

Earlham College Partnership Guidelines

In order to give proper support and to include more diverse voices in each production, the Earlham College Theater Arts department encourages on-campus and off-campus partnerships for all productions. Below are guidelines for students, faculty, and partners for facilitating such relationships and detailing their potential roles in a production.

How to Form a Partnership

1. Seek partners early. The more input the better! Partners can be found in campus departments, offices and/or clubs, and in the greater Richmond community.
2. Set expectations from the beginning. Outline what each Partner hopes to contribute to (and gain from) the process early so that all parties have clear expectations and an effective action plan.
3. Choose material of interest to current and potential partners. When possible, choose plays that will open opportunities for partnerships with specific departments on campus.
4. FIND MORE THAN ONE RESOURCE. No partner is going to be able to do it all. Look for multiple partners for each production.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES Through the Various Stages of Production

Throughout the process of producing a show, there will be times when an outside eye is more needed than others. Some partners may be more interested in work in the early conceptual phase whereas some may be more interested in post-show activities. It is important that partners and production teams are on the same page as to when each partner will be involved.

Pre-Production

PLAY SELECTION

Play selection is a time when many important decisions are made for the department. Partners input at this stage in the process can assure that the shows considered for production are appropriate for the department and helpful for the campus and greater community.

PLAY READINGS

Plays which may not be right for the department to produce can still have great value for the campus. If a partner has interest in any of the plays pitched, a reading is a great way to share the story with the community. Interdepartmental readings are a great opportunity for partners to choose plays of particular interest to their field of study.

CONCEPT MEETINGS

Once a play has been chosen, the production team will meet and discuss how this production will interpret the play. Partner input can be invaluable to the director and/or the production team at this point in the process. Discussing what elements of the story will and will not be highlighted can create a better understanding of how a production can serve our community.

PRODUCTION TEAM COMPOSITION

If a faculty member knows a student with particular interest in the content of the play, they can refer them as a dramaturg. Dramaturgs from other departments can partner with a theater student dramaturg to do research around the play and help inform choices made in the production.

Auditions

How a show is cast has a huge impact on how an audience perceives a play. Partners are encouraged to meet with the production team either before or after casting to discuss the impacts of potential casting choices. Another way that partners can contribute to casting is through promoting auditions and specifically encouraging underrepresented students to participate.

Rehearsal Process

PRODUCTION CHECK STEPS

Partners are invited to come to run throughs at pivotal points in the process to give feedback to the production team. Recommended times to check in are after the first stumble through, during the week before tech week, or during the second dress rehearsal.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The department is eager for opportunities to collaborate with other educational departments on campus. Theatre Arts faculty will provide resources to any instructor who has a course that could benefit from a unit or lesson focusing on themes of the play. The production can also offer classroom visits with students or faculty involved in the show.

PRODUCTION MATERIALS

Program notes and lobby displays help provide context to the audience about the historical context and themes in the play. Partners can contribute to the production by writing these short notes or designing a lobby display.

Performance Days

PRE-SHOW and/or INTERMISSION LOBBY ACTIVITIES possibilities include:

- tabling to share information about local impact of issues within the play
- sign up opportunities to get involved in community activities
- class research presentation displays
- experiential learning activities
- show related swag

PROLOGUE

A Prologue is a brief presentation or talk before a performance that provides context about the history of the play and its original production, as well as the concept and designs prepared for this production. A time to ask questions is also useful. A Prologue usually begins 45 minutes before curtain and lasts about 15 or 20 minutes. (*Attendance at a Prologue could be a good extra credit opportunity for some classes.*)

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION

One of the most valuable contributions Production Partners can make is to participate in a post-performance conversation with audience members as they respond to the themes of the play. Partners may serve as panelists, offer their particular expertise about the issues of the play, and/or facilitate the group conversation.

Post-Mortem Meeting

Each partner is encouraged to meet with Theatre Faculty after the production to discuss the production/ partnership process and to develop next steps for continual improvement.