

2020 Virtual PNW Thespians College Auditions Instructions

About the Event:

Due to COVID-19, British Columbia, Oregon, and Washington Thespians are joining forces to produce a Virtual Unified College Audition! You will prepare either a performance audition video or a video presentation of your tech/production portfolio and submit it along with your other registration info. Dozens of top college and university theatre programs will then be able to view and consider your materials on their own time.

Friday, October 23 is “Callback Invite Day” where participating colleges will reach out via email to offer students callbacks or interviews with their program. Callbacks will not happen on the 23rd, this is only the notification day. Each program has its own callback procedure, platform, and timeline, so read their invitation emails carefully to plan your next steps directly with them.

IMPORTANT ETIQUETTE: If a school reaches out to you to offer a callback or next step, take a thoughtful look at their program and **respond. Do not ghost a school.** If you are not interested in their program, give them a polite response such as *“Thank you so much for this callback opportunity, unfortunately I do not think your program will be a good fit for me at this time.”* This is a respectful way to keep the auditors from wasting their time trying to connect with you and to keep your inbox limited to schools you are seriously considering.

Requirements:

1. Only students who graduate in spring 2021 (or those from 2020 who took a gap year or did community college) may audition for college theatre programs at the Virtual PNW Thespians College Audition Festival.
2. Colleges and universities at auditions are seeking a minimum 2.75 grade point average. If you are below 2.75, you may still audition, but it’s up to the individual schools whether they will consider you for a callback.
3. College and universities are seeking actors (straight acting and musical theatre) in the Performance Auditions and designers (all areas), stage managers, directors, marketers, playwrights, and future theatre educators in the Tech/Production Portfolio Presentations. See details below for specific requirements.
4. The application is online! Visit <https://www.oregonthespians.org/>, <https://www.bcthespians.ca/>, or <http://www.washingtonstatethespians.com/> for the registration links (September 23-October 14). You will create an account and will be able to go back and edit your application over multiple sittings until you submit.
5. What you will need to submit: Your school counselor’s email address, your resume, headshot or photo of you, and your performance audition or Tech/Production Portfolio presentation video. Those doing portfolio presentations will also be able to upload their digital portfolio file (PDF). See page 2 for video requirements.
6. Application fee: \$15 for inducted Thespians and \$25 non-Thespians (payable in the registration site via PayPal). Residents of Canada only: please contact your teacher for a payment code to enter in the site and further instructions. Refunds will not be given due to cancellation. For those needing financial assistance, please email the following contact:
 - a. Oregon Thespians: collegeauditions@oregonthespians.org
 - b. Washington Thespians: btstuart@seattleschools.org
 - c. British Columbia Thespians: bcthespians@gmail.com

Timeline:

- Online registration window: Wednesday, September 23 thru **Wednesday, October 14, 2020.**
- College application and audition viewing window: Friday, October 16, 2020 thru Saturday, October 23
- Callback Invite Day: Saturday October 23
- Callbacks, interviews, and next steps: Schedule on your own directly with the programs who call you back.

Questions about the application? Accommodations for Students with Specific Needs?

All students are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the PNW Unified College Auditions. If you have questions or need special assistance or other accommodations to be successful, please contact the event co-chairs, Ben Stuart, at btstaurt@seattleschools.org, Craig Wrotniak at bcthespians@gmail.com, and/or Andrew Wilson at collegeauditions@oregonthespians.org.

Do's and Don'ts for Self-filmed Video Submissions

There are many tutorials and articles you can search for to help you create a strong video submission. Here are some key do's and don'ts:

- Do perform in a well lit space with a neutral background. Test the lighting and sound!
- Do check the frame so that all of your physical choices are captured but that you're not so far away that your facial expressions are lost. Above the knees is usually good with your face near the top quarter of the frame.
- Do not have fancy camera panning, zooming and out, or editing. This is distracting and unnecessary. Simply editing your video to start right before you introduce yourself and ending after you say "thank you" will do!
- You don't need to spend a fortune on equipment. The reps are looking at YOU and what you can do. That being said, researching tips for getting the best lighting and sound quality in your home set up will pay off.
- Try to deal with any potential distractions (pets, doorbells, phone rings, people walking thru etc...)
- Don't perform directly into the lens. Focus beyond it or on an unseen other character if performing.

Performance Audition Video Requirements:

Auditions must be solo presentations--other students may not perform with you. You will begin your audition with only an introduction: name, school, title of selection(s), playwright/composer/lyricist. You are allowed a maximum of **two** minutes (not including the introduction) for your performance. Colleges are budgeting their viewing time accordingly and may choose for themselves whether to reject applicants who ignore the time requirement.

In the performance category you may perform one, two-minute selection (song or monologue) or two contrasting one-minute selections (two monologues or one song/one monologue). If doing two selections, please film the entire audition as one continuous video with a pause to transition between the pieces.

Musical auditions must have accompaniment—a cappella singing will not be accepted. Your accompanist may be live in the room with you during filming or you may sing along with a recording. It is strongly advised that you arrange for a pianist to provide you with accompaniment--recorded or live. Do not sing over a cast album.

When choosing your performance piece, please avoid selections with dialects, accents, and any classical material unless you have been specifically trained in these areas. Costumes, scenery, and hand props are not permitted. Dress neatly—it makes a good impression.

Tech/Production Portfolio Presentations Video Requirements:

Your portfolio itself should be converted to a PDF document and could include production photos, links to videos, original documents, writing samples, drawings etc... The colleges will scroll through this on their own to get a closer look at your work. Visit <http://www.washingtonstatethespians.com/College-Auditions.php> for a guide for preparing a Tech/Production Portfolio with more details and tips.

IN addition to uploading your PDF portfolio, Tech/Production Portfolio applicants such as theatre technicians, designers, stage managers, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, theatre educators, marketers etc... will be allowed a maximum of **four** minutes to present their portfolios on video. Colleges are budgeting their viewing time accordingly and may choose for themselves whether to reject applicants who ignore the time requirement.

You will begin your presentation with an introduction: name, school, and intended area(s) of study or interest. Dress neatly—it makes a good impression.

The auditors would like to see YOU guiding them through your material and sharing any reflections or anecdotes not captured in the portfolio document itself. Remember, you will also upload a PDF of your portfolio for them to scroll through on their own.

The video is a chance to capture your energy and personality as a theatre artist and to highlight the most impactful parts of your work:

- If your portfolio is an all digital slide show, consider taping yourself in “presenter view” like you would on a Zoom call, where the document and cursor are visible as well as your face speaking.
- If your portfolio has physical materials such as set design models or costume/hand prop construction samples, you may want to display those in the frame and give the camera a closer look.
- Clips from actual performances that feature your technical work can be great supporting resources but are not required and may burn through your four minutes. Including links in your PDF may be a better choice.

About Callbacks:

In addition to viewing your audition or portfolio presentation video, college/university representatives may call students back for interviews or to see more audition work. Callback invitations will be emailed to students by the individual schools on Saturday, October 23. You likely will not connect with the college reps on this day, instead, follow the directions included in their email to arrange a future call or meeting with them.

If you do not receive a callback to a school you are interested in, you are welcome to reach out to that school and ask for feedback and to make a personal connection. Sometimes, when a school hears from an eager student who has taken the time to research their program, they may go back and reconsider that student. The schools are never required to give you feedback or a follow up, but it never hurts to send a thank you note for the opportunity.

Mailing representatives personal thank you cards or emails shortly after the event is recommended.