The Theater Arts Major

Narrative about the field:

Theater Arts is the interdisciplinary study of humanity, focusing on what it takes to be part of the process of performing and making a play on stage.

The Department of Theater Arts offers courses in four areas that are key to a well-rounded theater experience: Acting/Performance, Design, Production, and Dramatic Literature and History. Our students are given an opportunity to participate in the art of theater in all its parts. For example, students may act, direct, sing, dance, design, manage, build, and provide crew support on our productions as part of their major study. With a solid grounding in fundamental theater practices and exploration of cutting edge techniques, students begin their journey to find their unique voice.

Knowledge

Understanding how theater has an impact on the world is important. It is also valuable for a student to learn what is involved in creating a role, working in an ensemble, making the space of the theater come alive with a design, and to learn how to communicate and be clear about ideas and the basic needs for a production.

- Think conceptually and critically about theater text performance and production.
- Have an understanding of the history of theater, its relationship to the cultures that produce it, and a fundamental knowledge of theater genre and style.
- Develop a vocabulary and introductory skills in all areas of theater technique.
- Have advanced knowledge in a specific area within theater as a result of the student’s concentration within the major.
- Obtain experiential knowledge of stage and performance practices.

Core Skills:

Learning skills and techniques in Theater Arts is a crucial part of being a Theater Major. For Theater Minors these are also a way to learn about practices and methods that can enhance and support their chosen major. As a major or minor, students can specialize in a particular area of theater
performance or study a variety of methods and disciplines. Also, students are given the opportunity to develop their own material and perform their own work in the theaters provided by the department.

- **Acting:**
  - Familiarity with styles of actor training
  - Working knowledge and vocabulary of acting techniques
  - Ability to implement standard acting methodologies/performance skills in voice, physical technique/expression, and improvisation.
  - Practical experience in building a character through text analysis.

- **Directing:**
  - Be able to articulate action and dramatic structure
  - Understand analysis of plays from varying periods, genre, and styles.
  - Experience in conducting artistic research.
  - Have a fundamental knowledge of artistic process with designers and actors, and how to conduct a rehearsal and collaborate with theater artists.

- **Design/Production:**
  - Working knowledge and vocabulary in all design areas.
  - Have an understanding of the artistic process in the area of design and production: Costume, sets, lights, sound, stage management, stage crafts.

- **Theater History and Literature and Criticism:**
  - Investigate classical and contemporary theater
  - Examine writers, texts, approaches, and productions in their particular cultural and historical contexts.
  - Develop skills in close reading and critical inquiry.

**Social Justice**

On the stage, or in any given performance space students make social justice a part of their work in the theater.

- Students should possess an understanding of how theater has been used outside of the traditional realm for community building and individual growth.
Students will be equipped with the tools to create original pieces that can be used for giving voice to social issues through collaboration and interaction within performance.

Upon Graduating you will be able to:

- Have more confidence when addressing or articulating ideas to a group of people
- Apply auditioning and interviewing skills.
- Create original work.
- Understand the value of the focus and discipline necessary to create and collaborate in the theater.
- Apply liberal arts knowledge of theater text, skill, and creativity to any professional situation.
- Pursue advanced study in a specific theatrical area of your choosing.