

Garrison School of Visual & Performing Arts



Actors Academy Handbook

Directors:

Alexandra Wambold & Glenda Lanier

Administrators:

James Heater, principal
Vacant, assistant principal

PURPOSE

The purpose of this book is to familiarize the theatre majors and their parent(s)/guardian(s) with the rules and policies of the Esther F. Garrison School of Visual and Performing Arts Actors Academy.

GOALS OF THE THEATRE PROGRAM

1. Provide students with a solid foundation of performance through Acting. This includes providing students with the tools to: dream, reach, discover and create the performing arts, integrate them into their lives, and contribute to the community.
2. Provide students with a performance-based course with an emphasis in straight theatre and musical theatre.
3. Provide students who have interest, talent, and dedication the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge that will prepare them for progression into Savannah Arts Academy's Theatre Program.

EXPECTATION

The success and quality of the Garrison Actors Academy depends on the interest and cooperation of each academy member. You will be given a copy of the GSVPA Actors Academy's Handbook and you should acquaint yourself with the policies and traditions here at Garrison School of Visual & Performing Arts.

As a member of the Garrison Actors Academy, you are representative of this program, the school, and the community. Your dedication and effort is needed to maintain the tradition of excellence that has come to be expected of our Actors Academy, and it is a tradition that you will take pride in now and in the future.

The arts have a unique place in the school's core curriculum. Garrison's comprehensive curriculum focuses on strong technique and incorporates the Georgia Performance Standards. The curriculum is performance and writing focused. However, while it is an academic class in the sense of having definite objectives, there are some parts of the program that require participation outside of the normal school day. Annual performances of straight and musical works, presented to the public, are an important part of training at the school and mark the culmination of the academic semester. This experience allows students to develop discipline, endurance, memory skills and stage presence as they prepare for a professional life in the arts. It is our expectation that students and parents support the program through complete participation and dedication.

ATTENDANCE

Good attendance is an integral part of theatre training and is expected of the students, in order to achieve correct technical and physical development. Every absence adversely affects the rehearsal process and ultimately the performance.

STUDENT LEARNING PROCESS

The ideal student is a healthy child, creative, explorative, outgoing and willingness for intense work in a disciplined learning environment. The student will follow a structural sequence of training and curriculum that is designed to increase skill, creativity, performance ability, and discipline in keeping with their age, maturity and physical development. Corrections are inherent in theatre instruction; therefore, the student will be verbally and physically guided by the teachers to ensure proper advancement and execution of work.

Complete effort is required each day in order to make the experience successful. Using energy produces more energy. It is a wonderful feeling to complete your class or rehearsal knowing that you have done your best. Every class is a performance and all activities must be completed whether or not it has

gone well. Take a mental note of all corrections and go over them in your mind after each class so you do not have to be corrected again for the same thing.

Communication from students to teachers should be respectful. The majority of corrections from teachers will apply to all pupils in a similar situation. Observe other students, learn from them. Apply the information given whether in general and/or personally. The classroom environment is where you will learn to love the process, the frustrations as well as the achievements. Theatre students need to learn to love repetition.

Self-discipline is the only discipline. If class is something you look forward to each day, then you will be spending your energy wisely. When you feel tired or “not up to it,” that is the very day that you have the greatest learning opportunity. Your effort will provide you with a feeling of accomplishment. It is extremely important that the teachers should not have to prod you into doing what you should do for yourself. Students should emphasize full participation.

CLASSROOM RULES

1. Be Respectful.
2. Follow instructions.
3. Control yourself.

CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

1. Conversations between students and playing during class will not be tolerated. All questions concerning technique or activities should be directed towards the teacher.
2. Food and beverages are not allowed in the theatre rooms. Water is allowed during class in a closed plastic thirst bottle that does not require removing the top from the bottle completely. Thirst bottles should be stored in the storage areas and is not permitted on the theatre floor. Litter will not be tolerated.
3. Gum chewing will not be tolerated.
4. Do not bring valuables to school. The theatre teacher is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. A verbal warning is issued to the student.
2. Alternate exercises or written assignments are issued to the student.
3. A parent phone call, letter and/or conference.
4. A school detention. A written notice is sent home with the child to the parent and filed in the student’s theatre file.
5. A school referral.
6. The teacher and/or school administrator will review the issue with the parent/guardian and discuss a strategy for improving behavior. This will be the final opportunity for behavior improvement. If the student’s behavior does not improve, he/she will be asked to leave the program.

Theft, vandalism, inappropriate language and negative behavior are grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Students will earn their grade in theatre through the medium of performance, either as a part of a group or individually. Students will be awarded class assignment grades through participation of the normal class rehearsal including any written assignments. Attitude, effort and discipline will reflect upon the student’s grade. Written and in-class performances will be used as guidelines for tests. In-class performance tests will be evaluated with the usage of rubrics and/or evaluation forms. All dress rehearsals and performances are considered MANDATORY and will reflect upon the student’s grade as either a doubled test grade or Nine Weeks Exam.

Grading Weights

Class assignments 20%

Etiquette and class participation 20%

Tests/Projects (written and/or performance based) 60%

DRESS REHEARSALS

Dress rehearsals are MANDATORY and will count as an integral part of the performance grade. Unexcused, tardiness or early departures during mandatory dress rehearsals will result in a lowered grade. There will NOT be any make-up assignments for unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures for a MANDATORY rehearsal. An excuse for absence should be presented to the directors in writing PRIOR to the rehearsal date. Rehearsals and/or performances for extracurricular theatre venues are NOT an excuse for absences, tardiness or early departures of a Garrison's Mandatory Dress Rehearsal.

PERFORMANCE DATES AND MANDATORY DRESS REHEARSAL DATES

Dates: TBA

Mandatory Rehearsals and Performances will affect the student's grade. Unexcused absences from Mandatory Rehearsals and Performances will adversely affect the grade; no make-up assignment will be given.

DRESS CODE

The dress code rules are established for a purpose – to have uniformity and so that the teacher is able to see the full movement of the body. This Dress Code is **Mandatory** and will reflect in the student's grade. No purses or lanyards should be on the body during performance activities.

Proper shoes must be able to stay on the foot and provide for stability in movement shoes that are not secure can hurt your child's foot as well as hinder performance abilities.

Ladies must have shorts or solid leggings under skirts in order to assure full participation in theatre activities. Just as they may be expected to perform on stage in skirts, they will be expected to perform in class as well.

Students arriving unprepared for class may not be allowed to come onto the theatre floor. The unprepared student will complete an alternate written assignment. Consistently coming unprepared to class will adversely affect the student's grade and opportunity of performing.

SUPPLIES

1. **Grades 6-8:** Each student MUST have his/her own composition book for notes and in class writing assignments.
2. **Grades 6-8:** All theatre students should have a ½' or 1", 3-ringed notebook for handouts. Students should keep their theatre folders in class for every class meeting.
3. **Grades 6-8:** Pencils

INJURIES/ILLNESS

A student with an injury or illness is required to submit a note from the doctor, nurse or parent in order to be excused from participating in class. Sick or injured students are encouraged to observe class in order not to fall behind with material. Students should inform their instructors of any recent illness, injury or other medical conditions that may affect stamina or performance. **All injuries sustained during class rehearsals must be reported to the teacher before leaving the theatre room.** All classroom injuries will be documented by filling out an injury report which is available as needed. All medication is the responsibility of the student and parent(s).

DRESSING AREA/STORAGE

Students are expected to store all personal items in the storage areas in each theatre room. All belongings are to be taken home after class.

VALUABLES

The theatre faculty is not responsible for lost or stolen personal belongings. Students are strongly advised to leave personal valuables at home. Purses and wallets may be taken into the room while students are taking class.

FIELD TRIP/ PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCES

- A. Only exemplary conduct will be accepted from members of the GSVPA Actors Academy. Members must be on their best behavior at all times, especially on the buses, in a hotel, and at all group appearances.
- B. All students must ride the buses. A student may return from any event with his or her parent only if the parents have notified the Director beforehand. Other than the exception noted above, all students must return to the destination on the buses.
- C. Students must be careful not to damage bus property or individual property, or they will be held financially responsible.
- D. All school bus safety rules must be observed while riding.
- E. Upon arrival to GSVPA, parents should arrange transportation to individual homes.

SOLOS, LEADING ROLES, CLASS PLACEMENT

Casting of performance parts is to be determined by the Garrison Theatre faculty and is not up for discussion. Classes may be divided into groups at the directors' discretion. Students are expected to attend all rehearsals. Absence of rehearsals will affect the student's role and performance opportunities. Theatre students will be allowed to audition for Actors Academy Productions or leading theatre roles.

PARENTAL CONCERNS

Parents are welcomed to share concerns. However we ask that parents follow professional protocol. Priority Order: First speak directly to the specific class teacher, then the school's principal. Please do NOT contact faculty on their home or cell phones. To speak with the theatre faculty, please call the front office or email the teacher to set up an appointment. Direct classroom contact (912) 395-1000, alexandra.wambold@sccps.com or kristopher.colvin@sccps.com

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The growth of the theatre program weighs heavily on the involvement of parents. The booster organization will be established as a support system of the overall middle school theatre program: promotes the program, assists in supervision at performances, and creates mediums for financial expenses that are not ordinarily covered by the school. The organization consists of parents of the theatre students. All parents are expected to participate. Meetings are as needed. Booster parents that are consistent in participation will have first offers when attending any out-of-town field trips.

**Garrison School of Visual & Performing Arts
Theatre Handbook Contract 2016-17**

I, _____ (PRINTED NAME), with my parent(s) and/or guardian(s), have read and fully understand the rules governing the theatre program at Garrison SVPA. I understand that I must follow the rules of this handbook or be dismissed from theatre program activities.

I understand that problems in the class, disrespect to the directors, chaperone, and anyone affiliated with the Garrison Actors Academy will not be tolerated.

I understand that the director, for failures to obey the rules of this handbook, will punish me appropriately.

I understand that all rules, regulations, and consequences spelled out in the Garrison School of Visual & Performing Arts' CODE OF CONDUCT apply to me.

I understand that proper dress attire is required at all rehearsal and performance engagements.

I understand that chewing gum, eating, or drinking is prohibited in the theatre room or at any performing engagement unless otherwise specified by the directors.

I understand that the Garrison Actors Academy is an ACADEMIC study; therefore grades are applied to all areas of participation in the program. Performances, competitions and rehearsals at private theatre studios do NOT supersede the Garrison Theatre Calendar. I understand that I am expected to prioritize all rehearsals and performances of the Garrison Actors Academy. Extra-curricular sports and activities or transportation will not be approved as an excuse for missing Garrison's Actors Academy rehearsals and/or performances. Unexcused, absences from rehearsals and/or performances will negatively reflect upon the student's grade.

I understand that theatre performances are mandatory for every theatre major and excused absences must be cleared with the director before the absence occurs. I understand that any make-up work that I am responsible for will have to be made up by the specific time allotted.

I understand that the theatre directors have my best interest in mind at all times; therefore, I will not show any disrespectful attitudes or behaviors to my directors, other teachers and administration, and/or fellow theatre members.

Finally, I understand that since I have applied to be a part of the Garrison SVPA Actors Academy, I am committed to the expectations of: the Actors Academy as a whole, this handbook, the theatre curriculum, performances and rehearsals, and the rules of Garrison SVPA.

Parent's Signature

Date

Theatre Major's Signature

Date

Handbook approved August 2017 by:

Alexandra Wambold, Director

Glenda Lanier, Director