



## Pre-Professional Track: MUSICAL THEATRE

It is natural for some students that are training in the performing arts to start to become more serious about their pursuits as they get older. For these students we want to offer a pathway to help them develop their skills and aid them in the pursuit of higher theatrical outlets after they graduate from high school. We are calling this the Pre-Professional Track.

This track is designed to help both students looking ahead to their high school years and those are currently enrolled in High School.

This suggested curriculum is laid out to give students a well-rounded training background to help them hone their skills and prepare them for their future. Much like college credits, we are suggesting a certain number of training hours in each discipline over the course of a 4-year period.

If you are looking at this plan and are already in High School, you can meet with the First Act Studio directors for an assessment and how to get you “on track” for the future.

### FRESHMAN YEAR

**Dance:** 1-2 Dance Classes per year

**Acting:** 1 Acting class per year

**Vocal:** 1 Vocal class per year

**Specialty:** *Pick one of the following:* Musical Theatre Troupe/ HS Drama Camp/ HS Overnight Camp/Improv Troupe

### SOPHOMORE YEAR

**Dance:** 1-2 Dance Classe per Session

**Acting:** Weekly or Bi-Weekly Private Acting or 1 Acting class per year

**Vocal:** Weekly or Bi-Weekly Private Vocal or 1 Vocal class per year

**Specialty:** *Pick one of the following:* Musical Theatre Troupe/ HS Drama Camp/ HS Overnight Camp/Improv Troupe

### JUNIOR YEAR

Dance: 2-3 Dance Classes per Session

Acting: Weekly or Bi-Weekly Private Acting or 1 Acting class per semester

Vocal: Weekly or Bi-Weekly Private Vocal all year

Specialty: *Pick one of the following:* Musical Theatre Troupe/ HS Drama Camp/ HS Overnight Camp/Improv Troupe

## SENIOR YEAR

Dance: 2-3Dance Classes per Session

Acting: Weekly or Bi-Weekly Private Acting

Vocal: Weekly or Bi-Weekly Private Acting

College Prep Class or College Prep Coaching

Specialty: *Pick one of the following:* Musical Theatre Troupe/ HS Drama Camp/ HS Overnight Camp/Improv Troupe

## WHY IS TECHNICAL TRAINING IMPORTANT?

Technical training is the detailed-oriented study of skills and methods that allow artists to prepare in an articulate, meaningful and powerful nature. Proficiency in technique allows artists greater range, depth and intensity in expression through the fine-tuned details of their art. The details of artistic expression are what truly set students apart in college and professional performing arts auditions. Those vital details are discovered, appreciated and eventually mastered in technical training.

### ***Dance***

Dance Technical training must begin with ballet first and foremost. Ballet teaches dancers control over their body and develops strength alongside the control. If a student's focus is strictly dance, they will need to add other forms of dance such as jazz, modern, lyrical, contemporary, hip-hop, tap, etc. Learning to choreograph new dance pieces is also important as well as knowledge of well-known choreographers. If a student's focus is musical theater they will need to add jazz, tap and the occasional hip hop class along with the ballet training. Training is mostly taken in group classes, but as students advance private lessons can be added for student's specific needs.

### ***Acting***

Acting Technical training would begin with acting techniques such as Meisner, Stanislavski Shurtleff, and Shakespeare. As students' progress, they are encouraged to add such training as Voice and Movement for the Actor, Acting Through Song, Script Analysis, TV/Film

and Improv. A broad knowledge of classical and contemporary repertoire is beneficial, and students should be familiar with well-known playwrights and authors. Group training is encouraged and allows students to work off other actors and train in scene work. One-on-one training is encouraged for individualized guidance and monologue selection, breakdown and perfecting the audition material.

### *Voice*

Technical training for the voice is based on mix singing techniques. For students whose focus is musical theater, they will focus on mix singing to begin with and then as proficiency increases, they will add belt singing and legit (classical) training as well. Musical Theater students will also need to have a broad knowledge of musical theater repertoire. Musical Theater and Vocal Performance students should also include piano, music theory, sight reading, and ear training to their technical training. The majority of vocal technical training will take place in one-on-one private lessons, but lessons for music theory, piano, ear training and vocal performance can be taken in group classes.

## **PLAYS AND MUSICALS**

Obviously, one of the main reasons you are doing all of this work is to be cast in plays and/or musicals. However, too much focus can be placed on the productions we are involved in instead of the time in the classroom training. Yes, you do gain experience while doing a show but the level of training and growth is minimal compared to the classroom and is often tied to how you have been cast and in what type of production you are in as well. Think of it this way instead, Plays/Musicals are instead the testing ground for the training you have been doing. It is in the audition and rehearsal room that we truly see where we have achieved growth and what areas still need attention. So, we encourage that if you are following the plan above that you continually test all that you have learned in classes and lessons by participating in shows, just remember to balance your schedule so that you are not neglecting the training for the performance opportunities.