BFA Performance Hurdles 2015 Information

2015 Voice and Dance Hurdles: Friday, May 1, 3:00pm, Albert Taylor Theatre
Acting Hurdle/Acting II Final: Monday, May 11 and Tuesday, May 12 from 6:00pm till we’re done.

All Acting II students are required to attend BOTH nights of Acting II Final showings;
absence on either night will result in failing the course

All first year BFA students and All BFA transfer students are required to hurdle.
Decisions are made by the entire Performance Committee and are made in the best interests
of the student and of the program; the decision of the committee is final.

Petitions to Audition for BFA Programs
BA students interested in auditioning for a BFA program may petition to audition through the
performance committee. Submit petitions to the Hurdles Coordinator by 5:00pm March 31st.
The committee will respond to the petitions as quickly as possible. The Hurdles Coordinator for 2015
is Denise Myers: dmyers@millikin.edu

Petition Forms are available online and should be submitted to the Hurdles Coordinator via e-mail.
Petitions submitted after 5:00pm March 31st will not be considered. A sample petition is included
below. If you have a School of Music voice teacher and plan to petition, please inform your voice
teacher ASAP that you are preparing for the hurdle and get his/her input.

BA permission for admittance to Advanced Scene Study
Prerequisites for Advanced Scene Study are BFA only or permission of the faculty performance
committee. BA students interested in continuing to Advanced Scene Study need to inform the Hurdles
Coordinator of their interest by May 1st and their petitions will be considered during hurdles. Students
will be notified regarding their acceptance into Advanced Scene Study after the hurdle.

Sample Petition To Audition
REMINDER: This petition is a request to audition at the hurdles. Receiving a “yes” from the committee
ONLY indicates we agree to see the audition and does not in any way speak to our opinion regarding
the outcome of the audition.

DEADLINE: Submitted by 5:00pm March 31st to the Hurdles Coordinator (2015 coordinator is Denise
Myers: dmyers@millikin.edu). Preference for submission is via online, but hard copies are fine.
Petitions submitted after 5:00pm March 31st will not be considered.

Name: Petitioning for which Program? (Acting or Musical Theatre):
Choose one: freshman sophomore
Who is your Acting II teacher?
If petitioning into Musical Theatre,
Have you been studying with a voice teacher this year?
If so, who?
What dance classes have you taken at Millikin?

Acting Hurdle Information:
Your final Acting II scene will be your acting hurdle. Choose a scene from the following 5 plays covered
in class: Spike Heels, The Last Night of Ballyhoo, Seven Guitars, Crimes of the Heart, Nice People
Dancing... Choose your partner and scene early. Choice of Scene and Partner must be submitted
and approved by your acting professor before Spring Break (March 6). Any submissions/approvals after
the 6th will result in a 10-point deduction from your final grade. We prefer that students in the same
section do not perform the same scenes.
Dance Hurdle Information:
On Monday, April 27, 2015, 3-4pm in the Old Gym, everyone will learn the hurdle dance (a ballet combination) from Angie and two or three student assistants. On Wednesday, April 29, 2015, 3-4pm in AT, everyone will practice the hurdle dance with the student assistants. This will give you a chance to get more comfortable with the material, to practice it in the space you'll be performing in, to adjust to a different floor, etc. On Friday, May 1, 2015, at 3pm in AT, the Dance Hurdle begins. You will be dancing for the entire performance faculty. You’ll show the dance in small groups (approximately 4 will dance at a time), and you’ll get to dance the combination at least twice. After you dance, you’ll be dismissed to get ready to sing. You’ll dance in the same order that you sign up to sing (the first 4 singers will be the first 4 dancers, and so on). This tends to make the whole thing run smoothly, giving people plenty of time to change clothes, etc.

FAQs:
What should I wear?
Ballet shoes, leotard, tights, unitard, proper undergarments as you would in class, etc. Colors are ok, but no wild distracting prints, please. The dress code for ballet classes is a good resource if you have clothing questions. Look clean and professional. Let us see the line of your body. The less you cover yourself up, the better you will look and the better you will dance. Pull your hair back. You will need to show that you can effectively spot turns, so hair that will hit your face needs to be out of the way. This applies to both males and females with long hair.

I have a class during the time that you are teaching the dance. What do I do?
First, let Angie know that is why you aren’t there to learn the dance. Second, contact one of the assistants to see if he or she can teach you the combination. If they cannot, then you’ll need to learn the dance from a trustworthy friend.

Can I ask questions about the hurdles dance?
Sure. Once the dance has been taught, dance instructors and assistants will be happy to answer your questions. Don’t expect private lessons or coaching on “how to” do the steps, but questions on sequence, counts, etc., are perfectly fine to ask throughout the week.

What should I expect from the hurdle combination?
The hurdle combination will be comprised of skills you have worked on all year in ballet class. This is not a pop quiz, but a demonstration of the elements required for the completion of Ballet I.

Will the hurdle results affect my grade?
Grades for Ballet I are determined by the work you have done IN CLASS. The hurdle is a departmental evaluation that is not directly tied to grades.

Is the hurdle combination different for those of us in Ballet II or Ballet III?
The choreography is essentially the same for all levels of dancers. More advanced students should do multiple pirouettes, add beats to jumps, etc., if they can do so cleanly. Quality is always more important than quantity. All dancers should show skills appropriate to the level they are currently studying.

TIPS:
Stay hydrated and rested for the remainder of the semester. If you are tired, drink water and stretch your muscles. It is a challenging time of year for everyone. Remain calm and ask questions if you have them. Remember that you are showing us what you’ve been working on all year. Be proud of it and enjoy!
Voice Hurdle Information:
The voice hurdle begins at 4:00pm on Friday, May 1.
Students will be seen in groups of 6; a sign up sheet will be posted outside of SH210 on Monday, April 27.

The student should prepare two contrasting selections from standard musical theater repertoire (pre1995), and preferably from the classic Musical Theater Rep. (i.e., Gilbert & Sullivan, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Lerner & Loewe, Harnick & Bock, Kander & Ebb, Gershwin, Maltby & Shire, Rodgers & Hart, Schmidt & Jones, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, Jerry Herman, etc.). Scores with a strong pop or rock sound should be avoided (i.e., Steven Schwartz, Galt Macdermot, Tom Kreiger, Frank Wildhorn, Andrew Lloyd-Webber, etc.).

One song should be a ballad, demonstrating a lyrical line, breath support, and sound vocal production. The other song should be up-tempo, can be more character driven, but still demonstrating good vocal production. Songs should be performed in well-prepared cuttings (32 bars - Up tempo, 16 bars - Ballad.) Cuts should be clearly marked for the accompanist and provided in a bound folder or notebook, with limited page turns.

It is strongly recommended that students select their songs from the musical theater repertoire they have been studying throughout the school year. It is also best that students select material that is specific to their race and gender, especially if the songs chosen are specific to race or gender in their original settings. This is not an audition, where the specific songs chosen will have an outcome in terms of being cast in a given role or show. It is rather an opportunity for the Theater Department Faculty to see the students' progress during their first year of vocal study at Millikin.

REGARDING THE BELT VOICE: Students should not sing material that requires a “belt” voice unless they have been singing in belt during their studio lessons. It is more harmful to students’ progress in the Musical Theater program to sing a belt song not having trained in belt, than it is for them to not sing a belt song at all. If there is any question as to whether a particular song should be “belted” or not, contact the Theater Department Music Director (Kevin Long) for assistance in clarification.

No student will be put on vocal probation for not belting.

A NOTE ON SONDHEIM! Most, or all, songs composed by Sondheim should be carefully scrutinized by both the student and teacher, with regard to the complexity of the piano accompaniment, and the amount of support given (or not) to the vocal line. Students should consult with their teachers to determine the possibility of performing a given Sondheim song before considering a Sondheim selection for hurdles or auditions. While extremely moving, some of his later works are especially challenging for even the most gifted musician.

Songs by Jason Robert Brown and Adam Guettel should also be avoided.