

# Theatre Arts

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Website: [theatre.sewanee.edu](http://theatre.sewanee.edu)

All students are invited to participate in the curriculum and production program of the Department of Theatre Arts.

The major in theatre arts is designed to offer the student a strong foundation in all areas of the theatre: acting, directing, design, dance, playwriting, history, literature, and performance theory. The department expects its majors to augment their knowledge and experience in these disciplines by active participation in the full production program of Theatre Sewanee, the university theatre. The department also encourages its majors to supplement their work in theatre arts with courses offered by other departments—particularly in language, literature, music, art, and art history.

A few students each year decide to combine their theatre arts major with a major in another discipline. English, psychology, religion, and political science are among the many double majors theatre arts students have chosen in recent years.

The department also offers a theatre arts minor to students interested in a major course of study in another discipline.

## Faculty

Professors Backlund, Landon, Matthews, P. Smith (Chair)

## Major

### Requirements for the Major in Theatre Arts

The major requires successful completion of the following:

#### Course Requirements

THTR 111	Elements of Production	4
THTR 112	Elements of Performance	4
THTR 114	Elements of Design	4
THTR 221	Theatre History	4
THTR 231		4
Select one of the following:		4
THTR 342	Scene Design	
THTR 344	Lighting Design	
THTR 361	Costume Design	
Select twenty additional hours in theatre (THTR) from studio offerings in performance, design and production, or performance studies		20

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**Total Semester Hours** **44**

#### Additional Requirements

A comprehensive examination <sup>1</sup>	
Three theatre practica in each studio area <sup>2</sup>	
Three additional theatre practica <sup>2</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> The comprehensive exam includes a senior project that demonstrates a particular competence in acting, directing, design, history, playwriting, literature or theory, and a written examination that covers all aspects of theatre arts.

<sup>2</sup> The practicum is intended to link the production program more closely to the academic program. Each major must complete six practica in order to participate in the comprehensive exam.

## Honors

The student desiring a more intense concentration in theatre may become a candidate for departmental honors. The successful candidate completes with distinction eleven (forty-four semester hours) courses in theatre arts and all other related courses; passes the comprehensive examination with distinction; and demonstrates a particular competence in acting, directing, design, history, playwriting, literature or theory and criticism.

## Minor

A student choosing to minor in theatre arts may do so as early as the fourth, but not later than the end of the seventh semester. The student must have maintained at least a "C" (2.00) average in departmental courses already taken.

## Requirements for the Minor in Theatre Arts

The minor requires successful completion of the following:

### Course Requirements

Select two of the following:	8
THTR 111 Elements of Production	
THTR 112 Elements of Performance	
THTR 114 Elements of Design	
Select twelve additional hours in theatre (THTR)	12
<b>Total Semester Hours</b>	<b>20</b>

## Courses

### Theatre Arts Courses

#### THTR 101 Introduction to Theatre (4)

An introduction to aesthetics and the art of the theatre through an analysis of stage development and production technique.

#### THTR 103 Playing Shakespeare I: Shakespeare from School to Stage (4)

An approach to Shakespeare performance that begins with a consideration of Shakespeare's education in the verbal arts at Stratford Grammar School. In addition to intensive work in speaking and embodying Shakespeare script, student actors engage in exercises in verbal improvisation and written composition based on Renaissance rhetoric. *Prerequisite or Corequisite: ENGL 101.*

#### THTR 111 Elements of Production (4)

An examination of the collaborative contributions costumes, scenery, lighting, and property technicians make to the art of theatre. An introduction to the materials, technologies, equipment, structures, and best practices used in contemporary theatre production. *Open only to first-year students and sophomores.*

#### THTR 112 Elements of Performance (4)

An analysis of theatre as a collaborative art form with an introduction to the materials, forms, and functions of theatrical art. A discussion of genre, dramatic structure, and theory of performance. The course is designed for majors and minors in theatre arts. *Open only to first-year students and sophomores. Prerequisite: THTR 103 or THTR 111.*

#### THTR 114 Elements of Design (4)

An analysis of theatrical design as a collaborative art form with an introduction to the materials, forms, and functions of design. An introduction to the research, analysis, graphics, materials, and techniques used in contemporary theatre design. *Open only to first-year students and sophomores.*

#### THTR 131 Fundamentals of Acting (4)

An introduction to the actor's art. Understanding the demands of performance. The execution of dramatic action. Students are expected to perform frequently in exercises and scenes.

#### THTR 132 Fundamentals of Acting: Improvisation (4)

The development of intuitive and creative performance technique through improvisational exercises.

#### THTR 143 Beginning Video Production (4)

Video/film techniques including primary use of camera, visual and auditory editors, visual and sound image coordination, cinematography, script planning, and basic directing. Films will be analyzed with written reviews and studied in terms of imagery and metaphor, narrative development, structural parentheses and patterns, picture rhythm, and film time and film space augmentation. Students will participate in a group film-making experience followed by three individual assignments.

#### THTR 201 Masks and Millinery (2)

An introduction to the methods used in the design and creation of masks and hats for stage costumes. *Prerequisite: THTR 111.*

#### THTR 202 Stage Make-up for Performance (2)

An exploration of the stage make-up techniques used by actors and designers in the creation of characters.

#### THTR 221 Theatre History (4)

A survey of the history of the theatre with particular emphasis on the development of theatrical presentation and stage space. *Open only to sophomores, juniors, and seniors.*

**THTR 225 Music and Drama (4)**

A comparative and historical examination of works for the lyric stage, including grand opera, comic opera in its various national manifestations, and American musical theatre. Literary sources of stage works will be read in conjunction with the study of scores.

*Prerequisite: MUSC 101 or HUMN 202.*

**THTR 226 Asian Theatre (4)**

An introductory survey of traditional Asian theatre with particular emphasis on the cultural, sociological, and aesthetic context of theatre and dance form in the Noh, Kabuki, and Bunraku of Japan. Chinese Opera, Sanskrit drama, the Indian Kathakali, Malaysian shadow play, and Balinese dance theatre.

**THTR 232 Shakespeare and the Actor: Monologues (2)**

Intensive rehearsal of selected monologues and soliloquies. Exercises in this course help students develop vocal and physical expressiveness and skill in speaking heightened language. Not repeatable for credit. *Prerequisite: THTR 231.*

**THTR 233 Shakespeare and the Actor: Scene-Study (2)**

Intensive rehearsal of selected scenes in verse and prose. Exercises in this course help students develop vocal and physical expressiveness and skill in speaking heightened language. Not repeatable for credit. *Prerequisite: THTR 231.*

**THTR 234 The Physical Actor: From Neutrality to Clown (4)**

An introduction to the actor training methods of Jacques Lecoque with an emphasis on comedy. Exercises in movement, mime, character, improvisation, clowning, and for the neutral, larval, and Commedia mask. Students develop performance projects: original clown acts and performance pieces, traditional clown entrances, improvisations based on Commedia lazzi, scenes influenced by the Commedia from plays by authors such as Shakespeare and Molière. *Prerequisite: THTR 231.*

**THTR 235 Voice and Interpretation (4)**

Work in voice production, articulation, and interpretation through readings of literary and dramatic texts. A substantial amount of memorization is required. *Prerequisite: THTR 103 or THTR 231.*

**THTR 236 Acting with an Accent (4)**

An advanced scene study course in which students master the International Phonetic Alphabet and apply it to scenes written in a variety of dialects. Particular attention is given to regional American dialects and to the dramatic literature of English, Irish, and South African playwrights. *Prerequisite: THTR 131 or THTR 231.*

**THTR 239 Playing Shakespeare II: From Rehearsal to Performance (4)**

Advanced practice in speaking and embodying Shakespeare's language. Close scrutiny of Shakespeare's script for clues to performance. Students undertake written and oral exercises in understanding Shakespeare's rhetorical strategy, as well as intensive rehearsal of selected monologues and scenes for end-of-semester presentation. Not available for credit to students who have taken THTR 232 or THTR 233. *Prerequisite: THTR 103.*

**THTR 240 Costume Technology (4)**

An in-depth study of the techniques used in the creation of stage costumes. Students will explore historical and modern methods of drafting, draping, and fabric modification, including advanced construction skills. *Prerequisite: THTR 111.*

**THTR 242 Stagecraft (4)**

A study of the basic principles and techniques in the design and construction of scenery, lighting, properties, costumes and sound for the theatre. *Prerequisite: THTR 111.*

**THTR 245 The Audition Process (2)**

Selection and preparation of audition monologues from the modern and classical repertoires. This course involves reading from script. *Prerequisite: THTR 231.*

**THTR 246 Design and De'cor Period Styles (4)**

A survey of architecture, decor, and clothing from ancient to modern with special emphasis on the stylistic trends of each era. Emphasis in this class is on research and analysis of period styles. By looking at the common decorative elements of a certain era, the stage designer and director are able to understand the period style to create a more believable and unified stage picture.

**THTR 301 Special Topics in Theatre Design and Technology (2)**

This course offers an opportunity for students to explore in depth a variety of specialized topics in theatrical design or technology. Advanced, new, or experimental techniques for creating exciting visual elements for the stage are emphasized.

**THTR 323 Aspects of Contemporary Theatre (4)**

A seminar in the development of post-modern performance theory. Theatricalization of contemporary thought and concepts of performance are studied in the work of Antonin Artaud and Bertold Brecht, in The Theatre of the Absurd, environmental theatre, impossible theatre, theatre of images, and others. *Open only to juniors and seniors.*

**THTR 332 Advanced Acting II (2)**

Intensive rehearsal of scenes from the classical repertory with an emphasis on the Greeks, Shakespeare, and Molière. *Prerequisite: THTR 233.*

**THTR 337 Writing for Solo Performance (4)**

An introduction to the art of solo performance. Exercises in dramatic style, storytelling, and in writing and performing such solo genres as the autobiographical and character monologue. Consideration of selected examples of solo work from Homer, Sappho, the Medieval jongleurs, the West African griots, and such modern performance artists as Ruth Draper, Whoopi Goldberg, Danny Hoch, and Spalding Gray. Each student writes and rehearses an original performance project for public presentation at the end of the semester.

**THTR 340 Acting: Classic American Plays (4)**

This scene study course focuses on the plays of the 1930s-1950s, the era when American theatre first established itself internationally. Particular attention is given to the work of Eugene O'Neill, Clifford Odets, Lillian Hellman, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, William Inge, and Lorraine Hansberry as well as the approaches of prominent acting teachers during the period when the term "method acting" was coined. *Prerequisite: THTR 231.*

**THTR 342 Scene Design (4)**

Deals with script analysis, scenic research techniques, periods and styles of production, exercises in scale, proportion, volume, and color. The student is expected to complete a series of projects culminating in the completed design of a classic or contemporary play. *Prerequisite: THTR 114.*

**THTR 343 Advanced Video Production (4)**

This seminar course involves the production of video, sound, and the moving image. Students pursue a combination of advanced assignments and self-directed projects aimed towards furthering the study of these art forms through a focused set of methods and technologies. *Prerequisite: ART 102 or ART 104 or ART 202 or ART 231 or ART 243 or ART 331.*

**THTR 344 Lighting Design (4)**

Exercises in script analysis, research options, styles of production, lighting theory, techniques and equipment. Through journals and projects, students interpret and communicate with light. *Prerequisite: THTR 114.*

**THTR 347 Scene Painting (4)**

A study of basic techniques, tools and procedures employed by the scenic artist. Projects include exercises in color theory and mixing; problem solving; and common finishes on hard, soft, and three-dimensional scenic units.

**THTR 348 Advanced Scenography (4)**

A study of advanced problems in performing arts design. The student will be introduced to the fundamentals of CADD (computer-aided drafting and design.) Scenic and lighting designers will work together to create design solutions for different performance media. *Prerequisite: THTR 342 or ART 342 or ART 345. Prerequisite or Corequisite: THTR 342.*

**THTR 351 Fundamentals of Stage Direction (4)**

Introduction to the theoretical and technical aspects of directing through production of short scenes from the classical repertoire. *Prerequisite: THTR 131 or THTR 231.*

**THTR 352 Advanced Stage Directing (4)**

A continuation of THTR 351. Further application of directorial technique to staging problems in classical and modern plays. *Prerequisite: THTR 351.*

**THTR 360 Computer Aided Design for Performance (4)**

An opportunity for advanced students to explore drafting, drawing, rendering, and modeling software used for scenery, lighting, and costume design. Designers will work together on various advanced projects and have the opportunity to experiment in each area of design using the related software. *Prerequisite: THTR 342 or ART 342 or THTR 344 or ART 344.*

**THTR 361 Costume Design (4)**

Fundamentals of costume design and construction taught through principles of design, concept development, play analysis, character study, and visual metaphor. The laboratory includes basic methods of pattern making and costume construction.

**THTR 362 Advanced Costume Design (4)**

A continuation of the study in the design of costumes for theatre and dance. Advanced research in the history and development of costume rendering, construction methods, and design practices. Culminates in actual design projects for theatre and dance. *Prerequisite: THTR 361.*

**THTR 370 Design Studio: Model Making for the Theatre (2)**

This project-based course prepares the advanced scenic designer to conceive, craft and present actual 3-D scenic models to the production team. Models are explored as part of the process of exploration and discovery, initial sharing of ideas, and final presentation. Basic and advanced model-making techniques are learned and executed on a series of projects, culminating with a fully realized scenic model as the final project. *Prerequisite: THTR 342.*

**THTR 372 Design Studio: Perspective and Rendering for the Theatre (2)**

This project-based course prepares the advanced scenic designer to conceive, craft, and present fully rendered perspective scenic sketches to the production team. Perspective sketches are explored as part of the exploration and discovery process, initial idea sharing, and final presentation process. Basic and advanced perspective and rendering techniques are learned and executed on a series of projects, culminating with a fully realized series of scenic perspectives as the final project. *Prerequisite: THTR 342.*

**THTR 400 Traditional Theatre of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand (4)**

This course focuses on the exploration of the remarkable world of traditional Southeast Asian Theatre from its roots in the Indian Theatre. Students learn about the development of major traditional forms from their origins in folklore, myth, and religion, within the historical, cultural, and aesthetic framework of their times, as well as their place in today's world. The most exciting features of the course are that students study and observe training practices in seven of Southeast Asia's best traditional theatre schools, see at least fifteen live performances followed by backstage tours where they meet with the artists, and in addition, tour some of the most important historical and cultural locations in the region.

**THTR 402 Traditional Theatre of China (4)**

This course focuses on the exploration of the remarkable world of traditional Chinese Theatre. Students consider the development of major traditional forms from their origins in folklore, myth, and religion, within the historical, cultural, and aesthetic framework of their times, as well as their place in today's world. The most exciting features of the course are that participants study and observe training practices in seven of China's best traditional theatre schools, see at least fifteen live performances followed by backstage tours where they meet with the artists, and in addition, tour some of the most important historical and cultural locations in China.

**THTR 411 Rehearsal and Performance Lab (2)**

Work on projects of particular interest to individual actors: character work, scenes, short plays, monologues, original work, or honors presentations. This course may be repeated twice for credit. *Prerequisite: THTR 231.*

**THTR 412 The Shakespeare Project (2)**

Actors rehearse and perform a workshop presentation of a Shakespeare play, or selections from various plays that illustrate a prominent aspect or theme of Shakespeare's work. Examples: Shakespeare's Women, Shakespeare and the Italian Commedia, Shakespeare and the Clown. This course may be repeated once for credit. *Prerequisite: THTR 103.*

**THTR 431 Projects in Performance (2 or 4)**

An opportunity for advanced students to work on particular acting, directing, design, or technical problems—either in production situations or in special workshops. Repeatable to a maximum of six hours. *Open only to juniors and seniors. Prerequisite: Professor consent and prerequisite override required.*

**THTR 444 Independent Study (2 or 4)**

Advanced work for selected students. May be taken more than once for credit. *Prerequisite: Professor consent and prerequisite override required.*

**THTR 447 Advanced Scene Painting (4)**

Further study in scenic art, emphasizing the advanced techniques, tools, and procedures employed by the scenic artist. Advanced exercises in color theory, color mixing, color manipulation, problem solving, and painting techniques used for hard, soft, and three dimensional scenery will be explored. Major projects include stencil, spray, texture, and representative painting techniques used in the modern theatre. *Prerequisite: THTR 347.*