piece, sew a row of **zig-zag** at each width, a **foot space** apart.

5. **Bagged-out curved seam**: curved seam of straight stitch, trim, clip and turn. Use two 5”x12” pieces. See sample.

   **Machine hem**—concealing a raw edge by folding fabric in and stitching it down by machine.

6. **Machine hem**: On one 5”x12” piece, turn edge in ½” and then 1” (use iron to press each fold first) and then straight stitch close to folded edge.
HAND
on one folded square:
1. running stitch—“regular” hand stitching
   draw a line, and sew on it with running stitch

2. whip stitch—sewing in a spiral over an edge, or to join two pieces of fabric together.
   Often used to close up a hole, such as finishing a pillow. Used to hold down interior
   finishing edges, such as inner edges of collars or waistbands.
   Sew a label onto the folded muslin, near but not on your running stitch, with a whip
   stitch.

#3, 4, 5: On one piece folded in half. Sew with double thread. (or, when not on muslin,
   usually we use hymark (strong thread)).

3. Two or four-hole button sewn flat.

4. Two or four-hole button sewn with shank. Button sewn loosely, and thread is
   wrapped around stitches between button and fabric.

5. hook and eye or hook and bar. Used to close openings under tension. Not good
   without tension—will tend to un-hook. Can be supplemented with snaps, or hooks in two
   directions.

On one 5x12” piece:
6. hand hem—like a whip stitch, but with only the tiniest stitch through the exterior
   layer. Used to finish edges of garments when you do not want to see stitching on the
   outside.