

The Second City Training Center Manual -for Kids and Teen Students

Key Contact Personnel

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Policies and Procedures

This General Information page contains important and pertinent information regarding the Training Center and general policies for our students. All new students and parents should read it thoroughly, and print out a copy for their reference. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the office. Every effort is made to keep this information up-to-date. However, policies and procedures are subject to change without notice, at the Training Center's discretion.

About the Training Center

The Second City Training Center has emerged as a leading school for people from all walks of life to study improvisation, acting and writing. Many Second City alumni first studied here, including Tina Fey and Rachel Dratch of *Saturday Night Live*, Stephanie Weir of *MAD TV*, Steve Carell of *The Office*, Nancy Walls and Stephen Colbert of *The Colbert Report*, Chris Farley, Bonnie Hunt and Mike Myers. Other alumni of our Training Center include Sean Hayes of *Will and Grace*, three-time Tony Award winner Hinton Battle, author of Broadway's *Urinetown* Greg Kotis, Halle Berry, and countless other producers, directors, writers and actors working in theater, television and film. Our students come from many backgrounds and experience levels. Whatever your reason for joining, we aim to create a safe and supportive environment where you can explore and grow.

The focus of The Second City Training Center is to teach the skills which underlie the work on our resident stages. The classes, taught by professionals working in their fields, are dedicated to helping students develop their artistic voice, both individually and within

an ensemble, and to provide the tools and techniques needed to express that voice. We draw on our company's history of ensemble improvisation, satire, and revue comedy as developed and practiced by our actors, directors, and teachers and serve as a laboratory for the exploration of the future of the art form.

Facility Information

The Training Center office is located at 230 W. North Avenue, on the fourth floor of Piper's Alley. Office hours are Monday through Thursday from 10am to 10pm, Fridays and Saturdays from 10am to 5pm and Sundays from 12pm to 9pm. The Training Center office phone number is 312-664-3959.

There is a paid indoor parking lot at Piper's Alley as well as outdoor lots along Wells Street and North Avenue. On-street parking is limited; consult posted signs. Nearby public transportation routes include the Sedgwick stop on the Brown and Purple lines, North/Clybourn or the Clark/Division stops on the Red Line, and the North Avenue (#72), Sedgwick (#37), Broadway (#36), Sheridan (#151), LaSalle (#156) and Clark Street (#22) bus lines.

Restrooms

There are restrooms located throughout the building: outside of the Mainstage at the north end of the lobby; on the second floor behind the 1959 bar; two private restrooms at the eastern side of the 2nd floor classroom spaces; and on the third floor of Piper's Alley for the 3rd and 4th floor Training Center classrooms and the Skybox and de Maat Theatres.

Parents of younger students are strongly encouraged to take their children to the restrooms before class to avoid any disruption to the class.

Classrooms

- Donny's Skybox Theatre (4th floor, Piper's Alley)
- DeMaat Studio Theatre (3rd floor, Piper's Alley)
- Mainstage Theatre (1616 N. Wells Street)
- e.t.c. theatre (2nd floor, Piper's Alley)
- Rooms 401-410 (4th floor, Piper's Alley)
- Rooms 301-305 (3rd floor, Piper's Alley)
- Rooms 201-209 (2nd floor, Piper's Alley)
- The Beat Lounge (2nd floor, Piper's Alley)
- The Blackout Cabaret (2nd floor, Piper's Alley)

Classes & Attendance

Class Times

We aim to make your class days and times constant throughout each program.

Switching Class Times

If your schedule changes and it is impossible for you to attend your scheduled class time, let us know as soon as possible. We will make every effort to place you in a new class time which is convenient for you. However, once you are placed in a class time, we cannot guarantee switching you into a different time within the same term. Students switching sections may be charged a \$30 transfer fee. If other classes within your level are full, you may need to wait a term or even two to get into a different time slot. The best time to try to change classes is when registering for your next term.

Making Up Classes

If you are enrolled in a program that has multiple sections, you can make up a maximum of two missed classes by going to another class time during the same week. If you are uncertain about when you can make up a class, please call the Training Center office. Make-up classes are for your benefit. They do not erase the original absences, as they do not take away from the fact that you were not present with your own ensemble.

Each instructor has the right to inform any student who is making up a class whether they may participate or only observe the class.

Missing their regularly scheduled class jeopardizes their involvement within the ensemble.

Required Classes

The Second City Training Center reserves the right to require writing and/or acting classes for individual students as needed. Should an individual not complete any required class, the Training Center reserves the right to hold the student back a term until the requirement is satisfied.

Auditing/Guests

Visitors are not allowed to attend regular classes. A drop-in class or jam would be an appropriate option for guests.

Substitute Instructors

A substitute teacher may sometimes be necessary due to the fact that our faculty is comprised of working artists. When possible, students will be notified by their instructor in advance. However, sometimes advance notice is not possible.

Payment Policies

New Student Membership

Students who have never before taken a class at The Second City Training Center in Chicago will pay a one-time \$20 membership fee at the time of registration.

Multi-Class Tuition Discount

Students who enroll in more than one class within the same term will receive a 15 percent discount off each additional class. Some restrictions may apply.

Early Registration Discount

Most Kids & Teen program classes have an early registration period during which students can register at a lower tuition rate.

Class Scholarships

The Second City Training Center offers a limited number of scholarships for our youth programs. Scholarship applications will be posted on the website when they are being accepted and due. All components required for the applications are to be turned in at the same time. We will not accept late or incomplete applications.

Returned Checks

A \$30.00 fee will be assessed for returned checks due to insufficient funds or closed accounts.

Note: Tuition is non-refundable and non-transferable. All sales are final.

Auditions

Auditions

An audition is required to enter The Youth and Teen Ensembles, Long Form, and Script to Stage. All who audition should have a headshot or current photo along with a resume at the time of the audition. Please consult the Training Center for audition dates and appointment times. If a student is not able to make the scheduled audition, s/he is welcome to wait a term and audition later. We do not hold private auditions.

Donny's Skybox, De Maat Studio, Blackout Cabaret, Beat Lounge

Donny's Skybox Theatre is on the fourth floor of Piper's Alley. The de Maat Studio Theatre is on the third floor of Piper's Alley. The Beat and the Blackout are located on the 2nd floor. These spaces are used for classes as well as for a series of performances presented by alumni, faculty, students and guest artists of the Training Center. Visit our website for the current schedule of shows and performances.

Performances & Tickets

Listing Class Shows on an Actors' Resume

It is important that for any audition, whether through Second City or not, you represent your training and show experience with us correctly and honestly. For example,

performing in the Mainstage theater for an Ensemble show does not allow you to put “Second City Mainstage” on your actor’s resume. Please list the location or producing body on all your Training Center experience as “Second City Training Center, Chicago.” After completing a program, it is also important not to list yourself as a “Second City Alumni” but rather as a “Second City Training Center Alumni.”

For example, a student who has completed the Teen Ensemble should list the experience as:

Teen Ensemble Show - Ensemble - Second City Training Center, Chicago

If you are interested in more information on auditioning or creating a resume, the Training Center regularly hosts workshops and free events that cover the essentials of auditioning. Check the Training Center callboard, the student section of the website, or the Training Center newsletter for upcoming events of this sort.

Miscellaneous

Clothing

Students should wear comfortable clothing suitable for basic movement. Outfits should not be distracting to other students—no questionable graphics, sheer tops, short shorts/skirts, etc. We request that students not wear flip-flops or sandals to class. Instead, comfortable shoes (such as sneakers) are recommended. Remember that students will often be spending time in theaters, so students may want to bring a sweat shirt or sweater, as all of our facilities are air conditioned. As for auditions, we recommend what we call “nice casual”, meaning presenting yourself in a professional manner, but not too formal.

Valuables

Crime is part of life in the big city. Try not to bring anything of value with you to class, and never leave your belongings unattended. The Second City is not responsible for any lost or stolen articles. Cell phones are allowed but must be silenced during class.

Tuition Policy

Tuition is non-refundable, non-transferable. The Second City Training Center reserves the right to accept or deny any application.

Standards of Conduct

Civility

By their very nature, improv theater and comedy are artistic pursuits in which the boundaries of what is deemed socially “appropriate” and/or politically correct are often blurred and subject to interpretation. Words and/or conduct that offend one person may have no effect on another. The Training Center does not endeavor to shield students from ideas and/or behavior that they may find unwelcome, disagreeable or even offensive; indeed, the free exchange of ideas between students and their instructor(s) – even those that some may find objectionable – is vital to the creative process underlying great improv theater. As such, students should approach their class work with an open mind, and take into the account the diversity of viewpoints, beliefs and backgrounds that make the programs at the Training Center such a rich learning experience. By the same token, students should exercise good judgment when participating in class activities, and avoid engaging in conduct that rises to the level of abuse, such as targeted attacks directed at a particular individual.

As a general rule, the Training Center will not intervene to enforce social standards of civility. If, however, you feel that certain conduct – whether by an instructor or a student – has overstepped the bounds of what is acceptable even in an improv theater/comedy setting, you may decline to participate and report the behavior to the Youth Program Manager. The Training Center will investigate the matter and address the issue, as needed. There will be no retaliation against any student who in good faith raises a concern, reports an incident and/or participates in an investigation under this policy. Any student who believes that he or she has been retaliated against in any manner should report it immediately to the Youth Program Manager.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, is strictly prohibited. The Training Center will not tolerate harassment by anyone, including instructors, staff, students, visitors, vendors, contractors and third parties.

Harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with an individual’s participation in Training Center programs, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited harassment include, but are not limited to epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes directed at an individual based on his or her personal characteristics, which **do not serve any class-related function and/or fall outside the bounds of what is acceptable in the classroom**, as set forth in the Training Center’s Civility policy.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in particular is strictly prohibited. Sexual harassment encompasses a range of conduct from sexual assault (which is also a criminal act) to conduct such as unwanted touching or persistent unwelcome comments, sexual advances, propositions and/or requests for sexual favors, depending on the specific circumstances and context in which the conduct occurs. For example, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or sexually-directed remarks or behavior constitute sexual harassment when (i) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made, explicitly, or implicitly, a basis for an academic decision or professional advancement, or a term or condition of either; or (ii) such

conduct is directed against an individual despite its rejection. On the other hand, sexual innuendo or suggestive comments, gestures or jokes made in the course of a class exercise or performance may not be considered impermissible sexual harassment, if they serve an educational and/or artistic purpose.

Please note that due to the unique of the improv theater/comedy setting, a person's subjective belief that behavior is offensive, intimidating or hostile does not necessarily render that behavior harassment under this policy. Rather, the behavior must be objectively unreasonable in light of the surrounding circumstances and context. Such expression will not constitute impermissible harassment unless (in addition to satisfying the above definitions) it is targeted at a specific person or persons, is abusive and/or serves no educational purpose.

Complaint Procedure

Any student who experiences or witnesses harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, whether from a fellow student or a faculty member, should feel free to discuss the problem with their instructor, program head, Human Resources, or the President of the Training Centers, and, if desired, request that one of them speak informally to the person complained about. No one at the Training Center – whether a faculty member or a student – may reprimand, retaliate or discriminate against an individual for raising a concern, making a complaint and/or participating in an investigation under this policy. Any individual who believes that he or she has been retaliated against in any manner should report the matter to the Youth Program Manager.

All concerns and complaints will be treated with confidentiality to the extent practicable without compromising the investigation and/or resolution of the matter, and will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. Where possible, the Training Center will attempt to resolve the issue informally (for example, by speaking to the alleged harasser and/or counseling the parties). However, this does not preclude more formal corrective or disciplinary action.

Consensual Relationships Between Faculty and Students

It is against Training Center policy for students and instructors to enter and/or engage in romantic and/or sexual relationships with one another while the instructor is teaching the student in a class and/or supervising the student's work at the Training Center. Consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships between instructors and Training Center students not enrolled in a class the instructor is teaching, while not forbidden, generally are considered unwise and inappropriate. Please note that even where both parties have consented at the outset to a romantic and/or sexual involvement, such consent does not preclude a subsequent charge of sexual harassment against the instructor.

Sexual Assault Policy

Sexual assault is a criminal act that violates the standards of our community and is unacceptable at the Training Center. The Training Center's Sexual Assault policy applies to students, instructors, staff, and visitors, as well as vendors, contractors and third parties.

Sexual assault is defined as:

- Any intentional or knowing touching or fondling by an individual, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitals, breasts, thighs, or buttocks of the victim without the consent of the victim;
- Touching or fondling of an individual by the victim when the victim is forced to do so against his or her will; or
- Any nonconsensual acts involving sexual penetration of the sex organs, anus, or mouth.

Use of alcohol or drugs may impair an individual's capacity to consent freely and may render an individual incapable of giving consent.

Reporting Procedure

Any student who believes he or she has been sexually assaulted, whether by a fellow student, faculty member or visitor, should report the incident to the Youth Program Head, Human Resources, or the President of the Training Centers. The student is also encouraged to report the incident to the police and seek medical care as soon as possible. No one at the Training Center – whether a faculty member or a student – may reprimand, retaliate or discriminate against an individual for raising a concern, making a complaint and/or participating in an investigation under this policy. Any individual who believes that he or she has been retaliated against in any manner should report the matter to Youth Program Manager.

All concerns and complaints will be treated with confidentiality to the extent practicable without compromising the investigation and/or resolution of the matter, and will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. Depending on the severity of the incident and the individuals involved, the Training Center may pursue the matter through internal disciplinary procedures without the cooperation of the victim. Under such circumstances, the Training Center will inform the victim of its decision to proceed in this manner.

Violence

The Training Center maintains a zero tolerance policy for violence. Acts or threats of physical violence which involve or affect Training Center faculty, students and staff or which occur on Training Center / Second City property, will not be tolerated. Examples of prohibited threats or acts of violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hitting or shoving an individual
- Physically injuring another individual
- Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, or property with harm, or otherwise engaging in behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury in another person
- Intentional destruction or threatening to destruct Training Center / Second City property
- Making/sending harassing or threatening phone calls, text messages, and emails

- Harassing surveillance or stalking
- Unauthorized possession or use of firearms or weapons

Every student is encouraged to report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence of which he/she is aware. The report should be made to Youth Program Manager. Please note that this policy does not apply to fictitious “threats” or simulated “acts” of violence made in the course of your work at the Training Center.

Weapons

The Training Center prohibits all persons who enter Training Center / Second City property from carrying a handgun, firearm, knife, explosive, or other prohibited weapon of any kind regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon or not.

The only exception to this policy will be police officers, security guards or other persons who have been given written consent by the Training Center / Second City and/or are permitted by law to carry a weapon on the property.

Violation of this policy is grounds for discipline, including immediate dismissal.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The use, sale, manufacture, cultivation, distribution, dispensation, possession of illegal drugs or other unauthorized, intoxicating, or controlled substances while on Training Center / Second City property, or while otherwise engaged in Training Center activities, is strictly prohibited. The term “controlled substances” is defined as any substances that are illegal or controlled by federal and/or state law, including lawful substances (such as prescription drugs) which have been improperly obtained and/or used in violation of their lawful prescription.

Students are prohibited from having any such illegal or unauthorized controlled substances in their systems while attending class and/or engaged in Training Center activities. Outside alcohol consumption or illegal drug activity that impacts a student’s class work or participation in Training Center activities and/or threatens the reputation of the Training Center / Second City will not be tolerated.

Alcohol consumption by Training Center employees, volunteers, students or guests who are under the age of 21 is strictly prohibited.

Students who violate the Training Center’s Drug and Alcohol policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including permanent expulsion from the Training Center and/or referral for prosecution of criminal violations.

Student Whistleblower Policy

Students must immediately report to Youth Program Head, Human Resources, or President, any activity or conduct that they suspect is:

- Illegal, or a violation of any state or federal law and/or regulation; or
- A serious violation of Training Center policy and/or procedure, including the above-stated policies regarding violence, use of drugs and/or alcohol and weapons; or

- Otherwise inappropriate and/or unethical.

The Training Center will not retaliate against any student as a result of his or her report of inappropriate conduct under this policy, or because he or she has refused to follow an illegal, inappropriate and/or unethical request.

Confidentiality

Reports of inappropriate conduct under the policy may be submitted on a confidential basis by the student directly or may be submitted anonymously. The Training Center will endeavor to investigate the reported conduct as discreetly as possible under the applicable circumstances. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an appropriate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations

Upon receipt of a report of inappropriate conduct under this policy, the Training Center shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation and appropriate corrective action will be taken, if/as warranted.

Open Door Policy

The Training Center is committed to providing a safe, productive and fun educational environment for all students. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, concern or question can be addressed and discussed.

Students or parents who have a question, problem, suggestion and/or complaint should feel free to discuss the issue with Youth Program Head. There will be no retaliation for raising a concern under this policy. Any issues raised or discussions held pursuant to the Training Center's Open Door Policy will be treated with confidentiality unless the student agrees to include others in the discussion or an investigation into the matter is warranted, in which case, confidentiality will be maintained to the extent practicable without compromising the investigation.

Please note that the Training Center's Student Whistleblower and Open Door policies do not apply to complaints of harassment or sexual assault. Students who wish to report an incident of harassment or sexual assault must follow the complaint procedures set forth in the Training Center's Anti-Harassment and Sexual Assault policies.

Discipline Policy

Immediate Dismissal or Expulsion

If at any point during class, the instructor feels that a student is engaging in behavior which is threatening, dangerous and/or highly disruptive to the classroom ensemble, the instructor may require that the student leave the classroom for the remainder of that day's class. Students dismissed from class in this manner may not return to their regular class until they and their parent or guardian have spoken with someone from the Training Center office. Behavior which would result in immediate dismissal includes, but is not

limited to threats or acts of violence, inebriation and/or severe impairment due to use of drugs and/or other controlled substances, violation of the Anti-Harassment and/or Civility policies or other actions which are disruptive to the work of the class, in the discretion of the Training Center. If behavior is deemed excessively disruptive or dangerous to the Training Center environment, the Training Center reserves the right to permanently expel a student from the Training Center as well as the extended Second City property.

Warnings

Students who display behavior which an instructor deems to be detrimental to the progress of their ensemble may be issued a warning. The instructor gives the warning verbally and then notifies the Training Center office. If a student receives more than one warning for similar issues, the Program Head will be notified and appropriate action will be taken. Depending on the circumstances, students may be required to transfer classes, repeat a term, take a leave of absence from The Training Center or to leave the Training Center permanently. Examples of conduct considered detrimental to the progress of the ensemble include, but are not limited to, excessive lateness, missing more than one of the scheduled classes (even excused absences), inappropriate classroom behavior (including being under the influence of drugs and/or other controlled substances), harassment of another student or Training Center employee, and/or inability to keep up with class progress.

Receipt and Acknowledgement of The Second City Training Center Handbook and Policies

Please read the following statements, sign below to acknowledge your understanding, and return this form to .

Understanding and Acknowledging Receipt of the Second City Training Center Handbook

I have received and read a copy of the Second City Training Center Handbook, and agree to abide by the Handbook's rules, policies, and standards of conduct, including, without limitation, the Civility, Violence, and Anti-Harassment policies, as well as any revisions made thereto. I understand that the policies described in the Handbook are subject to change at any time.

I understand that by their very nature, improv theater and comedy are artistic pursuits in which the boundaries of what is deemed socially "appropriate" and/or politically correct are often blurred and subject to interpretation. As such, I may, at times, be exposed to ideas and/or behavior that I find unwelcome, disagreeable or even offensive. Under such circumstances, I agree to approach my class work with an open mind and take into account the diversity of viewpoints, beliefs and backgrounds inherent to the Training Center learning experience. By the same token, I will exercise good judgment when participating in class activities and avoid engaging in conduct that rises to the level of abuse, such as targeted attacks directed at a particular individual. Finally, I understand that if I am exposed to and/or experience any conduct that makes me uncomfortable and/or that I believe oversteps the bounds of what is acceptable in an improv theater / comedy setting, I am not required to participate, and should discuss the matter with .

Student's Printed Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____