

Assistant Director Guide

Students at all levels of experience are welcome to be an Assistant Director for a production in the Theatre Department's season of plays. Students may assist one of the three professionally directed shows or may assist a student director completing his or her thesis in the Thesis Festival which is typically the last slot in the season. The Assistant Director position is an opportunity for a student to learn firsthand an individual Director's process and the production process as a whole.

The duties of an Assistant Director vary from show to show; this page provides an outline of what might be expected of an Assistant Director. Some duties may be shared with the Stage Manager. If there is a Dramaturg working on the show, some of these duties would fall under the Dramaturg's purview. Good communication and respect are important in clarifying the assignment of these duties—and the assignments may change throughout the rehearsal period.

Pre-Production Duties

Read and study the play; discuss interpretation and production concept with the Director (and Dramaturg when relevant).

Attends all design meetings.

Perform research, as requested, that could encompass criticism, historical period, playwright's biography and body of work, etc.

Attend and assist with auditions and call-backs, typically the first three evenings of the semester.

Duties of the Assistant Director *During* Rehearsals

Attend all rehearsals, actively watch and listen, sometimes take notes for Director.

Maintain an up-to-date copy of script and rehearsal schedule.

Take notes and communicate regularly with the Director regarding the progress of the production. Support the Director in realizing the play onstage, which requires an in-depth understanding of the play, its characters, the setting, etc.

Director may also ask Assistant Director to run special rehearsals such as line-throughs or speed-throughs.

The AD may be asked to walk through scenes for an absent actor.

Occasionally run errands such as making copies, leading guest artists to rehearsal space, or grabbing coffee.

Duties of the Assistant Director *After* Rehearsals

The Assistant Director may be asked to type up any rehearsal notes taken by the Director for distribution to the cast and/or crew.

Duties of the Assistant Director *Between* Rehearsals

Attend all production meetings, making sure Director's concerns are addressed.

Tech and Dress Rehearsals thru Opening

Take notes during tech and dress rehearsals, and share with cast and crew.

Once the show opens, the Director's responsibilities to the production end, and the Assistant Director's tasks are likewise concluded.

A student who takes on an AD role must register for Rehearsal and Performance in the Director's section; it is a 2 point course for a grade.

Students who wish to pursue a concentration in Directing are strongly encouraged to be an Assistant Director at least once during their time at Barnard.

If you would like to be considered for an Assistant Director on an upcoming Departmental production, please contact Professor Reagan: areagan@barnard.edu