

Sound Engineer

As a member of the crew for a production, you are an important and integral part of the production team. It is crucial to the success of the rehearsal and performance process that you conscientiously fulfill your responsibilities. This document is intended to help you understand your duties during the rehearsal and performance process – it is not intended to be comprehensive, and the Sound Designer, Technical Director, and/or Production Manager may have other specific assignments for you.

The Sound Engineer, under the supervision of the Sound Designer and Technical Director implements the sound design. He or she is directly responsible for the acquisition, installation, and maintenance of all sound equipment and the supervision of the sound crews who hang, focus, and run the sound equipment.

Responsibilities of the Sound Engineer include (subject to change based on the needs of the production):

Design Phase

- Read the play, discuss technical needs with the Sound Designer, and familiarize the Designer with available equipment choices in department inventory or on campus.
- Attend design meetings as requested, consult with the Sound Designer on overall scope of show, facilities, materials issues, and provide estimates as needed.

Budgeting Phase

- Develop a budget from the Sound Designer's list of equipment needed, including the costs for sound media, practicals, and equipment rental. A labor estimate is also developed for pre-load-in, load-in, and strike.

Production Phase-Before Plot Due Date

- Gather, construct, and/or modify practicals, special effects, and equipment as it becomes available. If necessary, coordinate usage of stage practicals or mics with the stage manager, technical director, props coordinator, and/or costume shop manager.
- Attend production meetings through the build phase to keep the production team advised of progress.
- Work with the Technical Director to schedule the load-in, hang, and focus of sound equipment.

Production Phase- Between the plot due date and beginning of load-in.

- Obtain and assemble the required documentation and resources for the sound design, from the Sound Designer and other sources as necessary. The Sound Plot is typically due from the Designer two weeks before load-in begins.
- Finalize the production estimate developed earlier in the process based on the sound design. All budgeting issues should be discussed with the Technical Director and Production Manager.
- Discuss the lineset schedule and overhead location of any added speakers or special effects with the Technical Director as soon as possible. Discuss and resolve any obstructions, conflicts, or challenges with the TD.
- Obtain a rental quote (if needed) from several sound rental houses.
- Check stock inventories for specific cabling needs and rigging equipment prior to placing any orders.
- Reserve rental orders at least one week prior to load-in/sound hang.
- Purchase or gather any materials needed for special effects, etc. at least 5 working days prior to tech.
- Coordinate materials purchasing and equipment rentals with the Technical Director.
- Gather all pertinent documentation and circuit the sound plot based on the distribution of sound circuits throughout the theater. Circuit plans for Minor Latham Playhouse (MLP) or Glicker Milstein Theatre (GMT) are available from the Technical Director. Discuss any potential problems with the Sound Designer or Technical Director.

Load-In, Focus, and Tech/Dress Rehearsal Period

- Organize and help supervise the load-in, focus, and work calls.
- Rig pipes, booms, and other equipment as needed.
- Set up and test mics and patch all speakers into the mixer, then run a sound check before the focus call to make sure everything is working properly.
- Organize the necessary elements for the focus call. These may include:
 - Contacting the Sound Designer to confirm focus times
 - Gaining access to sound equipment overhead (Ladders, Genie Lift, etc.)
 - Organizing additional crew to move scenery if necessary.
- Supervise the focus call ensuring all work is performed in a safe manner. Focus must be completed prior to the first technical rehearsal.
- Set up headsets for each member of the crew and for designers as needed.
- Train the running crew in the operation of mics and special effects.
- Attend all technical rehearsals. Attend tech notes sessions after technical rehearsals are completed.
- If necessary, adjust the focus, hang, or placement of sound elements as discussed with the Sound Designer during notes sessions.
- Assist in the strike of tech tables and electrical equipment after the final dress rehearsal and before the opening performance.

Performance

- Read performance reports, respond to any reported problems and be readily available for troubleshooting.
- Work with the Sound Board Operator to fix any problems encountered. Repair or replace malfunctioning equipment. Keep sound equipment areas (backstage, control booth) safe and clean.

Strike

- Organize the strike of all sound equipment in conjunction with the Technical Director.
- Restore the sound equipment storage areas to their usual clean condition.
- Coil sound cables and strike speakers if necessary.
- Sort and pack rental equipment for return.
- Organize a crew for the return of rented or borrowed equipment.

At any time throughout the production schedule the Sound Engineer is encouraged to utilize the production staff to help resolve any challenges encountered during the production process.

The Sound Engineer reports directly to Technical Director Greg Winkler (gwinkler@barnard.edu) and is registered under Production Manager Mike Banta's (mbanta@barnard.edu) section of THTR V 3172 Rehearsal and Performance.

Rehearsal and Performance is a graded course. Each student is evaluated at the end of the semester by a committee of the staff and faculty, who consider the student's promptness, preparedness for work, execution, initiative, and follow-through. Lateness to any rehearsal or work call has the potential to impact the final grade.