Theater Arts

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About the Department

The Department of Theater Arts offers major curricula leading to the bachelor of arts (BA), bachelor of science (BS), master of arts (MA), master of science (MS), master of fine arts (MFA), and doctor of philosophy (PhD) degrees. Courses in theater arts are available for students majoring in other disciplines who want to develop their communication skills and their ability to appreciate and evaluate what they see and hear.

The theater arts department offers a cross-disciplinary and liberal-arts education. Preprofessional courses provide vocational competence in teaching and in some aspects of commercial theater. Some students seek careers in commercial, educational, and community theaters as designers, actors, technicians, stage managers, or theater managers. Many continue specialized training in MFA degree programs or nondegree professional training schools. Some students use their liberal-arts background to pursue vocational opportunities that require advanced skills in communication and organization.

Students may gain practical experience in theater studies through University Theatre productions and other opportunities.

Theaters

The newly renovated Robinson Theatre has a proscenium stage and seats 300 people. The new James F. Miller Theatre Complex includes a "black box" arena theater seating 100–150 people, a new lobby serving both the Robinson and the new Hope Theatre, a new costume shop, and an expanded scene shop. The Pocket Playhouse, in Villard Hall, is a small proscenium stage and seats seventy-five people.

Technical Facilities

The scene shop is well equipped with power tools for wood and metal fabrication. Lighting equipment includes computerized controls and up-to-date instruments. The costume shop has power sewing and serging machines and a laundry and crafts area. Students are encouraged to sign up for production workshop classes or to practice their crafts as volunteers. Those who qualify for work-study financial aid are hired to assist in the shops. The shops are open every day.

Pocket Playhouse

Pocket Playhouse is the site for a series of productions presented by an elected student board. Student directors may propose plays and the board makes selections by lottery.

University Theatre

The department's season is composed of productions in two venues: the Robinson Theatre and the new Hope Theatre. Faculty members and graduate students direct and design as many as six shows a year. Auditions are open to UO students, and admission for UO students is free.

Faculty

Alexandra Bonds, professor (costume designer). BS, 1972, Syracuse; MA, 1974, Denver. (1979)

Bradley Branam, assistant professor (technical direction, media design). BA, 2000, Luther College; MFA, 2009, Missouri, Kansas City. (2012)

La Donna Forsgren, assistant professor (African American theater, Black feminist theories and drama, playwriting). BA, 2002, Western Oregon; MA, 2005, Brigham Young; PhD, 2012, Northwestern. (2011)

Joseph Gilg, instructor (acting, directing). BA, 1969, St. Benedict's College (Kansas); MA, 1975, MFA, 1986, Oregon. (1992)

Jerry Hooker, associate professor (scene designer). BA, 1978, Puget Sound; MFA, 1985, Utah State. (2001)

Theresa May, assistant professor (dramatic literature, acting). BA, 1980, California, Irvine; MFA, 1983, Southern California; PhD, 2000, Washington (Seattle). (2007)

Michael Malek Najjar, assistant professor (Arab American theater and performance, playwriting, performance theory). BA, 1993, New Mexico; MFA, 1999, York; PhD, 2011, California, Los Angeles. (2011)

Janet Rose, senior instructor (technical director, lighting designer). BFA, 1977, Florida Atlantic; MFA, 1979, Ohio. (1987)

John Schmor, associate professor (theory, history, acting). BA, 1984, Willamette; MA, 1989, PhD, 1991, Oregon. (1999)

Emeriti

Robert Barton, professor emeritus. BA, 1967, Western Michigan; MA, 1968, PhD, 1977, Bowling Green State. (1980)

Faber B. DeChaine, professor emeritus. BS, 1952, Oregon; MA, 1953, Michigan State; PhD, 1963, Minnesota. (1964)

Grant F. McKernie, professor emeritus. BA, 1964, Northwestern; MA, 1965, PhD, 1972, Ohio State. (1979)

John C. Watson, associate professor emeritus. BA, 1964, Lewis and Clark; PhD, 1987, Oregon. (1987)

Jerry R. Williams, professor emeritus. BFA, 1964, Carnegie-Mellon; MA, 1965, Washington (Seattle). (1973)

The date in parentheses at the end of each entry is the first year on the University of Oregon faculty.

- **Bachelor of Arts**
- **Bachelor of Science**
- **Minor**

Undergraduate Studies

For its undergraduate major program, the Department of Theater Arts has three principal objectives:

1. The attainment, by all of its majors, of a broad liberal arts education
2. Sufficient instruction to provide an appreciation of the different areas of theater
3. Direct experience in several aspects of theater production

Students study acting, directing, design, costume, lighting, stagecraft, history, dramatic literature, and theory. Courses in these fields are available to both majors and nonmajors.

In addition to the BA or BS degree requirements of the university, the following requirements are specified for students with a major in theater arts:

Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

Bachelor of Science Degree Requirements

TA 210	Introduction to Design	4
TA 211–212	Theater Production I-II	8
TA 250	Acting I	4
TA 271	Introduction to Theater Arts	4
TA 364	Play Direction	4
TA 367–369	History of the Theater I-III	12
TA 470	Majors Seminar	4
Three of the following:		9
TA 321	Scenery Production	
TA 322	Costume Production	
TA 323	Lighting Production	
TA 324	Production	
Three upper-division courses in acting, directing, design, technical production, or playwriting		12
Three upper-division courses in history, literature, criticism, or dramaturgy [1]		12
Total Credits		73

1 With the consent of an advisor, a student may substitute a course in another department for one of these courses, selected from a list approved by the theater arts faculty.

Grading Options

Some courses in theater arts are offered pass/no pass (P/N) only. Work counts toward fulfillment of the 180-credit requirement for a BA or BS only if satisfactorily completed.

Transfer Students

Transfer students must complete six 4-credit, upper-division courses and two of the production courses listed in the course list in residence at the University of Oregon.

Honors in Theater Arts

At the end of each academic year, the department's faculty selects certain graduating seniors and confers on them departmental honors. Criteria include academic performance as well as the quality of participation in the production program.

Minor Requirements

Theater arts courses [1]		8
Upper-division theater arts courses [1]		16
Total Credits		24

1 At least 16 credits must be taken at the university. One course in each of the following areas must be included: literature and criticism, performance, technical theater, and theater history.

Course work for the minor must be completed with letter grades of mid-C or better.

- **Master of Arts**
- **Master of Science**
- **Master of Fine Arts**
- **Doctor of Philosophy**

Graduate Studies

The department offers graduate work leading to the MA, MFA, and PhD degrees. Students entering the master's degree program should have an undergraduate major in theater arts or the equivalent, while students entering the doctoral program should have completed a master's degree in theater arts or the equivalent.

Each graduate student is expected to show ability in both academic and production areas. During residence at the university, a student is expected to make a significant contribution in three areas out of the following seven: acting, directing, technical theater, management, playwriting, teaching, and design.

Master of Arts Degree Requirements

Graduate courses in theater arts		29
TA 607	Seminar: [Topic] [1]	16
Total Credits		45

1 Course topic changes every term. MA requires at least 16 credits (four seminars).

Additional Requirements

Students are required to write a thesis and pass an oral examination.

Candidates for an MA degree in theater arts must demonstrate their ability to read a second language.

Master of Science Degree Requirements

Graduate courses in theater arts		29
TA 607	Seminar: [Topic] [1]	16
Total Credits		45

1 Course topic changes every term. MA requires at least 16 credits (four seminars).

Additional Requirements

Students are required to write a thesis and pass an oral examination.

Master of Fine Arts Degree Requirements

Graduate courses in theater arts		38
TA 607	Seminar: [Topic]	16
Total Credits		54

Additional Requirements

Terminal artistic projects are completed typically after students complete course work.

An oral evaluation and review of the project is held following completion of the project performance. A written report on the project, previewed by the candidate's report committee, follows the review.

Specialization

Areas of specialization are set design, lighting design, and costume design.

Course work is substantially completed during the first two years.

The MFA program typically takes three years to complete.

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements

PhD candidates are expected to complete 60 to 90 credits in history, theory, and literature of the theater after obtaining a master's degree.

Students seeking the PhD degree must acquire two research tools, one of which must be the knowledge of a second language. The other may be a third language or 9 credits of graduate-level study outside the department in a field related to the student's research intent.

Most theater arts students take approximately 130 credits beyond the bachelor's degree. After candidates have completed most of their course work, they write a qualifying examination and take an oral examination. The qualifying examination committee may require that all or part of the examination be retaken with or without additional courses. Students who fail to pass this examination by the second try may not remain in the theater arts PhD program. A dissertation with an oral defense is required. The dissertation must be completed within three years after the student is advanced to candidacy, which happens after passing the comprehensive examination.

For additional requirements and information, contact the graduate coordinator.

Courses

TA 121. Scenery and Lighting Laboratory. 1-2 Credits.
Building and painting scenery, hanging lights for productions. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 8 credits.

TA 122. Costume Laboratory. 1-2 Credits.
Building costumes for productions. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 8 credits.

TA 124. Production. 1-2 Credits.
Working backstage for productions. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 8 credits.

TA 196. Field Studies: [Topic]. 1-2 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 198. Workshop: [Topic]. 1-2 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 199. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable. Freshman seminars.

TA 210. Introduction to Design. 4 Credits.
Introduction to the principles of design as applied to the arts of theater design, scenery, costumes, and lighting. Creative projects to develop concepts of visual imagery. Includes laboratory.

TA 211. Theater Production I. 4 Credits.
Introduction to the mechanics of mounting a theatrical production including basic construction of scenery and props and use of lighting equipment. Includes laboratory.

TA 212. Theater Production II. 4 Credits.
Introduction to costumes and makeup. Costume construction includes basic hand and machine sewing techniques. Beginning makeup covers ingenue, beards, wounds, and fantasy. Includes laboratory.

TA 250. Acting I. 4 Credits.
Principles of warm-ups, individual inventory, Stanislavski system, character analysis, and rehearsal procedure.

TA 251. Acting II. 4 Credits.
Continuation of performance principles for contemporary realistic theater with addition of dramaturgical scene study.

TA 252. Acting III. 4 Credits.
Development of improvisational skills while establishing a working file of monologue material.

TA 271. Introduction to Theater Arts. 4 Credits.
Play and script structure, contemporary aesthetic attitudes, and the value of theater arts to society and the individual.

TA 321. Scenery Production. 1-3 Credits.
Production or performance crew head for scenery. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 12 credits.
Prereq: TA 211

TA 322. Costume Production. 1-3 Credits.
Production or performance crew head for costumes. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 12 credits.
Prereq: TA 212

TA 323. Lighting Production. 1-3 Credits.
Production or performance crew head for lighting. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 12 credits.
Prereq: TA 211

TA 324. Production. 1-3 Credits.
Stage manager, assistant director, or dramaturgy position. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 12 credits.

TA 325. Performance. 1-3 Credits.
Preparation, rehearsal, and performance of an acting role. Repeatable thrice for maximum of 12 credits.

TA 364. Play Direction. 4 Credits.
Sources of dramatic material, choice of plays, casting and rehearsal of players, production organization.

TA 367. History of the Theater I. 4 Credits.
Development of the theater from its origins to the present. Emphasizes the history of dramatic literature, criticism, theater architecture, design, and performance.

TA 368. History of the Theater II. 4 Credits.
Development of the theater from its origins to the present. Emphasizes the history of dramatic literature, criticism, theater architecture, design, and performance.

TA 369. History of the Theater III. 4 Credits.
Development of the theater from its origins to the present. Emphasizes the history of dramatic literature, criticism, theater architecture, design, and performance.

TA 399. Special Studies: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 401. Research: [Topic]. 1-21 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 405. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-21 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 406. Field Studies: [Topic]. 1-21 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 407. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 408. Workshop: [Topic]. 1-21 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 409. Practicum: [Topic]. 1-3 Credits.
Repeatable thrice for maximum of 12 credits.

TA 410. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 411. Costume History I. 4 Credits.
History of Western clothing in cultural context. Egyptian to Renaissance.

TA 412. Costume History II. 4 Credits.
History of Western clothing in cultural context. Mid-Renaissance to romanticism.

TA 413. Costume History III. 4 Credits.
History of Western clothing in cultural context. Victorian to the present.

TA 416. Costume Design. 4 Credits.
Beginning design concepts and various artistic media as applicable to costume design and rendering techniques.
Prereq: TA 210.

TA 417. Advanced Costume Design. 4 Credits.
Analysis and interpretation of scripts for costume design. Continuation of development of rendering techniques.
Prereq: TA 416.

TA 418. Costume Pattern Drafting. 4 Credits.
Designing patterns through flat patterning and draping techniques. Practical experience in pattern development and execution.
Prereq: TA 212.

TA 419. Costume Construction. 4 Credits.
Practical problems encountered in building and decorating costumes for the stage.
Prereq: TA 212.

TA 420. Return and Review for Actors. 1 Credit.
Review foundational concepts and technique by participating, demonstrating, and coaching in Acting I or II. Repeatable for Acting I (TA 250) only once; for Acting II (TA 251) only once.
Prereq: TA 250, 251, 252. Coreq: TA 409.

TA 441. Scene Design: Single Set. 4 Credits.
Elements of scene design; the scene designer's role. Creating a ground plan, measured perspective techniques, elevations, design styles. Design process and procedures related to the proscenium stage only.
Prereq: TA 210.

TA 445. Advanced Projects in Theater Technology: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Specialized areas of theater technology, one topic per term. Topics include scene painting, stage management, props, and computer drafting. Repeatable seven times when topic changes for maximum of 32 credits.

TA 452. Advanced Acting: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Topics in the performance of a specific genre or authors, or in specific performance technique, including voice, movement, and musical skills. Repeatable when topic changes.
Prereq: TA 252, 271; one from TA 210, 211, 212.

TA 465. Playwriting. 4 Credits.
Laboratory seminar focused on active and intensive development of new skills and aims in writing for live performance. Offered alternate years.
Prereq: junior standing.

TA 467. Lighting for the Stage. 4 Credits.
Designing lighting for the stage; technical and aesthetic problems.
Prereq: TA 211.

TA 470. Majors Seminar. 4 Credits.
Capstone seminar for junior theater majors; readings and research in new theater trends, aesthetics, professional and higher academic opportunities.

TA 471. Studies in Theater and Culture: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Dramatic literature and historical cultural concepts. Establishes a cultural context for periods of drama, using arts materials and socioeconomic factors to clarify aesthetic attitudes and practices of theater. Repeatable thrice when topic changes for maximum of 16 credits.

TA 472. Multicultural Theater: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Origins and development of contributions in theater and drama by various cultures including Latino, Chicano, African American, Asian American, and Native American. Repeatable four times when topic changes for maximum of 20 credits.

TA 474. Themes in Dramatic Literature: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
The intents, uses, and effects of dramatic literature with special regard for theatrical production and audience reception. Repeatable thrice when topic changes for maximum of 16 credits.

TA 503. Thesis. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 507. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 508. Workshop: [Topic]. 1-21 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 510. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-4 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 511. Costume History I. 4 Credits.
History of Western clothing in cultural context. Egyptian to Renaissance.

TA 512. Costume History II. 4 Credits.
History of Western clothing in cultural context. Mid-Renaissance to romanticism.

TA 513. Costume History III. 4 Credits.
History of Western clothing in cultural context. Victorian to the present.

TA 516. Costume Design. 4 Credits.
Beginning design concepts and various artistic media as applicable to costume design and rendering techniques.

TA 517. Advanced Costume Design. 4 Credits.
Analysis and interpretation of scripts for costume design. Continuation of development of rendering techniques.
Prereq: TA 416/516.

TA 518. Costume Pattern Drafting. 4 Credits.
Designing patterns through flat patterning and draping techniques. Practical experience in pattern development and execution.

TA 519. Costume Construction. 4 Credits.
Practical problems encountered in building and decorating costumes for the stage.

TA 541. Scene Design: Single Set. 4 Credits.
Elements of scene design; the scene designer's role. Creating a ground plan, measured perspective techniques, elevations, design styles. Design process and procedures related to the proscenium stage only.

TA 545. Advanced Projects in Theater Technology: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Specialized areas of theater technology, one topic per term. Topics include scene painting, stage management, props, and computer drafting. Repeatable seven times when topic changes for maximum of 32 credits.

TA 552. Advanced Acting: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Topics in the performance of a specific genre or authors, or in specific performance technique, including voice, movement, and musical skills. Repeatable when topic changes.

TA 567. Lighting for the Stage. 4 Credits.
Designing lighting for the stage; technical and aesthetic problems.

TA 571. Studies in Theater and Culture: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Dramatic literature and historical cultural concepts. Establishes a cultural context for periods of drama, using arts materials and socioeconomic factors to clarify aesthetic attitudes and practices of theater. Repeatable thrice when topic changes for maximum of 16 credits.

TA 572. Multicultural Theater: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
Origins and development of contributions in theater and drama by various cultures including Latino, Chicano, African American, Asian American, and Native American. Repeatable four times when topic changes for maximum of 20 credits.

TA 574. Themes in Dramatic Literature: [Topic]. 4 Credits.
The intents, uses, and effects of dramatic literature with special regard for theatrical production and audience reception. Repeatable thrice when topic changes for maximum of 16 credits.

TA 601. Research: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 602. Supervised College Teaching. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 603. Dissertation. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 605. Reading and Conference: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 606. Field Studies: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 607. Seminar: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 608. Workshop: [Topic]. 1-16 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 609. Practicum: [Topic]. 1-3 Credits.
Rehearsal and Performance is a current topic. Repeatable five times for a maximum of 18 credits.

TA 610. Experimental Course: [Topic]. 1-5 Credits.
Repeatable.

TA 651. Theory of Dramatic Production. 4 Credits.
Theory of acting.