

Dramaturg

IT CANNOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH THAT ALL PRODUCTIONS USE THEIR DRAMATURGS DIFFERENTLY! USE THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL ONLY AS A GUIDE BEFORE YOUR FIRST MEETING WITH YOUR MENTOR OR DIRECTOR!

Dramaturgy refers to a set of activities necessary to the theater-making process, often centering on the work of selecting and preparing play scripts for production. In the production process, the dramaturg functions as the “expert” and advocate for the script and other literary components of the production process. Production dramaturgy includes text analysis, research, writing and collaboration. Organizational skills are key for the dramaturg as is the ability to work collaboratively with others. It is also important to remember that dramaturgy is an art because it involves creativity, imagination and aesthetic judgment.

Standard tasks for a production dramaturg include: extensive research and analysis; discussions with director, designers and playwright (when applicable) before rehearsals begin (at least one month); ongoing discussions with production team during the rehearsal process; attendance at 2-3 rehearsals/week; attendance at run-throughs and previews; notes to director and/or author when developing a new play in conjunction with the playwright; raise questions/suggestions to director and/or playwright regarding the play script; record/document production process. *In some instances, (though this is not the case at Theatre Northwest), dramaturgs are responsible for assisting with script and production season selection.*

More specifically, the production dramaturg responsibilities may include tasks within any or all of the following categories of work:

Script Analysis

Analyze the action, characters, imagery and ideas in the play
Provide play development work on a new script
Analyze the play’s contribution to literature with an emphasis on ideas, language and style, character development
Report and recommendation of an appropriate translation of a play
Assist the artistic team in adapting a classic text
Compile analytical work in a useable format (casebook, website, etc)

Research

Report on events and ideas related to the world of the play
Define terms and describe specific activities in the play
Find critical analysis of the play and playwright
Compile production history of the play

Compile relevant critiques of the play and key productions
Prepare research packet for cast
Locate drafts and versions of script
Collate, cut, track, edit, rewrite, construct, and arrange script material
Secure permissions to use copyrighted material
Find songs, pictures, stories, videos (representational, metaphorical, and abstract) related to the world of the play, characters, themes, etc.
Collect research in a casebook or on a web site

Collaboration

Meet with director, playwright, and design team well in advance of the start of the rehearsals process
Attend all production meetings
Attend anywhere from two-five rehearsals a week
Develop the play workshop process (for new plays)
Take notes related to the play text during rehearsals for the director and playwright (when applicable)

Outreach and Education

Develop and/or assist with projects that may include:
Educational web sites
Lobby displays
Educational packets for high schools
Program notes
Post-show discussions, audience discussions, or panel responses
Interdisciplinary symposia for productions
Lectures for school or community groups
Marketing materials

I, _____ have read the above job description for my duties as _____ for the production of _____. I realize that these duties may be adjusted for, but not limited to the following reasons, show complexity, crew size, crew experience, etc. I will carry out my duties to the best of my abilities and ask questions when I need help.

Signed & Dated,

Student _____ Faculty _____