

Ponderosa High School Beginning Drama Class



Student Handbook 2023-2024

www.pondodrama.com



Ponderosa Stage Productions



PHS Drama

Please keep this handbook in your binder. It's required to be in class every day.

Drama Handbook

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After reviewing this handbook with your parents, complete the class contract by _____.

Beginning Drama
Ponderosa High School

Renée Fritz
Instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This yearlong course is designed for students with limited or no theatre experience, and promotes enjoyment and appreciation for all aspects of theatre including performance, theatre history & terminology, and play analysis. Improvisation and beginning scene work are used to introduce students to acting and character development. At the end of spring semester, students will also explore acting techniques for film and tv.

Fall Units of Study

Storytelling <i>Fundamentals of Acting:</i> Pantomime Voice Improvisation Developing Character	FALL FINAL: Monologues Terms Test
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Spring Units of Study

Improvisation: <i>Theatresports</i> Commedia dell'Arte Play Study: TBA	SPRING FINAL: Film Project "Commercial Parody Awards" Terms Test
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EXTRA-CURRICULAR REQUIREMENT: The best way to learn about theatre is to experience it. Students are expected to see at least one PHS production over the course of each semester and complete a play review form. (Page 9)

CLASS FORMAT: A beginning class has lots of warm ups and theatre games to get everyone used to the stage. Offstage you can expect lecture notes, Bell Ringer journals, quizzes, and projects. Performances may be group or solo. If you're using your time wisely, you should have no homework. Flex sign ups are available if you need to meet with your partner or group outside of class.

GOOGLE CLASSROOM is the main hub for classwork, including unit slides, makeup work, performance sign ups, upcoming PHS shows, and links to online curriculum. Please note, grades for quizzes taken in Google Classroom are visible in Aeries.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES like phones and tablets are sometimes used as part of the curriculum. If you don't have a phone, you can use a Chromebook located in the hallway. Other than for curricular purposes, *phones are not allowed in class*.

SUPPLIES NEEDED: A binder, *or* section of a binder, labeled "Drama Class" with *one* pocket divider for handouts, and plenty of pens, pencils & highlighters for script notes.

GRADING POLICIES

Your presence in this class is vital to your grade. If you're chronically absent on performance days, it will seriously affect your grade.

40% of your grade is rehearsal time & in-class work

This includes Bell Ringer journals, worksheets, and art projects. Rehearsal is defined as the time prior to performance, when the unit goals are being visibly demonstrated to the instructor through daily practice as preparation for a final performance.

60% of your grade is in Performances, Quizzes/Tests & Projects Category

Performance is defined as you, or your partner/group, onstage in front of the class and instructor demonstrating through performance the skills that you learned in this unit. You receive feedback on your performance--in acting, this is called getting "notes." Ensemble performances ("group" work) receive two separate grades: individual & group performance.

Rehearsal Points System: Every class day is worth 5 *Rehearsal Points*, for a total of 15 Rehearsal Points each week. Total Rehearsal Points are given at the end of each grading period. If you want to earn all the points here's how:

- Attend drama class daily
- Arriving prepared & ready to engage, without distractions (phones, socializing, etc.)
- Participate onstage warmups
- Actively rehearse by standing up, moving around (Sitting ≠ rehearsal.)
- Memorizing with a partner
- Ask fellow student actors to watch your rehearsal
- Be willing to watch other students' rehearsals
- Raising up fellow student actors when they appear nervous or unsure
- Approach Mrs. Fritz with questions related to your project
- Take rehearsal time seriously: *The quality of your rehearsal time is a direct reflection of the quality of your performance*

ABSENT WORK (non-performance only): You get the number of days you were absent plus one to turn your work in. Absent work must be turned in directly to me at the beginning of class. If you miss a quiz you must take it during the assigned "Makeups" Flex period. You may not make up work if your absence is a cut in Aeries.

LATE WORK: I will accept any late work for partial credit only on the last Friday of each grading period. You can *only* receive credit by handing it directly to me. *Due to the nature of my job as director of our school productions, I'm not always able to enter late work immediately. Late work may not receive feedback (rubrics or stage notes).*

"NEXT CLASS" PASS: At the end of this handbook is a "Next Class Pass" for each semester. These give you one extra day to turn in a late assignment for full credit. At the end of the semester you can turn in unused passes for extra credit points.

ATTENDANCE POLICY & YOUR PERFORMANCE GRADE

The show must go on!

Performance assessment dates are announced a minimum of 1-2 weeks beforehand, giving you plenty of time to arrange your schedule. **A single, unexcused performance can have a serious impact on your entire grade. If you're unexpectedly absent on your Performance Day, you or your parent must email me the day of your performance: rfritz@eduhd.net**

FIRST PERFORMANCE ABSENCE: You are allowed ONE makeup performance per semester, with these conditions:

1. The absence must be excused in Aeries, and
2. You (or your parent) must notify me of your absence on the day of the performance via email or Remind.

If you miss a **solo performance**, you *may* be able to perform if we're still in the performance window. If not you'll need to bring me a "Request for Flex Performance Appointment" form (page 5). If you don't do this on the day you return to class, you won't be able to make up your performance.

If you miss an **ensemble (group) performance**, you must notify me, and your group members via school email. On the day of your performance, a stand-in will deliver your lines & blocking. Actors grades are not penalized for another actor's absence. Depending upon the amount of time & work that went into the performance you will either complete an assignment from the Drama Choice Board, or write an full essay with citations. For example - a short scene performance that we worked on for a week would equal reading a dramatics article of my choosing & writing a 5 paragraph essay with quotes from the article for evidence. An ensemble piece that we have been preparing for a month would equal a 5-7 page (typed) research paper on a major playwright of my choosing with a minimum of 3 different cited sources.

If you miss a performance date for a second time, you receive a 0%. The only exception is if you have a doctor's note for the date of the performance, or if your parent contacts me directly to explain a legitimate emergency.

NON-PERFORMANCE: Any student who is present on performance day but refuses to perform will receive a "0" with no makeup. If you're too sick to perform, you should be at home in bed! If you are having stage fright, come talk to me beforehand. If you aren't performing because you feel unprepared, see me before we start. I may allow you to read from your script for partial credit (better than zero), especially if you demonstrate other acting skills.

Students in a PHS Sport or outside activity must provide ensemble members with the times they'll be missing rehearsals. I will work to schedule your performance on a day when you're not absent for your sport or activity.

Request for
Flex Performance Appointment

Complete this form with Mrs. Fritz the day you return to class.

Name:

Period:

Date of the Missed Performance:

The agreed upon Performance Appointment has been set for this Flex Period:

Day: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reminder: You are allowed ONE makeup performance per semester, as long as:

1. Your absence was excused in Aeries, and
2. You (or your parent) emailed me on the day of your missed performance

Mrs. Fritz is not responsible for reminding you of your appointment.

PHS THEATRE HOUSE RULES

WE ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE A NICE THEATRE.

UPON ENTERING THIS THEATRE YOU HEREBY AGREE TO ABIDE BY,
AND ENFORCE, THE FOLLOWING RULES:

1. NO FOOD, DRINKS, OR GUM
2. NO FEET ON THE SEATS, SEAT ARMS OR BACKS
3. DO NOT CLIMB OVER THE BACK OF THE SEATS
4. DO NOT JUMP ON OR OFF THE STAGE--USE THE STAIRS ON EITHER SIDE
5. PERSONS MAY BE BACKSTAGE, ONSTAGE OR IN THE TECH BOOTH *WITH PERMISSION ONLY*
6. USE OF GREENROOM BATHROOMS NOT PERMITTED
7. IF IT'S NOT YOUR WIG, COSTUME OR PROP, DON'T TOUCH IT
8. STUDENTS AREN'T ALLOWED TO LEAVE ANY PART OF THE THEATRE BUILDING WITHOUT PERMISSION
9. CELL PHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED DURING CLASSROOM TIME (*EXCEPT FOR CURRICULAR PURPOSES, WHICH ARE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS WHEN NECESSARY*)

CONSEQUENCES FOR BREAKING THE RULES

1st time: Warning

2nd Time: Cleaning the theatre at lunch

(so you understand what it takes to maintain this space)

3rd Time: Phone call home and REFERRAL TO ADMINISTRATION

EXCEPTIONS TO RULES 7 & 8

RULE #7 LEAVING THE THEATRE WITHOUT PERMISSION RESULTS IN AN AUTOMATIC DETENTION. AFTER THE SECOND TIME, REFERRAL TO ADMINISTRATION.

RULE #8 AFTER ONE WARNING, YOUR PHONE GOES TO PHONE JAIL ON THE APRON.

At lunch, there is a designated area near the stage to eat at drama club meetings.

THEATRE SAFETY RULES

We observe two types of safety rules in drama: physical and emotional. The physical safety rule is very simple: *no unplanned bodily contact*. The emotional safety rule is just as important. You and your peers put yourselves on the line when you perform for each other. You openly share yourself with us and then allow others to comment on your expression. This is a big deal. Therefore:

- Raise each other up--especially if you see someone who really needs it
- Always applaud performances. Applause is good for the soul--you'll want it when it's your turn.
- When a performance begins, please be quiet. A distracted audience member can impact the emotional concentration of the performer.
- Please keep the drama onstage. This class requires a mental focus that is hard to achieve if you're dwelling on what happened at lunch.
- Drama exercises are all designed to build trust in fellow actors. The theatre is not a place for gossip, name calling or hurtful comments about personal issues.
- When in doubt, choose kindness.

MATURE CONTENT POLICY: Many award winning theatrical plays, scenes and monologues have objectionable words, subject matter and situations. You aren't allowed to perform material that is inappropriate for a classroom situation. If you really want to perform a scene or monologue but you think it may violate this policy, *meet with me first*. I can determine if cuts or revisions could make it acceptable for the classroom environment.

To learn more about our drama program here at PHS visit our website at:

www.pondodrama.com

IMPORTANT DATES TO KNOW

Our campus theatre company, *Ponderosa Stage Productions*, puts on several productions throughout the year. **Attendance at both Mainstage shows is an extracurricular requirement for all drama students (mainstage shows are in bold).** Tickets are announced 2-3 three weeks before opening night. Students can see the play for free if they usher a performance.

2023-2024 Play Season

FALL MAINSTAGE SHOW: *Macbeth* (aka *The Scottish Play*)

Audition Date: Wednesday, August 23 (After school)

Show Dates: Nov. 2nd-4th & Nov. 9th-11th

Curtain: 7 pm (2 pm Matinee on Saturday Nov. 11)

Children's Theatre October 4th & 5th

Winter Shorts: (Lenaea Festival Previews)

Show Date: Wednesday, January 31 7 pm

(Depending on when Open House is scheduled, the performance may be Thursday, Feb. 1. You will be notified well in advance of any change.)

SPRING MAINSTAGE SHOW: *Shrek, the musical*

Auditions: January 16-18, 2024

Show Dates: April 11th-13th & April 18-20th

Curtain: 7 pm (2 pm Matinee on Saturday April 13 & April 20)

Drama Night: Awards Ceremony & Comedy Night

Thursday, May 16th Curtain is 7 pm

- Both mainstage shows have 6-8 performances over two weekends, with both evening and day shows to see. Since play reviews constitute 10% of your grade, you should plan ahead to work them into your schedule.
- If you perform or are on the crew for a mainstage show, you are exempt from the Play Review requirement.

The Play Review Requirement *(10% of semester grade)*

All students in the PHS Drama Department are required each semester to see both Main Stage productions (the Fall Play & the Spring Musical) and complete a Play Review.

Why is seeing a play at PHS a requirement? Watching a performance put on by other students in our program allows you to experience a real time application of concepts we learn in class every day. You'll gain an appreciation of the work your peers put into these shows. Most students come back from seeing a show inspired by what they've seen and even changed! (And some even decide to be a part of the next show.)

1. **Exactly how do I fulfill the play requirement?** In the fall, attend the fall play. In the spring, see the musical. For each show, complete a Play Review form with a ticket stub attached.
2. **What if I can't afford to purchase a ticket?** You can see any play for free if you sign up to usher a performance. Talk to Mrs. Fritz for other ways to see the show for free.
3. **When do I need to see the shows?** The fall play runs Nov.. The spring musical runs . You may attend any show; both shows have five evening performances at 7 pm and 1 Saturday matinee at 2 pm.
4. **What is a Play Review form and when do I turn it in?** Pick up a Play Review form from me. Fill out this form completely and attach your ticket stub as proof that you saw the show. **Your Play Review needs to be turned in within five days of closing night.**
5. **I lost my ticket stub to attach as proof that I saw a show. What do I do?** Take the form home and get a parent signature on the sheet. Have your parent write a note on it saying that you did attend the following event *with their signature*.
6. **How much is the requirement worth?** Play Reviews end up being around 10% of your grade. Missing a Play Review *will* have an impact on your grade. It's a good idea to plan in advance which show you'll see so you don't miss the requirement.
7. **I was an actor or crew member in a Main Stage production here at PHS. Do I still have to fill out a Play Review?** *If you attended all required rehearsals and shows, you are exempt.*
8. **I volunteered as an usher or ticket-taker for a production, or I worked a few times on set building. Do I still have to fill out a Play Review?** *Yes.*

Non-PHS plays: If you've already seen a PHS Mainstage show you can receive extra credit by seeing a live stage play at another theatre. You *must* have an official ticket stub and complete a Play Review form. You can't receive more extra credit for seeing more than one outside show, and only shows staged during the school year are eligible.

Student Name: _____ Period: ____ Due by: _____

PHS Drama Class Contract

Dear Student: Please place your initials next to each requirement for this class, and then sign at the bottom. Return this contract at the date indicated above.

_____ I have read the Class Handbook & will keep it in the front of my binder.

_____ I promise to abide by the policies & understand the consequences.

_____ I understand the extracurricular requirements and have discussed them with my parent(s).

Dear Parent: Please review these requirements with your son or daughter carefully. Your signature below indicates that you understand and support the expectations for drama class. If you have any questions, please contact me at rfritz@eduhd.net.

_____ I understand the extracurricular requirements and have discussed them with my parent(s).

Signature of student: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Parent email and/or phone: _____

I look forward to making this class an enjoyable learning experience for you all.

Renee Fritz

PHS Drama Instructor

Program Director, Ponderosa Stage Productions

www.pondodrama.com

Parents, please indicate below whether or not you allow photographs of your child on our website:

_____ I allow my student's image to be used on the PHS Drama Website.

_____ I do NOT allow my student's image to be used on the PHS Drama Website.