

M Manhattan
School of Music
MUSICAL THEATRE

Student Handbook 2016-2017

To the Inaugural Musical Theatre Class of 2020!

I am thrilled that you are finally here! Manhattan School of Music is now the only independent Conservatory in New York City to offer a degree in that most American art of forms, Musical Theatre. The reputation of Manhattan School of Music and its alumni is legendary and we will continue to add to that reputation. The Artist/Faculty and I will work to help you become the best you that you can be. I challenge you all to “Dare to fail gloriously”, to respect each other and your Instructors, and to compete only with yourself. This year will be filled with hard work, growth, and progress. That being said, remember to have fun! If this isn’t fun please consider another career. We will be having some of the top people in the New York Theatre scene giving Master Classes. We will be preparing and presenting two Showcases, one in the Fall semester and one in the Spring semester. I hope that your family and friends will be able to attend to see your accomplishments.

This Handbook has been created to discuss departmental policies. Please be sure to read the Manhattan School of Music Student Handbook as all general policies of the school contained therein apply to this department as well.

I look forward to getting to know each and every one of you and am honored to be joining you on this exciting journey. Class of 2020... The Class of Perfect Vision.

Luis Perez

Associate Dean and Chair of Musical Theatre

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Private Voice Teacher

Your teacher is among the most vital sources in helping you to make career decisions, both large and small. As in any relationship, issues may arise which require discussion and/or resolution. You are encouraged to discuss problems as they occur directly with your teacher. Unresolved issues and/or the sense that you cannot discuss problems with your teacher need to be addressed with the department chair or the Provost.

You are entitled to and required to have twenty-eight one-hour private lessons with your major teacher in the course of the school year. Some teachers give these lessons each week. Others, given the nature of other performance and teaching commitments, offer two-hour lessons and/or lessons at differing intervals. Others still have teaching associates or substitutes to give lessons at times when they are unable to do so. Make certain that you understand your teacher's lesson schedule plan. If you are concerned that you are not receiving the requisite number of lessons, or have a problem with the frequency of your lessons, notify the department chair.

During the Orientation week process you will do a showing for your fellow classmates and the Faculty. You will be asked to sing a song of your choice preferably in the three-minute range and perform a one minute monologue. The voice faculty and Chair of Musical Theatre will assign each student to a teacher we feel to be the best fit.

Change of Private Voice Teacher

Students may request a change of teacher. This is an important decision to be thought over carefully and thoroughly. Student decisions to change teachers are often the result of miscommunication or lack of communication with the current teacher. You are therefore encouraged to discuss the matter with your teacher and/or with the departmental chair and the Dean of Students. If you wish to change teachers you must obtain a Change of Teacher Request Form from the Provost's office. Complete instructions are on the form. School policy prohibits any action against a student by a former teacher.

Departmental Lateness and Attendance Policy

Don't be late and don't skip class, period. It is one of the skills that you will leave here with. You have to show up. Lateness in the real world of theatre costs money to the production and is a fireable offense. While the following is the Departmental Policy towards Lateness and Absence each teacher has the right to make their policy stricter.

Classes meeting once a week:

After one absence, final letter grade will be lowered by one-half letter grade for each additional absence. Two late attendances will equal one absence.

Classes meeting two or more times per week:

After two absences, your final grade will be lowered by one-half letter grade for each additional absence. Two late attendances will equal one absence. Four or more absences will result in an F for that class.

Teachers, at their discretion, may choose to not allow a late student into that class.

As per Manhattan School of Music policy, if you receive a “C” or lower in a performance course, you will be automatically placed on probation.

If you are ill or have a personal tragedy, contact your teacher immediately to let them know you will not be in class. A doctor’s note will be required for an excused absence.

Professional Leave Policy

During the academic year Freshmen cannot participate in any theatrical activity outside of Manhattan School of Music.

Sophomore, Junior, and Senior year students who have a GPA of 3.0 or higher may, with the approval of the Chair and Faculty, audition outside of the school. If a student learns of an audition from a Faculty member it must still be approved by the Chair. Please use common sense when asking for outside auditions. The student will not allow you to leave for the purposes of doing a cruise ship (while that is a viable experience and great source of income in the future). If you are denied the opportunity to audition outside of the school please honor the advice of your Faculty.

Students do not need permission to audition for or to accept summer employment unless it interferes with the end of the current semester or the beginning of the next. In that case, permission must be granted by the Chair. Auditions for summer work must not conflict with your class schedule. Permission must be asked to miss a class in order to audition for such work.

If you should get cast in a major production which will force you to leave school, you will have two years in order to come back and finish your degree.

Once approved for an outside audition, please fill out the Limited Leave of Absence form available from the Dean of Students.

Technical Standards

In order to maintain the integrity of the educational process at Manhattan School of Music, the school has developed a set of criteria for entrance to, and graduation from all the degree programs offered at MSM. These standards include a combination of both technical and musical skills and they are the result of consultation with faculty, administration and professionals throughout our musical community.

All Musical Theatre students admitted to Manhattan School of Music will have demonstrated the following abilities:

- 1) Proper pitch and interval recognition.
- 2) Physically able to participate in dance and conditioning classes.
- 3) Stamina to endure rigorous rehearsal periods.
- 4) Willingness to work in an Ensemble setting.

By graduation the student will have acquired the following skills:

- 1) Read music and sight sing.
- 2) Play the melody line of a song with appropriate rhythms.
- 3) Sing in the various styles for Musical Theatre.
- 4) Analyze a Script, scene and song.
- 5) Develop a believable character.
- 6) Have a working knowledge of Musical Theatre History and repertoire.
- 7) At least a basic knowledge of Ballet, Tap, Jazz and Musical Theatre Dance.
- 8) Understand the components of an effective self-marketing technique.

Each of these components will be graded at the appropriate level by the professors and a rubric for achievement will be used in assessing the progress. Each semester students will be evaluated by the Faculty and recommendations will be given as to the progress expected in the subsequent semester.

Audition Policies

All students are required to audition for all productions, as well as complete assigned crew work, each semester. After this year you will be auditioning twice a year. The first audition will take place during orientation week and the second will take place at the end of the Fall Semester.

Auditioning for a show constitutes a professional commitment by that student and students will accept any role in which they are cast. Conflicts such as weddings, work schedules, and out of town travel must be approved in writing by the Chair and the Director of the production prior to auditions.

All auditions and audition requirements will be scheduled and announced in advance of the productions.

Dress appropriately for each audition, as if you are going on a date with someone you care about seeing again. You will be auditioning for various shows so research those shows and sing something appropriate to the style and period.

In your Senior year you may request the Chair to be out of the casting pool. This request may or may not be approved.

Crew and Public Relations Assignments

Students are required to crew or do Public Relations on one production each semester.

Crew assignments will be made concurrent with casting. When possible, student preferences will be considered in making crew assignments.

Health and Safety

Successful completion of the degree program in Musical Theatre will require that a student be in good health and have the stamina required to participate safely in all classes. We recommend that students have regular medical checkups and report any pre-existing conditions vocal, physical, or psychological conditions that might affect their work to the appropriate faculty member. If you are on any medications, be sure to bring or have access to adequate supplies. Do not change any ongoing medications without consulting your family and your doctors.

Due to the specialized nature of our work as Musical Theatre performers, a general physical may not detect conditions such as vocal or orthopedic pathologies. When deemed necessary by a faculty member, the recommendation will be made that a student consult a physician or specialist of the student's choice, in order to insure that participation in course work or rehearsals will not compromise a student's health. As much as possible, faculty will work with students to adjust assignments and schedules as needed for vocal, physical, or psychological rehabilitation. If severe pathological conditions prevent satisfactory participation and progress in the training, a student will be requested to take a leave of absence from the program until sufficient health is regained.

Conflict Resolution

Theatre is a highly emotional activity to say the least. While it is right to have an impulse during acting work it is not always right to act on that impulse. If my impulse is to "strike someone" I do not actually hit the person but instead put that impulse into my words. When working on a scene, if it is necessary to use physical force, you must contact your teacher so that they can have a fight director work with you. If you feel unsafe with a scene partner bring it up to the teacher of that class immediately. When working with a scene partner it is imperative that you respect each other's time. If you are experiencing problems with a scene partner, again please address that person directly first. If that does not remedy the problem bring it to the attention of the teacher of that class. This is not ratting someone out! You will continue to take acting lessons outside of school and nothing is worse than to have a scene partner that doesn't show up for rehearsal or won't learn their lines. This is all part of your training. Threats of any kind between students whether face to

face, via email, Facebook, Instagram, etc. will be taken very seriously. If you are threatened please contact the Chair immediately. There are times you may disagree with a teacher or feel you are not being treated fairly. We ask that you discuss the issue with that teacher first as the conflict may be the result of miscommunication or misunderstanding by either party. If you feel that no resolution is reached or are afraid of raising the issue contact the Chair of Musical Theatre. If you are uncomfortable discussing the issue with the Chair, bring the issue to the Provost or the Dean of Students.

Emails and Announcements

Important departmental announcements will be sent to your official school email address only! It is your responsibility to check your email often. If asked to reply, please do so promptly. This will also be a part of your discipline as a performer.

Please check the Musical Theatre Bulletin Board frequently for announcements as well. The Bulletin Board is located outside office 303.

Recording of Performances

The school records all required performances when possible.

No one is allowed to record or video tape any class work or performances without the express permission of the Faculty in charge of that class or performance.

Concert Attendance

Plan ahead to make sure you complete this requirement!

(From the Student Handbook)

All MSM degree programs include a requirement of Concert Attendance. The purpose of this is to enhance each student's education through exposure to concert repertoire and to build community among students who hear other students and faculty members perform. Each semester, all large ensemble concerts in all genres and all faculty recitals are good for Concert Attendance; most small ensemble concerts and many master classes also fulfill the requirement. A list of qualifying concerts is published by the Provost's office. The procedure for receiving credit for concerts and for tracking your progress is outlined below. Please note that Concert Attendance appears as a pass/fail course on your transcript. If you know you will not fulfill the requirement in a given semester, you may drop Concert Attendance, following the same procedure and schedule you would use for any course, as published by the Office of the Registrar. As with any course, if you fail Concert Attendance, the F will remain on your transcript. Attending concerts is a vital part of the educational experience at Manhattan School of Music; students must attend at least seven per semester. To encourage completion of this requirement in a timely manner, all students are registered for concert attendance (CA1000) during their first semester at the school and each subsequent semester until the requirement is fulfilled.

Undergraduates BM/DP: 6 semesters required

Transfer BM2: 4 semesters required

Transfer BM3: 2 semesters required

Graduate Students MM/PG: 2 semesters required

PS: 1 semester required

Please note: Students who perform in any portion of a concert will not receive concert attendance for that concert.

Procedure 1. The Office of the Registrar registers every student for concert attendance each successive semester until the requirement is fulfilled. A student who has no intention of meeting the requirement in any given semester must petition to drop it from his or her schedule that semester during the scheduled add/drop period; otherwise a grade of F will result and will remain on the student's transcript even after the requirement is fulfilled. Since no credit is attached to concert attendance, such failures will not affect the student's grade point average.

2. All students obtain the list of approved concerts for each semester from www.msmstudents.com or from the Office of the Registrar. Not all concerts are approved for concert attendance. Be sure the concert you attend is on the approved list. The Office of the Registrar cannot be responsible for erroneous or misleading information in individual concert advertising. The official list is the ONLY guarantee that a concert is approved for Concert Attendance credit.

3. For each approved concert on the concert attendance list that you attend, you must bring your MSM ID card, as this will be the ONLY way your attendance at the concert can be recorded. If you have lost your ID card, you must get a new one. You will not be able to receive credit for the concert at a later time. Similarly, if you forget your ID card at home, you will not be able to receive concert attendance credit.

4. At the end of the concert, the house ushers will scan the barcode on your MSM ID card with a scanner, similar to the ones in the cafeteria. This will record your attendance for that concert into a central database that will keep a running tabulation of your concerts. As the house ushers will not wait long after the concert has ended and ID card scanning has been completed, you should get your card scanned immediately at the end of the concert, after which point you may go attend to other business (congratulating friends, meeting conductors, etc). If you leave a concert early for any reason, you will not get concert attendance credit for that concert.

5. If you perform in any portion of the concert, you are not eligible for concert attendance credit for that concert.

6. Attendance at fewer than 7 concerts in any given semester will result in a failure, as we do not roll over concerts from one semester to the next. Additionally, only concerts in multiples of 7 will fulfill additional concert attendance requirements.

7. You are highly encouraged to check your concert attendance online every week at

www.msmstudents.com. Attendance data is uploaded as follows: Concerts on Monday through Thursday: Posted by 12 p.m. the following day Concerts on Friday, Saturday or Sunday: Posted by 12 p.m. the following Monday.

8. Disputes regarding Concert Attendance should be directed to the Assistant Director of Student Engagement. You must bring physical proof of your attendance at the concert (ticket stub, program) within one calendar week of the concert in question. Requests for concert attendance credit for concerts over a week old may not be honored. Do not wait until the end of the semester to claim credit for concerts missing from your online report.

9. Standard concert etiquette applies to all concerts. If you are caught by an MSM staff or student staff member using your cell phone during a concert for any reason, you may lose eligibility to get credit for that concert. You will not graduate until you have successfully completed your concert attendance requirement. Manhattan School of Music rules of academic honesty apply to required concert attendance. Any student misrepresenting attendance at a concert will immediately receive an F for the semester. Students who wish to attend 14 concerts and receive two semesters of credit during one semester may do so. Note that in any given semester, students are not permitted to receive credit for more than two sections of concert attendance (that is, 14 concerts for two semesters' credit). For more information regarding concert attendance, please see the academic catalog.

Concert Decorum

Look at each concert or performance you attend as an event. Dress as if you were going out on a date with someone you want to impress. **NO CELL PHONE USE!** Respect the hard work of your fellow students and be present at the event. You are representing the Musical Theatre Department, a serious responsibility.

Contacting the Chair of Musical Theatre

If you need to contact Luis Perez Associate Dean and Chair of Musical Theatre you can do so in the following ways:

- 1) Email Lperez@msmny.edu
- 2) Call and leave a message at 917-493-4557
- 3) Stop by his office during office hours or schedule an appointment. Room 303.

Plagiarism

From the School's Student Handbook

All students have an obligation to behave honorably and to respect the highest ethical standards in carrying out their academic assignments. Academic dishonesty is defined to include any form of cheating and/or plagiarism. Disciplinary sanctions, including lowered or failing grade, probation, or

dismissal, may be administered in cases involving academic dishonesty or falsification of academic information. All allegations of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Provost. In clear-cut cases, such as documented plagiarism, the Provost may offer a summary judgment, which will include sanction or mediation designed to bring the matter to a conclusion. In a case that has received summary judgment, the student may appeal the decision to the Dean's Council. Also, the Provost may elect to bring the case directly to the Dean's Council. The Council consists of three faculty members, who, along with the Provost and the Dean of Students, will conduct a hearing and render an opinion. The decision of the Dean's Council will be final.

Sexual Harassment

From the School's Student Handbook

Manhattan School of Music Title IX/Sexual Misconduct Policy Protecting Students Preventing sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault at Manhattan School of Music Introduction Manhattan School of Music complies with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendment of 1972 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender in educational programs and activities. Title IX states as follows: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." Equal educational opportunity has been and will continue to be a fundamental principle at Manhattan School of Music. Acts of sexual misconduct, as defined in this Policy, are considered a form of sex and/or gender discrimination prohibited by Title IX and this Policy. This Policy specifically addresses sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. For more information regarding the School's prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, and other characteristics protected by law, please see the Equal Employment and Educational Opportunity Policies: <http://www.msmnyc.edu/Portals/0/Equal%20Employment%20and%20Educational%20Opportunity%20Policy%202.23.2016.pdf> The School is committed to creating an environment in which students feel safe to focus on their education and their art. It is our goal to provide educational and preventative programs to minimize the occurrence of sexual misconduct, to provide needed support to individuals who have been impacted by sexual misconduct, and to provide prompt and equitable investigation into allegations. The United States government and Manhattan School of Music consider sexual misconduct and sexual harassment to be forms of sex discrimination. Manhattan School of Music does not discriminate on the basis of sex (or any other protected category) in its employment or education. Students who believe they have been subjected to violations of this Policy are encouraged to report these incidents so that the Institution can provide needed support and take steps to protect the community. This policy outlines procedures for making such a report, including options for making an anonymous or confidential report. Sexual harassment, sexual misconduct (including sexual assault), domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking can be experienced by individuals regardless of gender or other personal characteristics. Manhattan School of Music is committed to addressing sexual violence on behalf of all members of the student community. Title IX Coordinator In compliance with Title IX, Manhattan School of Music has designated Carol Matos, Director of Administration and Human Relations, to be the School's Title IX Coordinator. Carol Matos is located in Room 107 and can be reached by telephone at 917-493-4450 and by email at cmatos@msmnyc.edu. Ms. Matos works to ensure compliance with Title IX. Questions regarding

Title IX can be directed to her or to the United States Office of Civil Rights: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>. Jurisdiction It doesn't matter whether the incident or incidents happened on campus or off; if you are a Manhattan School of Music student and you have experienced sexual misconduct, we want to help. Confidential and Anonymous Reporting All MSM employees will treat reports of sexual misconduct as confidentially as possible; however, most personnel are required to report incidents they learn about to the Title IX Coordinator. The exceptions are the Campus Health Nurse and the counseling staff, who are not required under Title IX to report the name and/or other identifying information about an alleged victim to the Title IX Coordinator. 1 To contact MSM's Campus Health Nurse, Sophia Grigoriou, please visit her in room 618 in Andersen Hall, or via email and phone at 917-493-4278 / sgrigoriou@msmnyc.edu. Our School counselors work from room 616 in Andersen Hall. To contact them for an appointment, please email any one of the following addresses: Shara Sand, shara@drsharasand.com; Michelle Bartnett drmicheleB@verizon.net; Peter Haddad, peterjhaddad@gmail.com. To make an anonymous report of sexual misconduct, see the School's Campus Health Nurse or a member of the counseling staff during business hours, or fill out our anonymous on-line Sexual Misconduct Report Form <https://iframe-intranet.msmnyc.edu:51206/hr/SexualMisconductReportForm.aspx>.

Sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, sexual misconduct (including sexual assault and sexual violence), dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking are prohibited by this Policy. Any acts of retaliation or intimidation are also prohibited.

Theatrical Ethics Code of 1945

Developed in 1945 for the Circle Theatre in Los Angeles. Among the backers of this theatre was Charlie Chaplin. This Code was reprinted in the May 2008 Equity Newsletter, published by Actors' Equity, the union for professional actors and stage-managers.

More than 40 years later, this Code still speaks clearly to the discipline and conduct of the people Constantin Stanislavski called "Ladies and Gentlemen of the Theatre."

This code of conduct is a part of our code of conduct for the Musical Theatre Program, Manhattan School of Music, and all students are expected to read it carefully, understand it, and live by it during their time in the conservatory. Any student who has a problem with or question about any aspect of this code, as well as the aspects of our student handbook should speak with Luis Perez Chair of Musical Theatre.

Forward to the Code:

A part of the great tradition of the theatre is the code of ethics which belong to every worker in the theatre. This code is not a superstition, nor a dogma, nor a ritual which is enforced by tribunals; it is an attitude toward your vocation, your fellow workers, your audiences and yourself. It is a kind of self-discipline which does not rob you of your invaluable individualism.

Those of you who have been in show business know the full connotation of these precepts. Those of you who are new to show business will soon learn....it is with the sincere purpose of continued dedication to the great traditions of the theatre that these items are here presented."

The Code:

1. I shall never miss a performance
2. I shall play every performance with energy, enthusiasm and to the best of my ability regardless of the size of the audience, personal illness, bad weather, accident, or even death in my family.
3. I shall forego all social activities which interfere with rehearsals or any other scheduled work at the theatre, and I shall always be on time.
4. I shall never make a curtain late by my failure to be ready on time.
5. I shall never miss an entrance.
6. I shall never leave the theatre building or any stage area until I have completed my performance, unless I am specifically excused by the stage manager; curtain calls are part of the show.
7. I shall not let the comments of friends, relatives or critics change any phase of my work without proper consultations; I shall not change lines, business, lights, properties, settings or costumes or any phase of the productions without consultation with and permission of my director or producer or their agents and I shall inform all people concerned.
8. I shall forego the gratification of my ego for the demands of the play.
9. I shall remember my business is to create illusion; therefore, I shall not break the illusion by appearing in costume and makeup off-stage or outside the theatre.
10. I shall accept my director's and producer's advice and counsel in the spirit in which it is given, for they can see the production as a whole and my work from the front.
11. I shall never 'put on an act' while viewing other artists' work as a member of an audience, nor shall I make caustic criticism from jealousy or for the sake of being smart.
12. I shall respect the play and the playwright and, remembering that 'a work of art is not a work of art until it is finished,' I shall not condemn a play while it is in rehearsal.
13. I shall not spread rumor or gossip which is malicious and tends to reflect discredit on my show, the theatre, or any personnel connected with them—either to people inside or outside the group.
14. Since I respect the theatre in which I work, I shall do my best to keep it looking clean, orderly and attractive regardless of whether I am specifically assigned to such work or not.
15. I shall handle stage properties and costumes with care for I know they are part of the tools of my trade and are a vital part of the physical production.
16. I shall follow rules of courtesy, deportment and common decency applicable in all walks of life (and especially in a business in close contact with the public) when I am in the theatre, and I shall observe the rules and regulations of any specific theatre where I work.
17. I shall never lose my enthusiasm for theatre because of disappointments.

Finally:

I understand that membership in the ...Theatre entitles me to the privilege of working, when I am so assigned, in any of the phases of a production, including: props, lights, sound construction, house management, box office, publicity and stage managing—as well as acting. I realize it is possible I may not be cast in a part for many months, but I will not allow this to dampen my enthusiasm or desire to work, since I realize without my willingness to do all other phases of theatre work, there would be no theatre for me to act in.”

Advice from John Cage

John Cage was a famous composer who worked closely with modern dancer Merce Cunningham and helped him start his studio. He wrote these *10 Rules for Students and Teachers*.

- 1) Find a place you trust, and then, try trusting it for a while.
- 2) Pull everything out of your teacher. Pull everything out of your fellow classmates.
- 3) Pull everything out of your students.
- 4) Consider everything an experiment.
- 5) Be Self Disciplined. This means finding someone wise or smart and choosing to follow them. To be disciplined is to follow in a good way. To be self-disciplined is to follow in a better way.
- 6) Follow the leader. Nothing is a mistake. There is no win or fail. There is only make.
- 7) The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. It is the people who do all the work all the time who eventually catch onto things. You can fool the fans but not the players.
- 8) Do not try to create and analyze at the same time. They are different processes.
- 9) Be happy whenever you can manage it. Enjoy Yourself. It is lighter than you think.
- 10) Always be around. Come or go to everything. Always go to classes. Read everything you can get your hands on. Save everything it may come in handy later.