

## Voicing Concerns for Students

The Department of Theatre aspires to be a place where people from all cultures, races, ancestries, sexes, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, ages, religions, and economic statuses feel welcome. If you have an experience within the department that does not reflect our values of respect, equity, and inclusion, have a conflict with another member of the department, or would like help understanding a challenging situation in the department, please let us know.

There are many people who are prepared to offer support and advice as you work toward a resolution. However, it is important for everyone to understand that in most cases a concern must be addressed at its source, and its resolution will involve collaboration and conversation amongst all relevant parties. Because we understand such conversations can be difficult, we encourage you to bring someone with you as a support. If you do not have someone you feel can offer you the type of support you need, you may request that the Department assign a faculty or staff member to be a third person in the meeting(s). Please make that request at the time you schedule your meeting.

### **What can I expect when I voice a concern to a faculty or staff member?**

1. We will listen.
2. We will tell you what we heard you say to ensure understanding.
3. We will ask if you would like to develop a plan of action, including involving other faculty or staff members or other university support systems. (To resolve a problem among members of the community, all relevant parties must be involved.)
4. We will do what we said we were going to do.
5. We will let you know that we have done what we said we were going to do.
6. We will file a record of your concern with the Department of Theatre, unless you ask us not to. The record can remain anonymous if you would like it to. If you have requested a response, you can expect one within 30 days.

Challenging situations emerge in a variety of settings and may require different approaches. Below are several paths you might take to share a concern with the department, depending upon the circumstances.

### **How do I voice a concern about a course I am enrolled in?**

1. If you feel able to, begin by making an appointment to talk with your instructor.
2. If you prefer not to begin the conversation with your instructor or if you spoke to your instructor but you feel further action may be needed, make an appointment with the area head who oversees the course:
  - Actor Training Program: Robert Scott Smith, [robertscott.smith@utah.edu](mailto:robertscott.smith@utah.edu)
  - Musical Theatre Program: David Schmidt, [d.schmidt@utah.edu](mailto:d.schmidt@utah.edu)
  - Performing Arts Design Program: Brenda Van der Wiel, at [b.vanderwiel@utah.edu](mailto:b.vanderwiel@utah.edu)
  - Stage Management Program: Amber Bielinski, at [amber.bielinski@utah.edu](mailto:amber.bielinski@utah.edu)
  - Theatre Studies: Tim Slover, at [tim.slover@utah.edu](mailto:tim.slover@utah.edu)
  - Theatre Teaching: Kimberly Jew, at [kimberly.jew@utah.edu](mailto:kimberly.jew@utah.edu)

If you are unsure which Area Head oversees the course, please contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUGS), Gage Williams, at [DUGS@theatre.utah.edu](mailto:DUGS@theatre.utah.edu) to identify the correct area head.

3. If you prefer not to speak to the Area Head or if you spoke to the Area Head but feel further action may be needed, make an appointment with the Department of Theatre's Associate Chair, Chris DuVal, at [AssocChair@theatre.utah.edu](mailto:AssocChair@theatre.utah.edu), or the Department Chair, Dr. Sydney Cheek-O'Donnell, at [Chair@theatre.utah.edu](mailto:Chair@theatre.utah.edu).

### **How do I voice a concern about something that happened during a rehearsal or performance of a Department of Theatre production?**

1. If you feel able to, begin by speaking to the director of the production or the stage manager. (Schedule an appointment outside of rehearsal or performance time to ensure that everyone's attention is undivided.)
2. If you prefer not to begin with the director or stage manager, or you have done so and feel additional input is needed, speak to the company's elected representative (a.k.a. deputy). They are responsible for routing concerns to the appropriate person or department.
3. If you prefer not to speak to the deputy, or you have done so and would like additional advice, schedule an appointment with the department's Production Manager, Amber Bielinski, at [amber.bielinski@utah.edu](mailto:amber.bielinski@utah.edu).
4. If you prefer not to speak with the Production Manager or you have done so and wish to discuss the matter further, schedule an appointment with the Department Chair, Dr. Sydney Cheek-O'Donnell at [Chair@theatre.utah.edu](mailto:Chair@theatre.utah.edu).

### **How do I voice a concern about something that happened in a different circumstance?**

You may speak with any faculty or staff member in the department about a concern, but if you don't know where to start, here are two options:

1. Contact Associate Chair, Chris DuVal, at [AssocChair@theatre.utah.edu](mailto:AssocChair@theatre.utah.edu).
2. Contact Department Chair, Sydney Cheek-O'Donnell, at [Chair@theatre.utah.edu](mailto:Chair@theatre.utah.edu).

The CFA Dean's office can also help you strategize an approach to discussing your concern with someone in the department. If you wish to follow that path, please contact [Associate Dean Liz Leckie](#) to arrange an appointment.

Finally, in some cases, University employees are required to report information to the Office of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Title IX (OEO) (e.g., sexual assault). Even if a University employee must report the information you share to the OEO, your communication with them will remain private and you will be allowed to choose whether to take further action. For example, if you report a case of sexual harassment to a faculty member, the faculty member is required to report that information to the OEO. A staff member from OEO will contact you to offer support and the opportunity to file an official complaint. The choice to file such a complaint is yours. To learn more about the OEO, discrimination, and sexual misconduct, [watch this short video](#).

### **File an Official Report**

[Click here](#) for detailed information on how to make an official report directly to the University regarding sexual assault, physical violence, a bias incident, property crime or theft, concerning behavior, discrimination, violations of the student code of conduct, academic misconduct, or environmental health and safety concerns.

### **Mental Health Services**

The University Counseling Center offers free counseling services to students. Visit their website for detailed information on the various resources available and how to make an appointment:

<https://counselingcenter.utah.edu/>

If you or someone else you know are in immediate danger, please call 911.