Theatre and Dance (THD)

212 Centennial West, (309) 438-8783
FineArts.IllinoisState.edu/theatre
Interim School Director: Ann Haugo

Programs Offered
M.A., M.S. degrees in Theatre Studies; M.F.A. in Theatre

Master of Science in Theatre Studies Program Requirements

This 36-hour degree requires:
- 6 hour thesis (THE 499) or passing a comprehensive examination
- 3 hours: THE 497
- 9 hours of history/theory-criticism with at least 3 in history and 3 in theory/criticism
- 3 hours in acting
- 3 hours in directing
- 3 hours in design/technical theatre (costume, scenic or lighting design)
- 4 hours of THE 477
- 14 hours of approved electives

Master of Arts in Theatre Studies Program Requirements

This 36-hour degree program requires:
- completion of the requirements outlined above
- The student must have either earned credit for a minimum of two years of a foreign language at the college level, or must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a foreign language. This latter requirement is met by passing an examination administered by the appropriate foreign language faculty or a reading language proficiency test.

All master's degree programs require a minimum of 50 percent of the non-thesis credit hours applied to the degree to be 400-level courses or above.

Master of Fine Arts Program Requirements

Students will be admitted into one of the following concentrations:
- Design (60 hours of study) Students in Design should select one of the following focus areas: Costume Design, Lighting Design, or Scenic Design
- Directing (60 hours of study)

The following courses are required:
- THE 501 during each semester of study
- THE 491 and 492
- 9 additional hours of history, literature, or criticism/theory
- 3 hours of college teaching, or equivalent experience

Course selection and plans of study will guide a majority of coursework completed in the student's studio area. A maximum of one year may be taken in an off-campus internship program. All master's degree programs require a minimum of 50 percent of the non-thesis credit hours applied to the degree to be 400-level courses or above.

Academic Advisors

An advisory committee will be assigned upon admission. The School Director, in consultation with the student and faculty whom the Director deems appropriate, will select the candidate's portfolio committee. The portfolio committee chair must come from the student's studio area.

Transfer Credit

A student who does not have an earned master's degree usually may present no more than six semester hours of credit from another college or university for use in meeting the requirements of the M.F.A. degree. However, a student may present all earned hours from an M.A./M.S. program in Theatre Studies at Illinois State University for use in meeting these requirements.

The total hours required for a student with an earned master's degree will be based on an evaluation of the student's portfolio and academic record. However, the final determination will not be made until the student has completed a minimum of six semester hours in his/her major area of emphasis. The student's M.F.A. committee will supervise all evaluations. Refer to M.F.A. Transfer Credit in the Fields of Study and Degrees Granted section.

A minimum of 32 hours must be taken at Illinois State University.

Residency Requirement

A student without an earned master's degree must complete a residency requirement of at least four semesters with at least two of them being full-time, consecutive semesters. A student with an earned master's degree must complete a residency requirement of at least two full-time, consecutive semesters. Summer session may be counted toward the two consecutive semester requirement.
The M.F.A. Portfolio
Each semester of enrollment the M.F.A. candidate will enroll in THD 501, M.F.A. Portfolio, for one hour credit. The portfolio is the backbone of the Master of Fine Arts program. It is designed to ensure the regular and systematic evaluation of the student's progress. The portfolio is a collection of materials, including examples of the student's work where appropriate, reviews, evaluations and other artifacts, which may record or characterize the student's experience in the program. The portfolio also contains the student's responses to evaluations as well as statements from the Portfolio Committee which provide direction for the student's future work in the program.

The student must have a portfolio evaluation for each full semester he or she is in the program. The written results of that evaluation are included in the portfolio. The portfolio provides a cumulative record of the student's progress which is carried over from semester to semester.

Finally, the portfolio, with its record of the student's activities in the program, provides the major objective basis for awarding the degree. Although the student may engage in major creative projects during his or her program, the portfolio stands in lieu of the traditional thesis or creative thesis project which is the culminating experience in many programs.

Qualifying/Comprehensive Examination: A qualifying examination is required prior to the exit portfolio presentation. It may be comprehensive to the extent that it examines the candidate's knowledge of the discipline of theatre; it may include graduate work the student is presenting for the degree; and it may include demonstration of proficiency. The examination will be conducted by the student's M.F.A. Portfolio Committee. The student may request that other faculty members with whom he/she has taken course work participate in the qualifying examination.

Final Portfolio Review and Exit Interview: To be eligible for the exit portfolio presentation, the student must (1) present a grade average of B or better with not more than six (6) hours of a grade of C; (2) have completed (or will complete in the current semester) two semesters of full-time resident study; (3) have a degree audit on file with the Graduate School; (4) have passed a qualifying examination; and (5) pass a final portfolio review and exit to be conducted by his/her M.F.A. Committee. The format of this review and exit will be determined by the M.F.A. Committee, who will, when the work is deemed satisfactory, recommend the student to the appropriate studio area for graduation. At least one week before the Graduate School graduation notification deadline, the School Graduate Faculty will meet to hear the studio area's recommendations. Once the Graduate Faculty has approved the student's graduation, the student will be recommended to the Graduate School for the granting of the degree.

Students should consult with their M.F.A. Portfolio Committees and the School Graduate Advisor for details and the calendar of the final portfolio review and exit. While no student is guaranteed graduation, those whose work is deemed unsatisfactory may be presented opportunities for remediation by their Portfolio Committees.

Dance Courses: coursefinder.illinoisstate.edu/directory/dan/
Theatre Courses: coursefinder.illinoisstate.edu/directory/the/
All Courses: coursefinder.illinoisstate.edu/directory/