

Guidelines on Touch, Boundaries, and Consent

Student guidelines

Acting is a physical endeavor that often necessitates touch between participants. The following guidelines are intended to ensure a safe, respectful, and professional work environment:

- Actors should establish verbal consent to work physically with their scene partner and acknowledge each partner's physical boundaries before any scene work involving touch.
- Your boundaries are perfect where they are. No one gets to make you change them.
- You may change your boundaries at any time. It is not necessary to give a reason for a change in boundaries.
- Consent may be revoked.
- Scene work involving theatrical intimacy or staged violence should be carefully choreographed with appropriate supervision to ensure safety and professionalism and must always be rehearsed with a third party present.
- It is appropriate to substitute a placeholder (such as a high-five) for intimate moments that have not been choreographed or adequately rehearsed.

Student-Teacher guidelines

Occasionally it can be useful for an instructor to use physical touch as a teaching tool, especially in physical skills-based courses such as voice or movement (e.g. placing a hand on the back of a student's neck to help the student identify muscular tension that may be impeding vocal function.) In these cases, the following guidelines apply:

- The instructor should be specific about the nature of the touch and its purpose.
- The instructor should establish whether there is consent to touch.
- The student is under no obligation to grant consent. If touch is not a good option for the student at any time and for any reason, it is the instructor's responsibility to modify the instruction.
- The instructor should be prepared to offer alternative instruction should consent be withheld.
- The student shall not be penalized, shamed, or denied instruction as a result of withholding consent for instructional touch.

Material selection

Students are encouraged to select and perform material that they feel has artistic merit and will challenge them to grow as performers. Please be advised that instructors will neither require students to perform material the student deems objectionable or offensive nor will they censor material presented in class. This means that, while you are in charge of your own artistic expression, you may be exposed to ideas or expressions that are outside of your prior experience or comfort zone. Our performance laboratories will endeavor to be respectful, welcoming, trustworthy, and brave spaces.