

University Theatre Event Handbook Updated Spring 2012

University Theatre
North Carolina State University

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To our patrons and users of University Theatre facilities:

We at University Theatre are pleased to be able to help you prepare for your event. We look forward to working with you to accommodate your needs with regard to staff, technical requirements and any other needs. Please be sure to read through this even handbook carefully and contact our offices should you have any questions.

This event handbook is provided as a planning guide for organizations who use performance venues operated by University Theatre. There are certain protocols that must be adhered to in order to maintain proper levels of safety, communication and professionalism that will all ensure your event runs as smoothly as possible for everyone involved.

For scheduling, billing and questions, feel free to contact our main offices at 919.513-8318. For and technical questions, contact the tech department at 919.515.3900.

Safety

Safety in the theatres is paramount. Its importance comes before any amount of planning, the run of your event, or anything else. The theatre can be a dangerous place for those who are not trained to use the equipment, and there are several things in a theatre that when used improperly can cause serious injury or death. Only University Theatre staff should be setting up and operating certain stage equipment or be involved in rigging of scenery unless specific permission has been granted by the Technical Supervisor on the work call. There are also a variety of safety concerns and fire codes that must be adhered to or you risk having your event shut down.

Theatre Systems With Safety Concerns:

Rigging: Rigging is the theatrical industry's term for hanging things from somewhere. The primary rigging system in Stewart Theatre is called an overhead line set system, which allows for the raising and lowering of curtains, masking, lighting and sound equipment, and any scenery that needs to be raised or lowered during an event. Some of these pipes that raise and lower are on motorized winches, and others are counterweight balanced and operated by a crewmember. If your event requires rigging of any sort (flown scenery, chandeliers, hanging props, banners, etc.) the Technical Director or Technical Supervisor for that work call must be present to direct and check the rigging for safety.

The Titmus and Studio Theatres in Thompson Hall have limited rigging capability.

A-Frame Extension Ladder: Stewart Theatre has a large A-frame extension ladder used primarily to focus stage lighting and adjust rigging on the line set pipes above the stage. Use of the A-frame ladder is restricted to University Theatre staff only unless permission by a staff member has been given.

Genie Lift: University Theatre has access to personnel lifts to assist in rigging and lighting operations. Use of the personnel lifts is restricted to University Theatre staff only unless permission by a staff member has been given.

Catwalks: Stewart Theatre and the Titmus Theatre have large steel framed catwalk systems that extend over the audience seating areas. These catwalks contain most of the front lighting capability of the theatre, as well as supporting most of the audio speakers. Access to the catwalks is restricted to University Theatre staff only.

Fire Codes:

The State of North Carolina can be very particular about code fire code violations. If a fire marshal were to walk into any University Theatre venue and find any code violations, they can shut down whatever event is currently in place until the violations are remedied. This includes student and campus organizations as well as professional and rental clients.

The most common code violation has to do with egress to and from building exits, known as fire lanes. There is a minimum four (4) foot path that must be maintained to at least two exits from any room.

All aisles and inner lobby areas must be kept clear from equipment and people. If there are any obstructions in an aisle, including camera tripods and sound equipment, that ENTIRE ROW is considered off limits to audience members.

The stage counts as a different room from the auditorium, and as such the auditorium exits do not count towards that number of unblocked exits from the stage. In Stewart Theatre, the main loading dock on Cates Avenue and the loading doors stage left across from Price Music Building are to be kept clear at all times.

Use of atmospheric effects (foggers and hazers) must be checked with the Operations Coordinator before use. Stewart Theatre owns two (2) foggers that are appropriate for short duration bursts of fog. However, complete "hazing" of the theatre, when you see haze in the entire room, is what sets off the smoke detectors and fire alarm system. Since we do try to keep audiences in their seats for the duration of events whenever possible, please talk to us beforehand when your organization is interested in using fog or haze. **If your organization wants to use fog or haze for the duration of the event, additional costs of having a fire marshal on site and the shutdown of the fire alarm systems will be added to the total cost of your event.**

Use of pyrotechnic (fire effects or open flame) devices must also be checked with the Operations Coordinator. There are certain effects that require permits from local authorities and we also want to make sure proper precautions are in place for fire prevention.

Drugs and Alcohol:

University Theatre reserves the right to remove persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol while using University Theatre venues. We take operational safety of our students, staff and audience members very seriously and as such have **no tolerance** for drug or alcohol influence on the part of members of your organization. If necessary, NC State Campus Police will be notified and persons will be escorted out of the building.

Event Planning

Event Planning is important because it gives the Operations Coordinator and Technical Director an idea about what sort of event you are putting together, how many people are needed to run the event, what type of equipment support you need, and if there are any special requests for the event that could prove problematic if not handled early on.

Event Contact: The Event Contact is the person from your organization who is going to be the primary contact person for our technical and house management crews, as well as our contact regarding event planning. This person must be available at all times during rehearsals and event. The Event Contact should not be a person who is required to perform on stage during the event since the Event Contact will answer tech crew questions and collaborate with the Technical Supervisor during the event.

Production Meeting: A production meeting is a useful tool to come in and take a look at the space for an event, see what may or may not work logistically, ask questions about the technical capabilities of the venue and to answer questions for the Operations Coordinator and the Technical Director about the event. The Operations Coordinator and Technical Director have experience that can help you and your organization to decide if certain things are feasible in the time and space you have allotted to you. Special requests are welcome even earlier so that discussions about feasibility can occur before it becomes too late to try to attempt certain things. Even if first contact is just to introduce yourself and to give some sort of idea about the kind of event you want to produce, it gets the ball rolling and helps the technical staff begin planning for the event.

It is required that the Event Contact meet with the Operations Coordinator at least two (2) months prior to the event. This gives your organizers time to think about the technical possibilities, ask questions about feasibility and makes you the organizer better informed when filling out the Technical Information Sheet requesting the technical needs for your event. The following are things to think about while planning your event.

Type of the Event: What kind of show are you putting on? Is it a dance show? Theatre? A fashion show? A guest speaker? A movie? A concert? A combination of all of the above?

Feasibility: This is mostly a discussion about whether or not certain things you may want for your show are possible and what can and cannot be done within the scope of the technical capabilities of the venue. Are the University Theatre facilities proper locations for your event? Does your organization have the budget to pay for an event? Does the timing work out within our busy event schedule?

Event Staffing: University Theatre provides technical staff for all events, which operates all of the house equipment, including, but not limited to, lighting, audio, rigging, curtains, follow spotlights, and the fly system.

We currently charge for the labor on events instead of charging for equipment rental on top of that labor charge. The minimum technical crew is four (4) technicians, including one (1) Technical Supervisor, one (1) Lighting Operator, one (1) Sound Operator and one (1) Deck Hand. Some shows may require additional crew, such as follow spotlight operators or additional backstage crew, and that will be determined by your needs for the event.

For ticketed events and most performances, we also require a minimum house management crew consisting of one (1) House Manager and two (2) Ushers. We also require four (4) volunteer ushers to be provided by the organization using the theatre to assist with audience traffic throughout the event.

Examples of labor estimates based on certain event types are at the end of this guide. For a more specific estimate, we need to know what the actual event schedule would be.

Lighting: Lighting in the theatre can be as simple as you want it to be or as complicated as you can afford. The basic lighting system is very capable. The information we're generally looking for is what areas of the stage need to be lit and in what colors from which directions.

- **Stage Wash:** A Stage Wash is full stage coverage in light, typically in one color. Guest speaker events and commencements typically only need one Stage Wash with no additional color added to it.
- **Color:** We have a wide range of color that we can add to the stage lighting, but in order to change that color, we have to clear the stage of set pieces, projections screens, etcetera, so we ask that you give us as much color information as you can early on. We'll tell you whether or not your color selections are feasible for your event based on how complicated the other lighting requests are.
- **"Spotlights" and "Specials":** A "spotlight" in theatrical terms is usually shorthand for a "follow spotlight", which is the type of light that can follow people around on the stage. A "special" light or cluster of lights focused into one area, like a podium or a particular stage riser, for highlighting people in that area. It does a similar job, it just can't move around the stage like the follow spotlight can.

We can provide up to two (2) follow spotlights, which can follow people around the stage, however these require crew to run them at additional cost per person.

Audio: Sound in the theatre is much like lighting in that it can be very simple, or it can quickly become quite complicated. The theatre has a variety of audio equipment for basic shows. **If your event requires audio capabilities that we cannot provide, the organization will be responsible for renting additional equipment at their own cost.**

- **Microphones:** There are both wired and wireless microphones available. For wireless microphones, we have both the handheld and lavalier (clip-on mic with a belt pack transmitter) types, though the number is limited. Check with the Operations Coordinator or Technical Director regarding the numbers of wireless microphones you may be interested in.

The podium has a microphone built into it, but if your speaker likes to move around on stage, they may be interested in a wireless option.

- **Playback:** Audio playback comes from a variety of sources. It can be used for show music, background music, walk-in music (for the audience coming into the theatre) and sound effects. Pre-recorded CD's are the easiest audio sources for us to use, though if we know about the request ahead of time, laptops and other digital devices can be plugged into our sound system. We do not take responsibility for the operation of audio sources other than CD's with event music or sound effects.
- **Piano:** We have a Steinway concert grand piano available for use in Stewart Theatre. If the user wants it tuned, we can arrange for the tuning and the costs are passed on to the user for the event. Currently, tuning costs are \$100 for each tuning. The piano is quite large, and if it is required to move during the performance, this may involve additional crew getting added to your show call and therefore could impact the labor charges.
- **Monitors:** Stage monitors are small speakers set up on stage for guest speakers or performers to hear anything that is run through the sound system. This could be for musicians, question and answer sessions or for backstage listening.

Concerts: The University Theatre venues are not properly equipped to provide full concert level sound reinforcement. **The Operations Coordinator and the**

Technical Director need to be made aware of the technical requirements of any concert well in advance, at least two (2) months. This includes all technical riders provided by the performers. The Operations Coordinator and the Technical Director will make a judgment call as to whether or not an outside audio company is required to provide the audio requested in the technical riders from the artists. **This is non negotiable.** A group or artist assumes that certain audio capabilities will be met for the venue they are contracted to perform in. They reserve the right to not perform if the equipment is not up to what they have requested and the organization has signed off on. This is why we ask to see all of the technical riders in advance, to make sure your organization is covered as far as the equipment requirements are concerned.

Video Projection: Are you planning on using the video projection equipment in the theatre? Since the Stewart Theatre was designed well before video projection was a standard operation for events, events with video and PowerPoint requirements need to consider a few things logistically. **If your event requires video projection capabilities that we cannot provide, the organization will be responsible for renting additional equipment at their own cost.**

- **Video Projector:** The current video projector in Stewart Theatre is an Eiki 10,000 lumen long throw projector mounted in the projection booth at the back of the theatre. The angle that it projects from is very steep so it is suggested that for any projected content in your event that your organization does a test run prior to the day of the event so there are no surprises.
- **Video Screen:** The surface most commonly projected on in Stewart Theatre is the CYC (short for cyclorama), the white fabric curtain at the back of the stage space. This works fine for most events. However, if you are expecting a larger audience, the side sections of the theatre may have difficulties seeing the CYC and the video projected on it. Some organizations remedy this by using two projectors and two smaller screens angled to the sides so everyone can see at least one screen. **We do not have access to nor do we provide portable screens or the projectors for a dual screen setup.**
- **Video Sources:** Stewart Theatre has a DVD player in stock to play DVD videos, though the most common video source is a laptop. Your organization must provide the laptop with the video clips or PowerPoint presentation for your event pre-installed. Since our operators are not typically familiar with the content of projected presentations, we generally suggest someone from your organization operate the laptop or video source. Also, please mention if your video presentation has audio in it and we can connect to our sound system so it can play through the theatre's

main speakers. Please have all video clips available to test during setup or rehearsal times. It is also best if you have several video clips to play that you put all of them on to one DVD or laptop for the rehearsals and the event. It just makes things a lot easier versus swapping video cables out every time there's a new video clip.

Note about web video streaming: Video streaming from the web over the wireless network is not recommended. Signal strength of the network diminishes with large numbers of people in the theatres. The feed quality is unpredictable and the audio and video quality can be poor.

Floor Surfaces: There are a couple different options for the finish on the floor for events. The black stage floor is the standard surface. There is also a black dance floor surface called "marley", which is available for dance shows if requested. The installation of the marley does add time to the load-in and strike time for an event, and as such will add to the total labor charge for the event if you want to use it.

Staging: Staging is basically the arrangement of things on the stage, such as a podium for a guest speaker, or chairs for award recipients, or platforms for a drum riser for a musical performance, etcetera. We can provide you with stage dimensions and ground plans to help your organization figure this sort of thing out. Then, let us know what you need in the space marked "Staging Needs" on the Technical Information Sheet. We don't have a lot of stock furniture, like specific couches or tables, so if your artist's technical rider requires certain items, let us know and we'll tell you what we can provide and what you'll have to find on your own.

Equipment Rental: The University Theatre venues are well-equipped theatres. However, we do not have everything available at a moments notice. Some organizations rent additional equipment to make their show better. Dance companies frequently rent additional lighting and extra wireless microphones are brought in for musicals. The Operations Coordinator can direct you towards lighting and audio rental companies if you have the need (and the budget) to bring in extra equipment. Due to equipment reservations and the logistics involved with pickups and deliveries, we will need to know about additional needs as early in the process as possible. **Additional equipment rentals must be requested at least one (1) month in advance.**

Technical Information Sheet: The Technical Information Sheet is your way of communicating what you need to the technical crews for your event. The Operations Coordinator and the Technical Director must approve the information you have given us on the Technical Information Sheet before we move forward with the event. **The Technical Information Sheet is due three (3) weeks in advance of your event.** The work calls for the event are typically put together two weeks in advance so we can make sure that the event is properly staffed. This schedule gives us time to ask questions about the Technical Information Sheet you have provided us and to clarify details about your technical requests before we finalize the work calls. There is a worksheet at the end of this guide explaining how to fill out the Technical Information Sheet. If you have any other questions while filling this out, please contact the Operations Coordinator, 919.513.8318 or universitytheatre@ncsu.edu.

We reserve the right to cancel any event where the information we have asked for by the minimum of two weeks prior to the event has not provided.

Tickets:

UNIVERSITY THEATRE DOES NOT HANDLE TICKET SALES.

Ticket Central handles ticket sales and you may not print your own tickets.

You may not sell any tickets until you have met with Ticket Central. All ticketed events must be reserved through Ticket Central. **Please arrange with Ticket Central, no later than 3 weeks prior to your event, to handle your sales and/or your printing of tickets.**

Additionally, at the discretion of the administrative staff you may be required to use tickets through Ticket Central for free events. More information is available at <http://ticketcentral.ncsu.edu> or by telephone at 919.515.1408.

Run of the Event

During the run of your event, it is important to follow these guidelines. Your event will run safer, smoother and more professionally with an understanding of these concepts.

The Stage Manager: A Stage Manager in the professional entertainment industry is a multifaceted job. They run rehearsals, make sure that things get set up before the run of the show and put away at the end of the night, check in with all aspects of the production during the rehearsals and the run of the show, etc. They also often run operations on deck during the show, oftentimes moving scenery and assisting with resetting audio equipment on stage. They use an intercom headset to be in complete communication with all of the technical aspects of the show.

The Stage Manager is usually going to be the Event Contact discussed earlier that we request on the Technical Information Sheet, unless your organization is hosting an outside performance group who tours with their own Stage Manager. However, as far as the event is concerned, we still ask that your organization retain a person in this type of position for coordination purposes between the performance groups and the production staff.

House Management and Ushers: House Management is more than just ticket taking and handing out programs at the doors when your audience comes into the theatre. Our House Manager needs to know if any seating may be needed for special needs patrons, whether or not the event is reserved or general seating, which areas are to be cordoned off for performers who are watching the event or VIP's, that sort of thing. The House Manager will also tell the technical crew when the house has opened and when the event can start, based on input from the event organizer. The House Manager is available starting one (1) hour before the start of events, typically 30 minutes prior to the doors opening to let audience members into the theatre. They will be in contact with the Stage Manager or Event Contact prior to the start to the event.

We ask for volunteer ushers from your organization to help cover all of the entrances, give out programs, take tickets and assist people in finding their seats. Depending on the space used, different numbers may be asked for. We ask for the extra help for a reason. It's a large task to properly move a potentially large audience into the theatre and get them situated before the event, and with so many potential entrances to the theatres, we have to cover them all and provide information and assistance to our patrons.

Event Completion

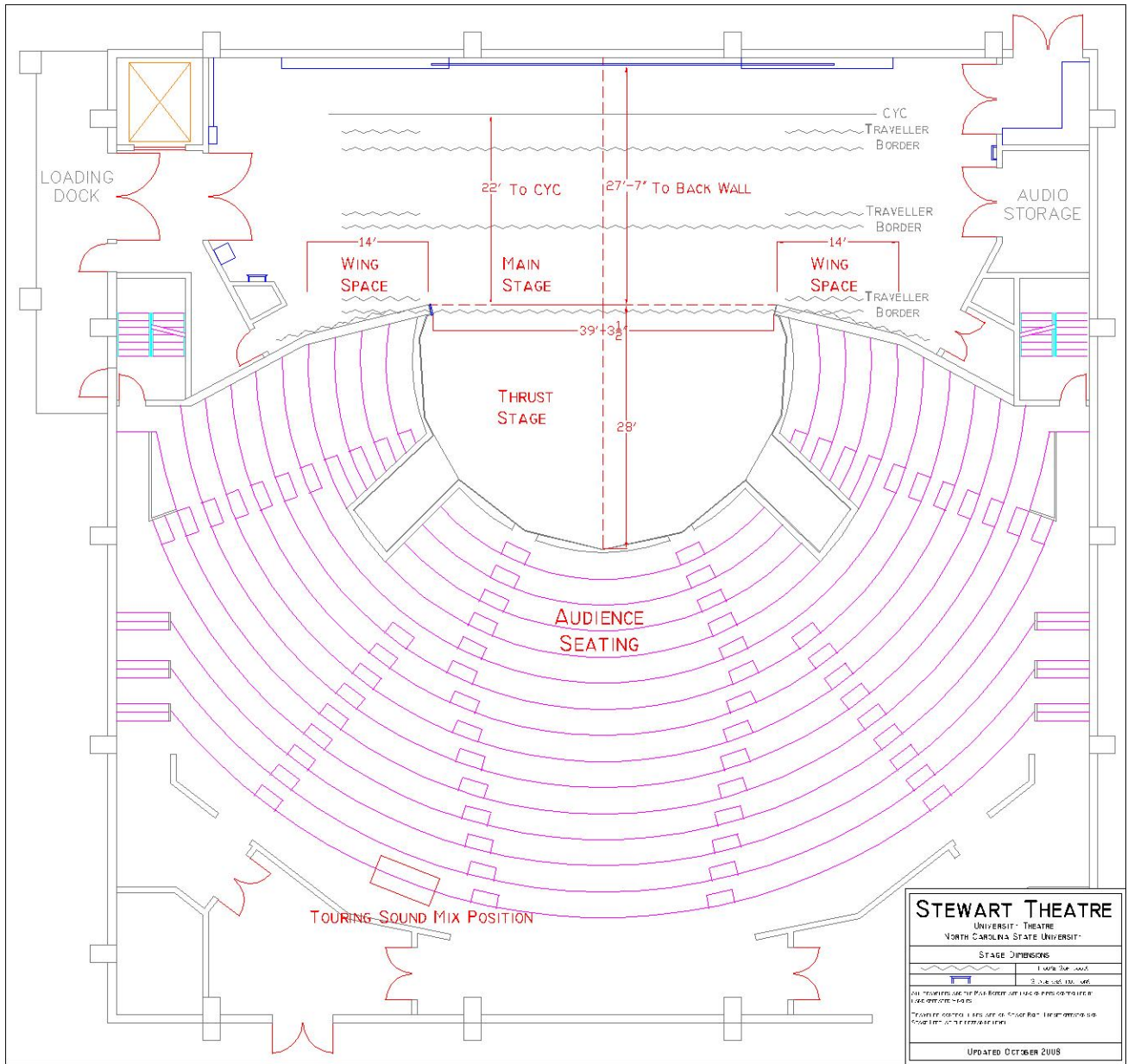
The Load Out and Post-Show part of your event begins as soon as the event comes to a close. The faster things are cleaned up and equipment is put back in their proper places, the faster everyone can go home. The Technical Supervisor running the event will start to restore the theatre to its original state as soon as is possible.

Load Out: Loading out your event requires that everything that your organization brought into the theatre or is responsible for (set pieces, additional staging, rented equipment, etc.) is taken out on the same day the event ends. There is a limited amount of space in the theatre, and there are many clients who use the theatre in a very tightly orchestrated schedule. Make sure things get removed from the theatre in a timely manner, so that our technical crews can start to restore the theatre space.

Restore: At the end of every event, our technical and house crews will restore the theatre space back to its original state prior to any technical load in. This may involve resetting lighting fixtures, putting away audio equipment, taking down any portable platforms, etcetera. Some of the labor charges will be the additional time after the event to put everything away. A complex event may take several hours of restore time, so any concerns about your organization's budget will have to take this into account.

The reason we start basically from scratch for every event's technical setup is so that we can fairly bill every organization for the actual work involved to put together that event. If we just left things after the show was done, it would take longer to reset for the next event. University Theatre produces in excess of 250 events a year, which means that most days, we have an event in the theatre, and we need to maintain a consistent state of preparedness to give everyone the same professional experience they have come to expect from University Theatre staff.

Post-Event: After the event has finished, sometimes there are concerns about how the event was planned, possible ideas about how to make things better the next time or just things that need be discussed about the run of the show. If the Operations Coordinator or the Technical Director feel that they need to talk to your organization about a significant concern, they will contact you and try to put together something called a "post mortem" meeting. This is a meeting planned in an effort to make sure that your organization understands what worked and what may not have worked to make the next event process run more smoothly for everyone involved. **If the organization has concerns about an event after its completion, contact us within 48 hours so that we can investigate the situation to improve our operations.**



More detailed Stewart Theatre technical information is available on our website:

<http://www.ncsu.edu/arts/stewart/stewartspecs.html>

Approximate Labor Costs

Most of the charges incurred by our users is based on the labor costs. There are some small equipment charges for certain items, but labor is the primary expense. What follows is several examples of various event types, how long they might be and what such a show can cost.

Guest Speaker (minimal setup, one hour prep and no rehearsal):	\$400
Corporate Event (extra rehearsal time, video screens, video feed):	\$600
Small Concert (setup, uses house sound, rehearsal time, 2 hour show):	\$800
Dance/Cultural/Fashion Show (full day of setup, rehearsal and event):	\$1300
Concert with professional sound company:	Up to \$3500 plus our labor charges

Our actual labor rates are available on the Rate Summary Sheet in the user packet.

Technical Information Sheet Guide

This page was put together to explain the aspects of the Technical Information Sheet in a little more detail.

Organization:	Organization name
Name of Event:	Name of event
Location:	Stewart Theatre
Estimated Attendance:	We like to know about the numbers of audience we should be expecting, since that will determine whether or not we require the organization to distribute tickets.
Date of Event:	Date of event
Event Start Time:	Start time for the event
Approximate End Time:	Closest estimate of the end of the event so we can better anticipate the time it will take to get everything put back after the event.
Access Time:	This is the time the organization wants the earliest access to the theatre. Once we know when the organization wants to be here, we can backtrack and determine how long to make our technical setup work calls.
Notes:	Notes about the access time, for example if a delivery for scenery or extra equipment needs to take place.
Rehearsal Time(s):	Time blocks organization would like for rehearsal time prior to event.
Event Contact Person:	Contact for Technical Supervisor and House Manager regarding technical and/or house questions about the event. Event planning, running rehearsal times and being available for technical and house questions during the event are all responsibilities of this person.
Contact Address, Email Address, Phone Number:	Contact info for the Event Contact Person.

Technical Requests:	This is where we're looking for basic technical information about the event. If there are more complicated requests or questions, contact the Operations Coordinator or the Technical Director.
Microphones:	How many do you need? Wireless or wired? Handheld or clip-on lavalier style?
Other Audio:	Audio playback, audio from a computer presentation, stage monitors, choral microphones, other audio requests.
Lighting:	If there are lighting needs beyond a basic white field of light covering the stage. Include colors and specials.
Follow Spotlights:	Mark the box with the number you want. Extra costs will be added to your bill.
Video Projector:	If your event requires video or Powerpoint style presentations, we need to know this. Do you need a portable screen or can you use the cyc at the back of the stage? If the house equipment is not adequate, make a note about needing other resources.
Piano:	Is the piano being used for the entire event or for certain parts? Does it need tuning? Does it need to be amplified?
Marley Dance Floor:	Do you need the dance floor surface for your event? It will add labor costs due to the time it takes to install it, but it is the preferred surface for most dancers.
Reserved Seating:	Basic reserved seating notes. Do certain sections need to be reserved, or are there VIP guests?
Staging Needs:	This is where notes about certain stage setups should be made. If there are chair requests, if the marley dance floor needs to be installed, where the podium would go for a guest speaker, if there is scenery for the event, etcetera.

Event Planning Timeline/Checklist

_____ Request a date with University Theatre's main office.

By phone: 919.513.8318

In person: University Theatre Offices
First floor of Talley Student Center
Room 1200

By email: andrew_korhonen@ncsu.edu

Online: go.ncsu.edu/reserveonline or

www.ncsu.edu/arts/stewart

Click "new! Reserve online"

Click "My Account"

Create your account and start to browse for open dates!

_____ Complete and submit the Reservation Request form.

Once a date has been entered into our calendar:

_____ Complete and submit Hold Confirmation and Agreement of Use.

_____ Two (2) months prior to event:

Contact Operations Coordinator regarding the technical details of the event.

By phone: 919.513.8318

By email: andrew_korhonen@ncsu.edu

This is to go over any questions the organization might have about using the theatre and what sorts of information our staff needs based on the type of event being produced. Not all of the details are needed at this time, but we want to make certain that organizations have started the planning process with enough time to ensure a successful event.

Concerts need to be discussed no later than two (2) months in advance, given the potential for the necessity of hiring a sound company (at the organization's cost) in order to handle the performers' technical requirements. Use of an outside sound

company is at the discretion of the University Theatre production staff and NON NEGOTIABLE.

_____ **Four (4) weeks prior to event:**

Ticket Central must be contacted a minimum four (4) weeks prior to the event if tickets are being distributed. Katherine Fuller, Manager.

By phone: 919.515.1408

_____ **Three (3) weeks prior to event:**

Complete and submit the Technical Information Sheet. All technical event information should be on this form.

If we have not received the Technical Information Sheet at least two (2) weeks prior to the event, University Theatre reserves the right to CANCEL the event.

_____ **Two (2) weeks prior to event:**

All schedule changes are due two (2) weeks prior to the event.

If there are changes to the technical requirements of the event, notify us with the changes as soon as possible and we will do what we can to accommodate those changes. Last minute requests may not be possible and accommodation of these requests is at the discretion of the University Theatre staff.