RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAFETY WITH FIREARMS

These guidelines are intended to give recommendations on the safe handling, use and storage of firearms.

SAFE USE AND HANDLING OF FIREARMS

1. **Blanks can kill. Treat all firearms as though they are loaded.** This includes real as well as prop guns.

2. The fight choreographer **must be present** the first time the firearm is introduced into a rehearsal.

3. Never point a firearm at anyone, including you, and if called upon to do so, consult the Fight Choreographer or other safety representative such as the Property Director and/or Stage Manager. Consider that whatever you point the gun at, that object will be destroyed.

4. Never place your finger on the trigger until you're ready to shoot. Keep your finger alongside and off of the trigger.

5. Know where and what your intended target is. If you or another person involved are moving, do not fire towards the other person.

6. Do NOT engage in horseplay with any firearms or weapons.

7. **NEVER** discharge a firearm when the barrel has become clogged with dirt or foreign material. The Property Director and/or Stage Manager should inspect the barrel of the weapon before every firing.

8. Maintain all safety devices in place until firearms are ready to be used.

9. Never lay down a firearm or leave it unattended. Unless you are in rehearsal or in production, all firearms should be locked up in the gun cabinet supplied by the theatre.
10. Hand loading or altering factory loaded blank ammunition shall be done only by a person qualified (either by license or experience) to work on firearms.

11. Do not use or bring live ammunition into the theatre or onto campus. (This will result in an immediate Category A and you are subject to other severe penalties.)

12. No person is to be coaxed, coerced or otherwise forced into handling a firearm.

13. Firearm jams or malfunctions must be called to the attention of the Property Director and/or Stage Manager. Do not attempt to adjust, modify or repair a firearm or attempt to un-jam the firearm. Malfunctioning firearms should be taken out of service until properly repaired by a person qualified to work on firearms.

14. During demonstrations and rehearsal, protective equipment (ear protection and goggles) should be worn by those who need to be within close proximity of any blanks fired from a weapon.

15. The Campus police should be notified of the 1st rehearsal with a firing weapon and informed of all subsequent rehearsals/performances.

16. All State and Federal safety regulations are applicable and override these guidelines if they are more stringent.

**The Property Master and/or Stage Manager are the individuals responsible for:**

1. Possession, control and distribution of all firearms within the rehearsal hall or in the theatre. All firearms to be used on the production, whether company owned or rented, or privately owned, are to be given to the Property Director and/or Stage Manager.

2. Designating individuals under their immediate supervision to assist them if necessary.

3. Being qualified to work with the type of firearms being used, and being knowledgeable in their safe handling, use and safe keeping.

4. Seeking expert advice if he or she is not familiar with the firearm to be used.

5. Ensuring that current licenses and permits have been obtained for the possession and use of production firearms. In the case of all UNCSA productions, campus police should be contacted to obtain the appropriate permit. This must done in advance of the first time they are introduced into a rehearsal. If they are first introduced in a rehearsal hall, the officer may ask to review the handling of the weapon on the actual set also.

6. Being knowledgeable about the laws governing transportation, storage and use of firearms and complying with those laws.

7. Being knowledgeable of and adhering to all manufacturers' warnings, expiration dates, storage and handling procedures for all blank ammunition.
8. Issuing firearms. The Property Director and/or Stage Manager will not place a firearm in the hands of a performer until he or she has trained the person who is to use it. The training shall include handling and safe use, including the safety lock.

9. Allotting a sufficient amount of time for training and rehearsal.

10. Requiring that an actor or weapon-handler demonstrate prior knowledge, if any, of the safe handling of a firearm.

11. Personally loading, or designating an experienced person working under his or her immediate supervision, to load the firearms. Firearms are to be loaded just before they are to be used in a scene.

12. Allowing any actor who is to stand near the line of fire to witness the loading of the firearm.

13. Using the lightest load of blank ammunition consistent with the needs of the scene, and advising the director and other involved personnel.

14. Notifying all present, including the sound mixer, prior to firing by announcing “Fire in the hole”.

15. Retaining possession of all firearms except during actual rehearsal or production. In the case of a handgun, they may choose to wear the weapon in a holster or simply retrieve it from the gun cabinet just prior to the scene. Once it is in the hand of either the Property Director and/or Stage Manager, it should never leave their hand until it is passed off to the actor. After the scene, the Property Director and/or Stage Manager will immediately unload the firearm, place the used cartridges into inventory and secure the firearm either on their person (if it is to be used again) or directly into the gun safe.

16. Checking each firearm before each use. All firearms must be cleaned, checked and double-checked, and inventoried at the close of each rehearsal or production. Weapons must be accounted for before personnel are allowed to leave the area.

17. Using simulated or dummy prop guns whenever possible.