
PRODUCTION-RELATED ACTIVITIES

"PRA"

REQUIREMENT

Cal State Fullerton School of Music

Usher Guidelines

Job Description

Ushers are responsible for the care and safety of all patrons. As an usher, you are expected to treat patrons as you would want to be treated. Ushers are also the public face for the Performing Arts Center and are often the first face of the University that many people encounter. Ushers are primarily responsible for assisting patrons during performances and during emergencies. It is essential that ushers are outgoing, friendly, have excellent customer service skills, and are able to handle responsibility with little supervision.

Specific responsibilities include

1. Assisting house management in setting-up the lobby for an event (putting out programs, setting up information tables, etc.)
2. Greeting patrons, distributing programs and assisting them in finding their seats
3. Handling patron seating issues when they arise with the assistance of the house manager
4. Answering patron questions or finding answers if needed
5. Directing patrons to bathrooms, water fountains, parking, etc.
6. Seating late-comers after an event has begun
7. Picking up trash in the venue at the end of an event
8. Guiding patrons safely out of the venue in the event of an emergency and being responsible for an emergency assembly area and the patrons in it
9. Other duties as assigned by house management

Reporting times

You should be present and ready to work by the call time listed in the signup notebook and in the update emails. Please be sure to arrive a few minutes prior to your reporting time to get settled, sign in and situated. Occasionally, call times may differ for unusual events. Please be sure to verify the call time when you sign up for an event.

You should report directly to your respective venue to sign in.

Before each event you will be briefed by the House Manager and given your assignment. You will also be told about any special instructions for this event and emergency evacuation procedures will be briefly reviewed. Once you are on duty, if you have any concerns or encounter any problems ask the House Manager for assistance.

Orientation begins promptly at the reporting time. Ushers not present at the start of orientation will be considered late and will be sent home as a NO SHOW.

Dress Code

Think conservative business casual or business dress.

NO: t-shirts, short tops, sneakers, jeans etc.

Please refrain from wearing dangling jewelry or overpowering perfume/cologne.

The dress code is a condition of receiving credit. What you wear and how you conduct yourself reflects directly on the Performing Arts Center and Cal State Fullerton. If you are inappropriately dressed, you will be dismissed for the evening with a NO SHOW.

General House Policies

Ushers will be briefed by the House Manager of their duties for the performance one half hour before the venue is open. Patrons are seated one half hour before the scheduled performance start time. Always greet patrons with a smile and a friendly remark.

For security reasons, you will not be allowed into the box office without a staff escort. Ushers are expected to be knowledgeable about the locations of bathrooms, water fountains, and telephones throughout the center.

Ushers are not to have cell phones, iPods, or any other electronic device with them at any time while working. They are expected to leave them with the rest of their belongings in their cars or at home. You will have the opportunity to lock up purses, etc. in a designated area.

At any time while working if you feel you cannot handle a situation, please contact the House Manger immediately. The House Manger is there to support and assist you when you have a problem.

Duties

Usher

After the House Manager briefs you, you are expected to bring a supply of programs to your assigned section. You are expected to walk through your assigned section and remove any litter from it. Use the walk through to familiarize yourself with your section (row numbers, unusual seating arrangement, half-rows in your section). Any safety violations or broken equipment in your section should be reported to the House Manager immediately. Be attentive to the level of cleanliness of the venue. The venue is expected to be *Ritz Carlton clean!* Make note of any areas in which your section fails to meet these standards and *tell a House Manager.*

Once the House Manager has announced that the house is open to patrons, Section ushers should be at their assigned station to take tickets, assist patrons to their seat, and hand out programs. Section ushers should open their section doors once the house is open. Section doors are closed once the performance begins. Late seating instructions will be given to the ushers during the evening orientation. Section ushers are expected to remain at the assigned station throughout the performance and until released by the House Manger.

You are expected to remain at your assigned section during intermission to open/ close the section doors, assist latecomers in finding the proper seats, and answer questions. Again, at the end of intermission ushers are expected to remain at the assigned station throughout the performance and until released by the House Manger.

Please be aware that sitting or standing in aisles is not permitted – it is a Fire Code violation.

At the end of the performance, you are expected to walk through all rows in your section to pick up any large pieces of trash, lost items and programs. Any personal items left behind by a patron should be brought to the house manager. Note the whereabouts of the item when you discovered it. Please also inform the house manager of any maintenance or custodial issues you notice. Once dismissed by the house manager, make sure you sign out. Failure to sign out could result in your service not being recorded.

Ticket Taker

After the House Manager briefs you, you are expected to be at your assigned position to answer patron questions. Once the House Manager has announced that the house is open to patrons, ticket takers should open the main doors to the venue and return at their assigned station to take tickets, direct patrons to the proper section and answer questions. Ticket takers are expected to greet the patrons, check the ticket for correct date, correct venue, correct entrance, and direct them to the proper section.

NO ONE GETS IN WITHOUT A TICKET!

Ticket takers are to remain at their posts until 30 minutes after curtain. Ticket takers are expected to be at their assigned stations during intermission. At the end of the performance, you are expected to pick up any large pieces of trash, lost items and programs in the lobby. Once dismissed by the house manager, make sure you sign out. Failure to sign out could result in your service not being recorded.

Late Seating

Ushers will be briefed on the late seating policy during orientation. This policy changes from event to event. For example, ushers may need to wait until the end of the first piece, often a natural clapping break, to seat late patrons. This break may occur anywhere from 5 – 20 minutes into the performance. Communicating with late patrons is a very important and delicate task.

Your interaction with the customer can often define their experience for the evening. Please follow these guidelines for interaction:

Before the break explain:

1. The late seating policy
2. That you are waiting until a natural break in the performance so as not to disrupt the performance or audience
3. In the interest of expediency, you will first direct them to the most easily accessible seats.
4. You would be happy to help them find their correct seats during intermission.
5. Please enter the venue quietly

Please be sensitive to the fact that many late patrons are already irritated and may become frustrated when not permitted to immediately enter the venue. Late seating policies are defined by the performing artist, and are designed to find a balance between the continuity of the performance and the need to accommodate latecomers.

At an appropriate time, ushers may open the doors to the venue and, using your flashlight as a guide on the floor, direct patrons to the best available seating.

Prohibited from the Venues

- Cameras and video recorders
- Audio recording devices of any kind
- Food or drink (except bottled water)
- Smoking
- Animals (except service animals)

It is the Section Ushers' responsibility to ask/request/demand that patrons not use a camera, eat, or use a recording device in the venue during a performance. The procedure is to approach them, ask them to stop – if they have a problem with your request, you may need to seek additional support from the House Manager. You may want to explain to patrons that this policy is not only out of respect of copyrighted materials any company or performance might have, but also out of respect to the safety of the performers.

Never argue with the patron. If after requesting twice for them to cease, notify the house manager.

The final step would be the removal of the uncooperative patron as coordinated by the Audience Services Manager.

Performance Venue

Typically seats are reserved for performances in the Recital Hall and Meng Concert Hall. Major exception would be free concerts, but a few ticketed concerts are unreserved (general admission)

With reserved seating, section, row, and seat number always correspond with the same number on the tickets.

General Seat Numbering: Sections are right, center and left as you look at the stage from the rear of the house

- Left Sections are numbered 1, 3, 5... (with odd numbers)
- Right Sections are numbered 2, 4, 6... (with even numbers)
- Center section is numbered consecutively starting with 101 from house right to house left

Recital Hall (PA110)

One floor.

- House left seats are numbered 1-7 (odd).
- House right seats are numbered 2-8 (even).
- Center seats all start house right with 101 and are consecutively numbered.
- All rows are consecutively lettered A-K.

Meng Concert Hall (PA176)

Two floors

Main Floor:

- Orchestra — Typical Center format. Numbered consecutively in the 100s, with rows A-T
- Boxes A-D — Both sides of the hall, with seat numbers lowest seat number closest to stage
- Parterre — Typical Right, Center & Left House set-up, with rows U, V, W

Second Floor: (used only when main floor is sold out)

- Balcony — Typical Right, Center & Left House set-up, with rows center rows numbered in the 200s. Rows AA, BB, CC
- Boxes AA-HH — Both sides of the hall, with seat numbers lowest seat number closest to stage

Stage View: (used for only a small number of performances)

- Typical Center number format. Numbering in the 200s, with rows XX, YY, ZZ

Problems? Call (657) 278-8223 if you're late, or have an emergency.

In the case of tardiness let us know of your expected arrival time. If no one answers, leave a message on the voicemail. Failure to inform us of tardiness or not showing up will affect your grade adversely.

- **A no-show will take two services to make up.**

Important Phone Numbers

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