

# 2019 Commencement Musical Proposal Guidelines

January 21, 2019

Yale Dramatic Association · P.O. Box 209037 · New Haven, CT 06520 · (203) 432-1210



## PRODUCTION INFORMATION

“Commencement” is a student-directed, student-staffed musical that is fully produced during the 9 days after finals end in the spring semester. By nature, Commencement is one of the most challenging and exhilarating theatrical opportunities on campus. While the producer holds ultimate responsibility for coordinating every aspect of the production, the show will be guided throughout its production process by the Dramat’s Board and Technical Advisor (Kerry Cripe). Auditions must be open to all Yale students, and pre-casting is not permitted.

## LOCATION

The Commencement Musical will be performed in the University Theatre at 222 York Street.

## TIMELINE

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| By February 8         | Contact Joseph Bosco (President) and Winston Venderbush (Production Officer) about applying |
| February 22           | Proposals Due   |
| February 28 - March 1 | Interviews  |
| March 3               | Show Selected & Announced   |
| March 4-10            | Auditions   |
| May 9                 | Preposterous Day (Commencement Move-in)   |
| May 11                | Load-in   |
| May 17-19             | Performances  |
| May 19-20             | Strike  |

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals are due by **6:00 P.M. on February 22nd**. Please email your proposal, a PDF of the libretto, and a link to a cast recording of your show to Joseph at [president@yaledramat.org](mailto:president@yaledramat.org). Please note that your proposal will be made available to the members of the Yale community for feedback.

**All individuals considering applying must contact Joseph and Winston by February 8th.**

Once contacted, they will set up a time to meet and go over proposal guidelines and any questions you have. This step in the process will ensure that producers and directors are on the right track to completing a proposal that meets Commencement’s demands. The length of your proposal will not be a determining factor in the selection process; focus instead on conveying all your information and ideas clearly. The Executive Board will

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interview the director and producer of each proposal. Interviews will last approximately 45 minutes and are tentatively scheduled for **February 28th - March 1st**.

## Key factors considered by the Board include:

- The potential for the show to generate enthusiasm, interest and involvement among Yale students;
- The demonstrated qualifications, capabilities & capacity of the director, producer, stage manager, and music director to carry out a positive, healthy, and successful production process;
- And the potential for the show to draw in a large audience of parents and families who are at Yale for commencement weekend.

## IMPORTANT NOTE

Over the past few years, Commencement has tested the limits of our technical capabilities. Yale's academic calendar has pushed the performances into late May, so not as many students have been able to stay on campus for the musical. Additionally, changes in the academic calendar have shortened the process by a day this year. Also note that though the show is put up in nine days, the design and production process last the whole semester. Directors and Producers should think carefully about the size of the show they choose to propose. Money, labor, and time are all very limited during Commencement, and the director and producer need to demonstrate the logistical and financial feasibility of mounting their production.

## Some things to consider:

- Cast and Orchestra size.
- Size and scale of technical elements—Scenic, Lighting, Sound, and Costumes—necessary given the Director's vision for the show, knowing that the designers will be chosen following the announcement of the show and all positions will be held by students.
- Although your proposal will not include specific designers and is not required to be fully staffed, please include as many names as possible of people who have agreed to work on crews and people who have signed on to your production staff. Realize that even with a stellar cast and creative team, the Commencement Musical cannot be pulled off in such a short time frame without dedicated crewmembers. The size and scale of your show should match the size of crews on your proposal.

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Please break down the proposal into the following section headings. Feel free to include additional information if it seems relevant. Remember to include your name, phone number and email address on the front page of your proposal. These proposals will be shared with the Yale community for feedback.

**1. Summary:** A brief summary of the proposed musical, up to 300 words.

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**2. Character Breakdown:** A gender, race, and vocal range breakdown, and a full character list with brief character descriptions.

**3. Why this show:** What is it about? What about the show excites you? Why is it appropriate as the Commencement Musical? Please address this in two distinct ways: First, how will it appeal to the Commencement audience of parents, families, graduating seniors, etc.? Relatedly, how will it appeal to the theater community? Finally, how will it be feasible within the short Commencement timeline?

**4. Design Ideas:** Please give a brief overview of your current ideas, even if they are basic or preliminary. Begin with a succinct description of your general design concept for the show. We will send this out to prospective designers to aid them and inform them as they apply for design positions. Then, go into further detail about how you will use Sets, Lights, Sound, and Costumes to enhance your vision. Feel free (but not obligated) to include any images you think would be helpful when considering your project.

**5. Staff and Crew:** This should be split into two portions: *The first should be a list of Production Staff members* that have committed to work on your show. Your production staff should be as complete as possible. You must have the following positions filled: Director, Producer, Stage Manager, Musical Director. *The second part should be a list of all crew members* who have committed to staying and working on Commencement if your show is chosen. This will help you get a jumpstart on recruiting and to start generating buzz about Commencement. This will also demonstrate your own abilities to generate excitement and reach out to potential crewmembers.

**6. Past Experience/Qualifications:** What experiences have prepared you to direct this production? What experiences have prepared the producer for this production? How are you, your producer, and your staff prepared to mount such a substantial show in such a short amount of time?

**7. Rehearsal and Production Process:** Explain your plans for the rehearsal and production processes from start to finish. What will be your process in rehearsals? What will be your process in collaborating with your designers and technical staff? Please include a detailed calendar indicating when you expect to hit important benchmarks. Please have your producer include a comparable outline of his/her anticipated production process.

**8. Tentative Budget:** Based on a budget of \$6,000, how do you anticipate the money will be distributed? Do not include rights in your calculations.