

Dear Dean of Arts and Sciences,

I am writing today to express my deepest praise for Allison Hetzel, as a teacher, mentor, and advisor. In my three years in the Theatre Department's M.F.A program, I spent each semester with Allison as a teacher and her knowledge, guidance and abilities helped me grow as an artist and educator, and remain a part of my work to this day.

During my Master's program at The University of Alabama, Allison taught me how to use my voice, my thoughts and my training to be both a better performer and better educator. She instilled in her classes a group of artistic support, which to this day I use as a core principle of my own teaching. In her Stage Voice class she introduced to me the performance methods of Patsy Rodenburg and Fitzmaurice techniques, helping me to support my voice on stage and expanding my vocal strength as an actor. Allison also taught the class that has benefited me the most in my post graduate career. During her Theatre Careers class I learned how to navigate the difficulties of academia, and believe that it was essential to my graduate program. One of the things that will remain with me for the rest of my teaching career is that Allison would always begin each class with a chime of a bell and a deep breath. This moment of peace in the busy day-to-day of a graduate student is invaluable. Allison was always available to talk about the inevitable "What am I going to do next?" question and would provide real, pragmatic answers to me. Her class was always a delight and a productively focused environment.

Allison Hetzel is an asset and vital part of not only The University of Alabama's theatre and dance department, but the university as a whole. She represents the excellence in teaching, advising, and artistic drive which she instills in her students.

Sincerely,
Michael Witherell

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