

Ponderosa High School Drama Class



ADVANCED DRAMA
Student Handbook
2023-2024

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



Ponderosa Stage Productions

www.pondodrama.com



PHS Drama

Drama Handbook

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After reviewing this handbook with your parents, complete the class contract by Friday, August 18.

Advanced Drama Remind Code: 4424bk

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is a performance-based class that stages productions both in and outside of class. Students will develop an understanding of the dramatic arts by repeatedly performing pieces of theatre – from improv and children's theatre to published works of art. Projects including playwriting, directing or backstage production will also be a part of class. The expectation is that every student will be learning to perform at a level acceptable for community theatre. Mastering and following all of the rules and etiquette of theatre is essential.

COURSE UNIT OVERVIEW:

Fall 2023

Children's Theatre

Enchanted Follies

Lenaea Festival Pieces

Student-directed One Act

FINAL: Scenes, monologues & musical pieces (Auditions)

Spring 2024

Winter Shorts Show

(Festival Previews)

Play Analysis & Scenes

FINAL: Drama Night Selections

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PERFORMANCES REQUIREMENTS:

Oct. 4-5 Children's Theatre (Day time performances)

January 31* Winter Shorts Show Call: 5:30 pm

Feb. 1 Open House (Lenaea performances)

Feb. 2 Lenaea Field Trip (Friday field trip)

May 16 Drama Night

Advanced Drama Flex Day: Every Thursday

Any student not on cast or crew for a Mainstage production (Macbeth or Shrek) must attend & write a review for the current production. Students on cast or running crew for a mainstage show are exempt from this requirement.

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- Pen/pencil & highlighters for script notes
- A 1" binder for performance scripts
- Rehearsal Handbook (Supplied, and it required in your binder all year)

GRADING POLICIES

40% Rehearsal

60% Performance/Major Project

Performance Attendance at each of the three required performances listed on page two of the handbook is mandatory. Expect an after school dress rehearsal the day before each performance.

Please Note: Because you're participating in whole-class productions, your presence in this class is vital to your grade. In advanced drama, chronic absences not only affect your grade, they are inconsiderate to the rest of the class who are depending on your presence *for a real show*. If you know in advance that you have an unavoidable absence on one of our performance dates you must inform me immediately so that arrangements can be made for either an understudy or a pre-production role (assisting Mrs. Fritz or the stage manager).

An **unavoidable absence** means something important that your parents have already pre-planned. (For instance, a family wedding.) It does not include true emergencies. Performance absences require a parent/guardian signature.

It is expected that you make Advanced Drama performances a priority over other outside activities. If you do a sport, are on the Acadec team, in choir, or have a job, you must notify me well in advance of missed dates. I'll make every effort to work with you if you are upfront. Understand that leading roles are given to students with no conflicts.

Rehearsal: As you've already taken a beginning drama class, you should be familiar with the rehearsal grading process.

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. Your total points are based on:

- Attending drama class daily
- Arriving in the theatre prepared to rehearse
- Not having your phones out backstage or in the wings
- Memorizing with a partner
- Asking fellow student actors to assess your rehearsal
- Watching other rehearsals from the wings for inspiration & support
- Waiting until we're offstage to ask
- Taking rehearsal time seriously

ATTENDANCE POLICY for *Non-extra curricular performances*

Performance assessment dates are announced a minimum of 1-2 weeks beforehand, giving you plenty of time to arrange your schedule.

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 *maybe* 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. This form is not to be used for an extra-curricular performance (like Children's Theatre).

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. Tickets are announced 2-3 three weeks before opening night. Students can see the play for free if they usher a performance.

Advanced drama students are required to attend shows in bold.

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 (Final dress is after school, Oct. 3)

Winter Shorts: (Lenaea Festival Previews)

Show Date: Wednesday, January 31 Call is 5:30

Final dress is after school, the day before.

(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

Dress rehearsal is after school, May 15th

Curtain: 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.

Advanced drama students are not required to audition for mainstage shows, but it's encouraged.

Play Review Requirement

All students in the PHS Drama Department are traditionally 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. 3, 4, 5, 10 & 12.. The spring musical runs March 23-25, 30, 31 and April 1. 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 Advanced 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 performance 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 performance expectations for this class. If you have any questions, please contact me at rfritz@eduhd.net.

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.

Parents/Students: If you're aware of any pre-planned absences on the performances dates listed in the handbook, please let me know below so I can plan. Thank you.