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United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc.

# Tenure & Promotion Guidelines

Adopted by the USITT Board of Directors, 2014

USITT

315 South Crouse Avenue, Suite 200

Syracuse, NY 13210

315-463-6463

[info@usitt.org](mailto:info@usitt.org)



# Table of Contents



<b>History</b>	5
<b>Preamble</b>	5
<b>Areas of Evaluation</b>	
1. Creative/Research Activities	7
2. Teaching	7
3. Service	8
<b>Workload</b>	8
<b>Mentoring</b>	9
<b>Documentation</b>	10
<b>Appendices</b>	
Costume Designers	14
Costume Technicians/Technologists	16
Projection and Media Designers	18
Scenic Designers	20
Stage and Production Managers	22
Technical Directors	24
Sound Designers	26
Lighting Designers	28



## History

A previous version of this document, published in 1987, significantly addressed the area of workload and working conditions for theatre faculty. By 2000, USITT believed a revision was in order. Theatre as a discipline was still relatively new to the academy. The methodologies of the discipline and the forms of research and creative activity fell outside the mainstream of traditional academic pursuits. While academic institutions generally embraced theatre productions as an important part of the cultural life of the academy, they were not entirely sure how to evaluate the creative work of faculty in design, production, and theatre technology in relationship to traditional academic scholarship. The 2000 revision addressed itself to the issues of process and expectations about academic activities and professional standards.

Acknowledging that theatre disciplines and higher education itself have continued to change and progress, this report, begun in 2013 and published in 2014, is timely.

## Preamble

The United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Inc. (USITT) is the association of design, production, and technology professionals in the performing arts and entertainment industry. Its membership consists of more than 3,500 individuals who work in the professional theatre and entertainment industries, as well as in academe. As a service to its membership, USITT charged an internal committee with examining the issues regarding tenure and promotion in higher education as they affect theatre design, production, stage management, and technical production faculty in colleges and universities.

The USITT guidelines for tenure and promotion strive to impart to its members a general understanding of tenure and promotion, as well as establishing clear

professional standards by which performance should be evaluated by colleagues and administrators at their institutions. USITT recognizes the necessary differences among academic institutions and does not attempt to suggest a single, standardized set of procedures or levels of achievement for faculty evaluation or accomplishment.

- It is the position of USITT that the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree is the appropriate terminal degree for faculty appointments related to creative/research activities involved in the public performance of theatrical events.
- It is the position of USITT that creative/research activities—including designing scenery, costumes, lighting, sound, and projections, as well as the technical execution of those designs by specialists in technical production, stage management, and production management—are appropriate forms of creative/research activity for faculty teaching within the disciplines, generally, of theatre or dance. These creative/research activities require substantial analysis, historical, and technological research, and the synthesis of information; they result in the creation of new works of art that are widely disseminated through public performance.
- USITT acknowledges that many institutions appoint design and technology faculty to a single tenure-track line with responsibilities in two or more areas of specialization. The evaluation of the candidate's performance should acknowledge the complexities of such an appointment as a single position rather than penalize the candidate by evaluating each area of specialization individually.
- It is the position of USITT that the creative/research activities of design, production, and technology faculty are equivalent to publication. While it is incumbent on each campus to determine the scope and appropriateness of such work, USITT recommends that all off-campus design and production work be considered the equivalent of juried, refereed publication.

Each campus will have a formal—and often informal—definition of the role of a faculty or staff member based on the mission of the institution. Candidates should begin to examine that definition, and the route to successfully meeting those expectations, as soon as possible. Usually there are three areas of concern to a personnel committee: creative/research activity, teaching, and service. Each campus and/or department may give differing weight to the importance of these areas—a candidate should understand the ratio. Similarly, personnel committees usually seek evidence of expertise in current practice, an active trajectory in creative/research activity, and the promise of future productivity and achievement.

If off-campus professional design and/or production work is a mandatory expectation for tenure or advancement in rank, it naturally follows that the institution will make available to the candidate sufficient time and resources to enable the candidate to reasonably achieve this expectation.

## Areas of Evaluation

### 1. Creative/Research Activities

Participation in theatrical productions is the normal mode of professional endeavor for theatrical design, production, and technology faculty. The creative process is documented by the graphics and organizational materials prepared in the planning of the production and by the visual and aural record of the production. Together, such work is considered creative/research activity.

There should be clear understanding between the candidate and his/her department, in advance of preparing a dossier for promotion, on the relative value and importance of

- theatrical activities on campus;
- theatrical activities off-campus in other public venues;
- juried exhibits and/or publications;
- the size and scope of theatre companies with which the candidate is working (e.g., major regional theatres versus local theatre companies);
- the time commitment required.

If off-campus productions will be required for a positive tenure decision, adequate allowances should be made for a faculty member to participate in such productions. Allowances should include covering campus responsibilities for the duration of any required absence.

### 2. Teaching

Quality teaching is an important component of advancement to tenure or promotion. The teaching record should clearly reveal that the candidate is capable of sustaining first-rate teaching during his/her career.

The teaching record should include assessment and evaluation of the candidate's success. Typical forms of evaluation can be

- course evaluation data that include written student comments;
- letters of evaluation from current and former students;
- statements from colleagues who have collaborated with the candidate;
- statements from colleagues who have observed the candidate's teaching;

- written comments from those who teach advanced courses for which a particular course is a prerequisite.

In advance of preparing a dossier for promotion there should be a clear understanding between the candidate and his/her department on the relative value, importance, and time commitments of

- typical forms of teaching including classroom and laboratory teaching;
- informal teaching, such as the interaction with students during the theatrical production process;
- advising;
- mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students;
- and other teaching activities such as curriculum development, pedagogical innovations, or placement of current students and graduates from the program.

### 3. Service

Service is generally evaluated in three categories: to the professional community, to the department/ university community, and to the regional community.

Service to the university is usually defined as the faculty member's involvement in the campus life outside of his/her departmental requirements. This may include presentations on campus or participation in college or university committees, such as faculty senate or personnel committees.

Service to the professional community promotes the discipline of theatre. Service includes professional consulting work, pro bono work for local theatre organizations, and membership and participation in professional organizations such as USITT, the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF), and the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE). Such activity is a natural extension of the design, production, and technology faculty member's teaching and professional work. It expands the individual's professional development and attests to his/her reputation as both educator and practitioner.

### Workload

USITT strongly recommends appropriate time requirements be taken into account when determining faculty workload as early as possible in a faculty member's career. In the case of design, production, and technology faculty, a workload policy should include consideration of

- creative/research activities, classroom teaching assignments, and production assignments;



- required attendance at work calls (such as building scenery, hanging lights, fitting costumes, etc.), technical rehearsals, and dress rehearsals;
- individualized student mentoring;
- service to the department and the institution, such as participation in advising, faculty governance, or other assigned duties.

Time requirements should balance departmental needs and institutional expectations of creative/research activities, with teaching, production, and other service activities assigned by the institution.

Workload structures and definitions vary greatly between institutions, colleges, and departments. Faculty members with a heavy teaching load or multiple production assignments may not be able to participate fully in outside creative/research activities. Likewise, when a heavy load of off-campus creative/research activities is expected, faculty may not be able to participate fully in both departmental teaching and production assignments. It is incumbent on the university, the department, and the faculty member to determine a reasonable workload that takes into account departmental, college, and university expectations for tenure and promotion. Such accommodation might include release time that recognizes production work and mentoring as equivalent to a teaching or service assignment. In any event, there should be a clear understanding of the time commitment required for production activities and some suitable accommodation made in the faculty member's workload.

## **Mentoring**

While some campuses have formal faculty mentoring programs, a candidate for tenure or promotion should develop a network of senior and junior members of the faculty as part of his/her strategy toward tenure and promotion. The demands of the discipline should not blind the candidate to the need for knowing the expectations at all levels of the personnel review process. In order to present evidence that the candidate's overall performance justifies the award of tenure or promotion, it is important for the candidate to work with the department (and institution) to determine the scope and criteria of the review process.

A candidate for tenure or promotion should be apprised regularly of his/her performance before being considered for tenure and be alerted to any concerns regarding progress towards tenure. A candidate should be proactive about seeking input regarding his/her progress, from his/her department chair at all stages of his/her appointment, whether there is a formal review period, a probationary process, or a reappointment review process on his/her campus. This process by no means guarantees the later award of tenure or promotion but should be viewed by the candidate as an opportunity to clarify

workload expectations and identify any shortcomings or unmet expectations of performance.

USITT recognizes the necessary differences between academic institutions (such as Research I or Liberal Arts) and does not attempt to suggest a single, standardized set of procedures, expectations, or levels of achievement for faculty evaluation or accomplishment. However, the following criteria may possibly serve as a basis for discussion. The evaluation of individual accomplishment within a collaborative framework may be best demonstrated by clear evidence of the following:

- degree of collaboration, such as how a candidate contributed to developing the interpretation, concept, and visual style for a given production;
- context in which the work was created, such as scale of performance and venue, numbers of performances, budget, support personnel, length of production preparation;
- validation of the candidate's work through presentation at non-theatrical venues, such as concerts, exhibitions (with juried exhibitions carrying additional importance), readings and presentations, public performances outside of a theatre;
- new knowledge acquired, original art work, or distinctive approaches.

## **Documentation**

A candidate should maintain statements appropriate to his/her institution (e.g. creative/research activity, teaching and/or service philosophy) as well as formal curriculum vitae (CV) that contain clear evidence of the following:

### **1. Creative and/or research activity**

- a. Productions worked on
- b. Names of key collaborators
- c. Venues and dates
- d. Repeat engagements off-campus—indicative of excellent accomplishment
- e. Any design or technology innovations in approach or solution

### **2. Teaching**

- a. Courses taught
- b. Courses created
- c. Curriculum development or innovation
- d. Student successes

### 3. Service

- a. On campus
- b. Off campus, including participation and leadership roles in professional societies

### 4. Honors and awards received

The creative/research process is documented by the graphics and organizational materials prepared in the planning of the production and by the visual and aural record of the production. It is the responsibility of the candidate to provide evaluators with evidence of his/her abilities. Portfolio materials should be of high quality and demonstrate the range of responsibilities inherent in the position of the faculty member being evaluated.

Design, production, and technology portfolio materials might include, but are not limited to

- research and analysis;
- renderings and technical drawings;
- production photographs, video, audio, etc.;
- works in a variety of styles—types of shows, time period, etc.;
- works of different scale—size of venues, budgets, etc.;
- supporting materials that document the organization of information, budgets, or personnel;
- supporting materials that document process and execution of production designs.

Design, production, and technology portfolio materials might be formatted as

- hard-copy printed materials;
- electronic and digital materials;
- original sketches and drawings;
- a web-based portfolio;
- a combination of all of the above.

Design, production, and technology portfolio materials, appropriate to the individual faculty member's appointment, should strive to demonstrate

- mastery and awareness of a complete process;
- written communication skills;

- expertise in current practices;
- awareness of relevant technologies;
- planning and procedural skills;
- budget and personnel management skills;
- awareness of safety procedures and regulations.

While review of such a portfolio by an objective external evaluator is an essential part of any peer review process, reviewers should also have the opportunity to see the candidate's work in situ, in real time, in order to understand the context or circumstances under which the work was created. USITT recognizes that geographic location, budgets, and time provide necessary differences between academic institutions, but it recommends experiencing the live performance of the work whenever possible (and perhaps on more than one occasion) as an important component of the external peer review process and to document the progress and accomplishments of design, production, and technology faculty. If on-campus reviews by external evaluators are a mandatory expectation for tenure or advancement in rank, it naturally follows that there will be a clear understanding of how such evaluators are chosen and by whom. Likewise, it follows that sufficient time and resources will be made available by the institution to enable the reasonable accomplishment of this expectation. ■

# Appendices



Costume Designers

Costume Technicians/Technologists

Projection and Media Designers

Scenic Designers

Stage and Production Managers

Technical Directors

Sound Designers

Lighting Designers

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Costume Designers

The costume designer is an artist/scholar/teacher who designs the costumes that enhance a given production in general and a characterization in particular. The costumes should visually express the stylistic interpretation of the drama unique to the production. They should meet the needs of the actors and the director (and sometimes dancers and choreographers) by allowing for appropriate movement and staging. The designs should also enhance or harmonize with the other visual elements such as scenery and lighting.

Though accomplished costume designers vary greatly in their depth of knowledge and ability in any one area, the range of proficiency typically required of a costume designer includes:

### 1. Design

- a. Ability to communicate ideas clearly through sketches using a variety of media
- b. Knowledge and ability to manipulate the elements of design
- c. Knowledge of the materials and methods of costume construction, including fabrics and fitting
- d. Knowledge of movement for acting, dance, and stage combat and the related requirements of costumes
- e. Knowledge of fabric modification, including dyeing, painting, lamination, and distressing
- f. Knowledge of techniques in costume crafts, such as masks
- g. Knowledge of safety procedures and regulations as they apply to costume construction
- h. Understanding of the related production design areas—scenic design, lighting design, and makeup design
- i. The ability to communicate effectively with the director of a production as well as the costume technicians

- j. Knowledge of standard safety procedures and regulations as well as rules prescribed by related professional organizations such as Actors' Equity Association

## 2. Literature and history

- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres
- b. Excellence in textual analysis of scripts
- c. Knowledge of historical dress, including ethnic dress and accessories, non-Western and unique theatrical costume, Western theatrical costume, and differing national styles of historic dress
- d. Knowledge of historic textiles and decoration
- e. Knowledge of art history as it relates to dress
- f. Knowledge of social and popular history, including period manners and movement
- g. Knowledge of the history of makeup, hair, wigs, and costume crafts, such as masks
- h. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production, with emphasis on the visual elements of costume, scenery, properties, and lighting

## 3. Administration

- a. Excellence in oral, written, and graphic communication skills to secure sensitive translation of designs into workable costumes
- b. Ability to work and collaborate with various artists, technologists, and technicians, many of whom may be unskilled students with various levels of experience, in a variety of professional and academic settings
- c. Excellence in financial management, including budget development and materials acquisition
- d. Ability to oversee the technical execution of costumes to ensure they accurately reflect the designs as sketched

Overall excellence from the costume designer requires the ability to consistently integrate knowledge in the areas noted above with an understanding of the conceptual requirements of a given production to produce costume designs that are both artistically and technically sound and within the constraints of the producing organization. Such expertise is demonstrated by participation in realized production. Off-campus professional activities, such as conference presentations, leadership roles in professional societies, and design opportunities, are strongly encouraged. ■

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Costume Technicians/Technologists

The costume technologist is an artisan/scholar/teacher charged with directing the technology aspects of a theatre's costume production operation. The costume technologist typically oversees the work of staff, student, and volunteer technicians, and sometimes student designers. Thus, the costume technologist must be evaluated as both a practicing technician and an administrator.

Though individuals vary greatly in their depth of knowledge and ability in any one area, the range of proficiency typically required of the costume technologist includes the following:

### 1. Technology and design

- a. Knowledge of costume design practices
- b. Excellence in the ability to effectively translate the designer's renderings
- c. Excellence in costume construction, including contemporary/period construction, silhouettes, and style lines
- d. Advanced knowledge of materials and methods of costume construction, including fabrics, understructure, pattern development (draping and flat patterning), cutting fabrics and matching patterns when appropriate, properly fitting garments, tailoring techniques
- e. Knowledge of costume crafts, including millinery, masks, armor, jewelry, and shoe repair
- f. General knowledge of hair styles and wig styling and maintenance
- g. Knowledge of fabric modification, including dyeing, distressing, painting, and laminating
- h. Knowledge of historical and modern textiles
- i. Knowledge of safety procedures and regulations as they apply to costume construction and costume crafts



- j. Advanced knowledge of equipment, including sewing machines, sergers, industrial irons, steamers, dye vats, washers and dryers, bone tipping/cutting machines, grommet/covered button presses
- k. Advanced knowledge of movement for acting, dance, and stage combat and the related requirements of costume construction
- l. Skill in wardrobe operations and costume maintenance, including leadership training and skills development in actor/wardrobe dynamics, quick change operations and problem solving, costume repairs, cleaning, and sustainability

## 2. Literature and history

- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres, and excellence in the textual analysis of scripts
- b. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production, with emphasis on the visual elements of costume, scenery, properties, and lighting
- c. Knowledge of the history of dress and clothing construction and the history of art and an understanding of how designers use such knowledge

## 3. Administration

- a. Excellence in managing a construction team or staff, including the first hand, stitchers, skilled and unskilled labor
- b. Excellence in managing the build and fitting schedules
- c. Skill in the range of managerial functions required in the costume operations of a theatre, including scheduling and management of the costume studio and personnel, financial management (budget development, materials acquisition, record keeping), stage and studio maintenance, and equipment acquisitions
- d. Skill in oral and written communication essential to the execution of costumes and to the smooth operation of the costuming operations of the theatre
- e. Ability to work and collaborate under pressure with various artists, technologists, and technicians, many or all of whom may be relatively unskilled students
- f. Capability in the higher levels of planning required in seasonal or repertory contexts ■

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Projection and Media Designers

The projection and media designer is an artist/scholar/teacher whose primary responsibility is designing projection systems and the associated media content for the theatre to enhance a given production. The projections and media should express through visual and aural means the unique stylistic interpretation of a production. Though accomplished projection and media designers vary greatly in their depth of knowledge and ability in any one area, the range of proficiency typically required of the projection and media designer includes:

### 1. Design and technology

- a. Excellence in sharing ideas and concepts in the artistic arena with other artistic staff (i.e., director, other designers, dramaturg, etc.)
- b. Ability to collaborate with artistic staff and support the direction of the production within a visual and aural environment
- c. Ability to share projection and media design ideas with others through verbal, visual, and aural means
- d. Knowledge and ability to manipulate current projection and media technology and systems and image manipulation software for both still and video playback
- e. Knowledge of technology and system analysis and equipment assembly processes for projection work
- f. Knowledge of video photometrics
- g. Knowledge of visual design and the effects of visual and aural stimulation in a human environment
- h. Knowledge of basic rigging, electrical, and electronic techniques/technologies as related to projection and media design
- i. Understanding of the techniques and skills of directing as they relate to projection and media design
- j. Understanding of the related production design areas—costume design,

- lighting design, sound design, and scenic design
- k. Familiarity with video and film shooting, camera operations, video and film lighting, and video and film audio recording
  - l. Knowledge of standard safety procedures and regulations as well as those prescribed by related professional organizations such as Actors' Equity Association
2. Literature and history
- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres, and excellence in textual and structural analysis of scripts
  - b. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production
  - c. Knowledge of music history and music genres
  - d. Knowledge of visual design history, film history, and film genres
  - e. Understanding of basic film editing
  - f. Knowledge of economic and social history
3. Administration
- a. Excellence in oral, written, and aural communication skills needed to secure sensitive translation of designs into reality
  - b. Ability to work and collaborate effectively with artists and technologists in a variety of professional and academic settings
  - c. Knowledge of fiscal management of audio and video production, acquisitions, and maintenance
  - d. Ability to assess the accuracy of the technical execution and operation of visual and auditory elements of the production
  - e. Understanding of editing studio personnel management and scheduling
  - f. Excellence in the higher level planning required in seasonal or repertory contexts
  - g. Experience in organizing and shooting original film and video content

Overall excellence from the projection and media designer requires the ability to integrate knowledge consistently in the areas noted above. Projection and media designers must work with an understanding of the conceptual requirements of a production to create projection and media designs that are both artistically and technically proficient and can be realized within the constraints of budget and available labor for the producing organization. Such expertise is demonstrated in participation in realized production both on and off campus. ■

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Scenic Designers

The scenic designer is an artist/scholar/teacher who designs the scenery (and often properties) that enhances a given production. The scenery should visually express the stylistic interpretation of the drama unique to the production. It should meet the needs of the actors and the director (and sometimes dancers and choreographers) by allowing for appropriate staging and dance spaces, both within the scene and from scene to scene. Further, the setting should complement and integrate with other visual elements of the production such as costumes and stage lighting.

Though accomplished scenic designers vary greatly in their depth of knowledge and ability in any one area, the range of proficiency typically required of the scenic designer includes:

### 1. Design and technology

- a. Excellence in expressing his/her artistic intentions for the setting and the collaborative choices of the production team in sketches, story boards, renderings, and/or scale models; drafting of plans and sections; execution of painter's elevations; scheduling and listing equipment and material selection; and painting
- b. Knowledge about the impact of color, line, shape, texture, movement, and composition and demonstrated excellence in manipulating these design elements
- c. Knowledge of the materials and methods of scenic construction, rigging and shifting, properties, and scenic painting
- d. Knowledge of movement for acting, dance, and stage combat and their related spatial requirements
- e. Understanding of the techniques and skills of directing as they relate to scenic design
- f. Understanding of the related production design areas—projection design, costume design, lighting design, sound design

- g. Knowledge of standard safety procedures and regulations, as well as those prescribed by related professional organizations such as Actors' Equity Association

## 2. Literature and history

- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres, and excellence in textual and structural analysis of scripts
- b. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production, with emphasis on the visual elements of scenery, properties, lighting, and costume
- c. Knowledge of the history of art (artists, historic styles, and genres), architecture, and décor
- d. Knowledge of economic and social history

## 3. Administration

- a. Excellence in oral, written, and graphic communication skills to secure sensitive translation of designs into workable scenery
- b. Ability to work and collaborate effectively with artists and technicians in a variety of professional and academic settings
- c. Knowledge of financial management of scenic production, acquisitions, and maintenance
- d. Ability to assess the accuracy of the technical execution and operation of the scenic elements of the production
- e. Understanding of scenic studio personnel management and scheduling
- f. Excellence in the higher level planning required in seasonal or repertory contexts

Overall excellence from the scenic designer requires the ability to integrate knowledge consistently in the areas noted above. Scenic designers must work with an understanding of the conceptual requirements of a production to create scenic designs that are both artistically and technically sound and can be realized within the constraints of the producing organization. Such expertise is demonstrated by participating in realized production. Off-campus professional activities, such as conference presentations, leadership roles in professional societies, and design opportunities, are strongly encouraged. ■

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Stage and Production Managers

Those charged with evaluating the work of design and production professionals should expect to address appropriate issues including the following when assessing stage managers and production managers. Stage managers practice a discipline in which their creative activity is devoted to enabling and implementing a theatrical work of art. Theatre is a collaborative art involving the contribution of writers, actors, directors, designers, technicians, and an audience. Stage management is the component of this process responsible for the interaction of all these participants, both on the artistic and the human plane.

The process of planning, rehearsing, and performing a theatrical work of art is a paradigm for group activity, the equivalent in the theatre field to traditional research. Successful work requires collaborative efforts from faculty and students. The disciplines of stage and production management are central to this process.

Though individuals vary greatly in their depth of knowledge and ability in any one area, the proficiencies typically required of a stage manager or production manager includes:

### 1. Technology and design

- a. Understanding of scenic, costume, lighting, and sound design practices
- b. Ability to interpret designers' renderings, models, and/or sketches
- c. Ability to communicate effectively with all members of the design and production team regarding resources of time and/or funds to accomplish the project
- d. Ability to use computer resources (spreadsheets, databases, etc.) to support such production process as scheduling and budget management
- e. Understanding of the materials commonly used in scenic construction
- f. Understanding of safe handling procedures for scenic equipment and

materials

- g. Understanding of safe stage operations and stage maintenance, including stage rigging and machinery, stage lighting equipment, and stage audio equipment

## 2. Literature and history

- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres, and demonstrated excellence in textual analysis of scripts
- b. Knowledge of theatrical production history, with emphasis on elements of scenery, properties, lighting, costumes, and sound
- c. Knowledge of art history, especially architecture and décor, and understanding of how designers use such knowledge

## 3. Administration

- a. Ability to coordinate and communicate responsibly and tactfully with diverse artistic personalities
- b. Ability to support the creative environment by anticipating, prioritizing, and solving problems
- c. Demonstrated success in working collaboratively with theatre artists of the highest caliber
- d. Competence in higher levels of planning required in seasonal or repertory contexts
- e. Knowledge of Actors' Equity Association and its rules
- f. Experience in time and personnel management, scheduling, and meeting contractual obligations
- g. Proven organizational skills ■

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Technical Directors

The technical director is an artisan/scholar/teacher charged with directing the technical aspects of a theatre's production operation. The technical director typically oversees the work of staff, student, and volunteer technicians and sometimes student designers. Thus, the technical director must be evaluated as both a practicing technician and an administrator. It must be acknowledged that the work of the technical director should be considered as creative activity in the same manner as any other member of the production/design team.

Though individuals vary greatly in their depth or knowledge and ability in any one area, the range of proficiency typically required of the technical director includes:

### 1. Technology and design

- a. Knowledge of theatrical scenic, costume, lighting, and sound design practices
- b. Skill in creative problem solving and in devising solutions to meet technical and design challenges
- c. Ability to effectively translate the designer's renderings, draftings, models and/or sketches into practical stage settings
- d. Skill in formulating and communicating technological solutions, including technical drafting and model building
- e. Knowledge of materials commonly used in scenic construction and their strengths and safe use
- f. Skill in methods of scenic construction, including plastics fabrication, metal working, carpentry, and cabinet work
- g. Knowledge of safe handling procedures for scenic equipment, hand and power tools, and materials used in scenic construction
- h. Skill in using computer software to support the production process as appropriate (spreadsheets, databases, CAD, etc.)



- i. Skill in stage operations and stage maintenance, including stage rigging machinery, automated systems, stage lighting equipment, and stage audio equipment

## 2. Literature and history

- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres, and excellence in the textual analysis of scripts
- b. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production, with emphasis on the elements of scenery, properties, lighting, sound, projections, and costumes
- c. Knowledge of art history, especially architectural details and décor, and understanding of how designers use such knowledge

## 3. Administration

- a. Skill in the range of managerial functions required in the technical operations of a theatre, including scenic studio and personnel scheduling and management, financial management (budget development, materials acquisition, record keeping), stage and studio maintenance, and equipment acquisitions
- b. Skill in oral and written communication essential to the execution of scenery and to the smooth operation of the technical aspects of the theatre
- c. Ability to work and collaborate under pressure with various artists, technologists, and technicians, many or all of whom may be relatively unskilled students
- d. Capability in higher levels of planning required in seasonal or repertory contexts
- e. Ability to supervise and maintain safe operations in accordance with state and local codes and authorities having jurisdiction (fire, safety, etc.) ■

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Sound Designers

The sound designer is an artist/scholar/teacher whose primary responsibility is designing sound for the theatre to enhance a given production. The sound should express the stylistic interpretation unique to the production. Though accomplished sound designers vary greatly in their depth of knowledge and ability in any one area, the range of proficiency typically required of the sound designer includes:

### 1. Design and technology

- a. Excellent in sharing ideas and concepts with other artistic staff (i.e., director, other designers, dramaturg, etc.)
- b. Ability to collaborate with artistic staff and support the direction of the production within an aural environment
- c. Ability to share sound design ideas with others through both verbal and aural means
- d. Knowledge and ability to manipulate current audio technology and systems, both reinforcement and recording/playback
- e. Knowledge of technology and system analysis and equipment assembly processes for both reinforcement and recording/playback
- f. Knowledge of acoustics
- g. Knowledge of psychoacoustics
- h. Knowledge of basic rigging, electrical, and electronic techniques/technologies as related to sound design
- i. Understanding the techniques and skills of directing as they relate to sound design
- j. Understanding related production design areas (costume design, lighting design, scenic design)
- k. Knowledge of standard safety procedures and regulations, as well as those prescribed by related professional organizations such as Actors' Equity Association

## 2. Literature and history

- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres, and excellent in textual and structural analysis of scripts
- b. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production
- c. Knowledge of music history and music genres
- d. Understanding of basic musical composition principles
- e. Knowledge of economic and social history

## 3. Administration

- a. Excellence in oral, written, and aural communication skills needed to sensitively translate designs into reality
- b. Ability to work and collaborate effectively with artists and technologists in a variety of professional and academic settings
- c. Knowledge of financial management of audio production, acquisitions, and maintenance
- d. Ability to assess the accuracy of the technical execution and operation of the auditory elements of the production
- e. Understanding sound studio personnel management and scheduling
- f. Excellence in higher level planning required in seasonal and repertory contexts

Overall excellence from the sound designer requires the ability to integrate knowledge in the areas noted above. Sound designers must work with an understanding of the conceptual requirements of a production to create sound designs that are both artistically and technically proficient and can be realized with the constraints of the budget and available labor of the producing organization. Such expertise is demonstrated by participating in realized production both on and off campus. ■

## United States Institute for Theatre Technology Tenure and Promotion Guidelines Lighting Designers

The lighting designer is an artist/scholar/teacher who designs the theatrical lighting for productions. Theatrical lighting should express the lighting designer's visual interpretation of the production and at the same time support, reinforce, and enhance the artistic statements of the other members of the production team.

Lighting is a combination of artistic work and technical knowledge and ability. Traits exhibited by individual lighting designers usually include both of these areas, but in wide variance. Many excellent lighting designers know or attribute little importance to technical details, leaving that work to electricians. Other lighting designers have a highly technical background and organize many or all of the technical details themselves, considering that to be an important part of the lighting design process.

Though accomplished lighting designers vary greatly in their depth of knowledge and ability in any one area, the range of proficiency typically required of the lighting designer includes:

### 1. Design and technology

- a. Ability to communicate design intent verbally and visually using methods such as story boards, overlays to renderings, sketches, lighting lab demonstrations, and/or computer renderings
- b. Knowledge of the theories and behavior of light (e.g., optics, reflection, refraction, etc.)
- c. Knowledge of color theory in both light and pigment
- d. Technical knowledge of current lighting equipment and the ability to apply this technology to a given production
- e. Knowledge of theories on the psychological perception of light
- f. Ability to interpret theatrical movement, speech, and music in terms of light

- g. Knowledge of the techniques and skills of directing as they relate to lighting design
- h. Knowledge of safety codes and regulations pertaining to lighting and electricity
- i. Knowledge of energy conservation methods appropriate to lighting and electricity
- j. Basic knowledge of the use of light as a design element in other media, such as film, television, and architecture
- k. Abilities in hand and/or computerized drafting
- l. Understanding of the related production design areas—scenery, scenic painting, costumes, makeup, projections, and sound

## 2. Literature and history

- a. Knowledge of dramatic literature, including historic genres, and excellence in textual analysis of scripts
- b. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production, with emphasis on the visual elements of scenery, projections, lighting, and costumes
- c. Knowledge of art history (artists, historic styles, and genres), especially in the use of light
- d. Knowledge of music and music history

## 2. Administration

- a. Excellence in oral and written communication skills to secure sensitive translation of the design ideas into a theatrical reality
- b. Ability to work and collaborate with various artists and technicians with various levels of experience
- c. Ability to oversee the technical execution and operation of lighting in production
- d. Excellence in the development and management of budgets for lighting equipment and personnel
- e. Knowledge of lighting personnel management and scheduling
- f. Excellence in the higher level planning required in seasonal or repertory contexts

Overall excellence in lighting design requires the ability to consistently integrate knowledge in the areas noted above with an understanding of the conceptual aspects of a given production. The results should be a design that is artistically

and technically sound, and within the limitations of budget, available labor, and equipment of the producing organization.

Because of the ephemeral nature of light, the lighting designer is best evaluated by attending a live performance of a production for which the designer is responsible. Examining a light plot may reveal drafting skills and a sense of the organizational arrangement of lighting in relation to designated acting areas, but does little to evaluate true ability in lighting design. Plots, color charts, and other paperwork should be evaluated but they cannot substitute for the viewing of an actual production. Still or video photography might add some useful information to an evaluation but, again, are inferior to a live production because light affects film and video differently than it does the human eye. If recorded media are used for evaluation of a candidate, the circumstances of the recordings must be clearly stated. ■



