

ACTING, B.F.A.

Begin Campus: University Park

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The BFA in Acting is an intensive training program for students who intend to pursue a career in acting for stage and film. Admission is determined via an audition and interview process, in addition to admission to the University Park campus. Four years of studio training include one semester in the Theatre Academy of London for advanced training. Performance opportunities are provided for the student, but must be earned through audition. Education in theatre and the general education curriculum provides depth to the actor's intellectual and artistic development. Concurrent majors and minors are allowed only with pre-approval of the program. Like all programs in the School of Theatre, the BFA in Acting is subject to NAST (National Association of Schools of Theatre) accreditation.

What is Acting?

Acting facilitates the highest level of curiosity, performance preparation, and investigation of the craft of acting. The commitment is to all stages of the journey from page to stage. Rehearsal journeys and public performances are full, yielding work that is truthful, nuanced, varied, deeply embodied, and emotionally compelling.

You Might Like this Program If...

- You regularly answer mundane questions in random accents
- Never gave up on make believe as a worthwhile pursuit
- Love words and bringing them to life
- Find yourself comfortable talking to everyone about anything!
- Find memorizing to be easy and fun

Entrance to Major

Admission to the program includes acceptance to the University Park campus, application to the program, an audition, and an interview with primary faculty members. Video taped auditions and video interviews may be arranged.

Entrance Procedures

Incoming First Year Students

Incoming first year students must apply to Penn State. Undergraduate applications for admission to Penn State must be complete and submitted before uploading the required documentation for pre-screening. Applicants who, after a successful pre-screen, are invited to audition will have opportunities for an on-campus audition. Video-taped auditions and video interviews may be arranged if necessary.

Detailed information on pre-screen and audition information can be found at: <https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific>. Applicants who are accepted to the Acting B.F.A program will be directly admitted to the major for the fall semester.

Change of Major/Change of Campus Students

Change of Major/Change of Campus students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.00 to be eligible for the Acting, BFA major. Acting, BFA applicants will follow the same application procedures as a first-year

applicant beginning with a required pre-screen. Applicants who, after a successful pre-screen, are invited to audition will have opportunities for an on-campus audition. Video-taped auditions and video interviews may be arranged if necessary.

Detailed information on pre-screen and audition information can be found at: <https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific>. Applicants who are accepted to the Acting, BFA major will be directly admitted to the major for the fall semester. Regardless of semester standing, this degree requires a minimum of four years to complete after acceptance.

Transfer Students

Transfer students must apply for undergraduate admissions to Penn State. Undergraduate applications for admission to Penn State must be complete and submitted before uploading the required documentation for pre-screening. Applicants who, after a successful pre-screen, are invited to audition will have opportunities for an on-campus audition. Video-taped auditions and video interviews may be arranged if necessary.

Detailed information on pre-screen and audition information can be found at: <https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific>. Applicants who are accepted to the Acting, BFA major will be directly admitted to the major for fall semester. Regardless of semester standing, this degree requires a minimum of four years to complete after acceptance.

Retention Requirements

Retention will be determined through the process of scheduled reviews, in concert with verification of sustained academic growth as demonstrated by earning of grades of C or higher within the major. Failure to do so is grounds for an academic warning, with clear written strategies and a time frame for the student to return to good standing. Should the issues not be addressed by the student, the faculty may advise the student into a different program or major.

Degree Requirements

For a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Acting, a minimum of 121 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	2
Requirements for the Major	83

9 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 3 credits of GHW, 3 credits of GN, 3 credits of GA.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
DANCE 270	Introduction to Bartenieff Fundamentals	3
DANCE 361	Intermediate Modern Dance I	1.5
DANCE 362	Intermediate Modern Dance II	1.5

DANCE 370	Anatomy and Physiology for Performers	3
DANCE 499	Dance Foreign Study	3
MUSIC 113	Music Theatre—Class Voice I ¹	1
MUSIC 114	Music Theatre—Class Voice II ¹	1
THEA 1S	First-Year Seminar: Theatre Production Practices ¹	1
THEA 106	Theatre Foundations ¹	3
THEA 115	B.F.A. Acting Foundations	2
THEA 132	Survey of Theatre Production Practice ¹	3
THEA 201W	Script Analysis	3
THEA 225A	B.F.A. Acting Studio I	2
THEA 225B	B.F.A. Movement Studio I	2
THEA 225C	B.F.A. Voice/Speech Studio I	2
THEA 289	Theatre Production Practicum ¹	1
THEA 322	Voice and Speech I	2
THEA 324	Movement for Actors I	2
THEA 325	Movement for Actors II	2
THEA 420	Scene Study I	3
THEA 421	Advanced Acting: Physical Approaches	3
THEA 422	Advanced Scene Study	3
THEA 425A	B.F.A. Acting Studio II	2
THEA 425C	B.F.A. Voice/Speech Studio II	2
THEA 427A	B.F.A. Acting Studio III	2
THEA 427C	B.F.A. Voice/Speech Studio III	2
THEA 429	Theatre Performance Practicum	2
THEA 437	Artistic Staff for Production	6
THEA 499	Foreign Studies—Theatre Arts	9
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 9 credits from the following:		9
THEA 401	Theatre History I: Ancient to 1700	
THEA 402	Theatre History II: From 1700 to Present	
THEA 403	20th Century Theatre History	
THEA 404	Twenty-first Century Theatre and Drama	
THEA 405W	Theatre History: American Theatre	
THEA/WMNST 407W	Women and Theatre	
THEA 408W	History of American Musical Theatre	
THEA/AFAM 412	African American Theatre	

¹ A grade of C or better per course is required for teacher certification.

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements ([https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-](https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/)

[education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/](https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education-program/)) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- **United States Cultures:** 3 credits
- **International Cultures:** 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Learning Outcomes

- Become embodied and effective actors with the ability to perform in a range of styles, genres, and mediums
- Increase their understanding and awareness of the multidisciplinary applications of performance within domestic and international contexts
- Practice analogical, abstract, and metaphorical thinking
- Value risk taking and learning from failure
- Develop expressive agility in body and voice
- Construct an authentic point of view that is evident in performance work
- Consistently create specific, interesting, idiosyncratic work
- Practice good global citizenship by being positive contributors to our community

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

University Park

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive ([https://](https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/)

bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (*Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin*).

Acting, B.F.A. at University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15, 15A, or 30H [‡]	3 DANCE 270 (GHW) ^{**}	3
THEA 1S [*]	1 THEA 132 [*]	3
THEA 100 [*]	3 THEA 150 [*]	3
THEA 115 [*]	2 THEA 225A [*]	2
THEA 225B [*]	2 THEA 289 [*]	1
THEA 225C [*]	2 THEA 322 [*]	2
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
	16	17

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
DANCE 370 (GN) ^{**†}	3 DANCE 361 (GA) ^{**†}	1.5
THEA 425A [*]	2 MUSIC 114 [*]	1
THEA 425C [*]	2 THEA 402 [*]	3
THEA 324 [*]	2 THEA 427A [*]	2
THEA 401 [*]	3 THEA 427C [*]	2
Supporting Course for Major (see note) ^{*1}	3 General Education Course	3
	General Education Course	3
	15	15.5

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
DANCE 362 (GA) ^{**†}	1.5 Semester Abroad	
ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D [‡]	3 THEA 499 [*]	3
MUSIC 113 [*]	1 THEA 499 [*]	3
THEA 146 [*]	2 THEA 499 [*]	3
THEA 420 [*]	3 PHOTO 100 (GA) ^{**†}	3
General Education Course	3	
Supporting Course for Major (see note) ^{*1}	3	
	16.5	12

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CAS 100A, 100B, or 100C [‡]	3 THEA 422 [*]	3
THEA 209 [*]	3 THEA 405Y, THEA 407W, THEA 408W, or THEA 412 [*]	3
THEA 421 [*]	3 THEA 325 [*]	2
THEA 429 [*]	2 Elective Course	1
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3

General Education Course	3
14	15

Total Credits 121

- * Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
- ‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
- # Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
- † Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

¹ **SUPPORTING COURSES AND RELATED AREAS** (6 credits)
 Select 3 credits THEA or A&A and select 3 credits THEA, A&A, or General Elective

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and replace both ENGL 30H and CAS 100. Each course is 3 credits.

Program Notes:

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS: Admission to the program includes acceptance to the University Park campus, application to the program, an audition, and an interview with primary faculty members. Video taped auditions and video interviews may be arranged.

RETENTION REQUIREMENTS: Retention will be determined through the process of scheduled reviews, in concert with verification of sustained academic growth as demonstrated by earning of grades of C or higher within the major. Failure to do so is grounds for an academic warning, with clear written strategies and a time frame for the student to return to good standing. Should the issues not be addressed by the student, the faculty may advise the student into a different program or major.

Career Paths

This degree prepares students for advanced study in acting, movement, playwriting, or directing. Students are ready to enter the profession, prepared on every level to be a successful artist. With the required semester in London, students are prepared to engage at the international level.

Careers

Graduates are prepared for careers in all areas of performance, including stage, TV, film. They also have preparation for jobs in casting, directing, choreography, writing, and teaching.

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

Students are prepared for graduate programs in acting, directing, dramaturgy, playwriting, performance theory, and movement, as well as professional programs in performance.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES (<https://arts.psu.edu/degrees/master-of-fine-arts-in-theatre/>)

Professional Resources

- Actors' Equity Association (AEA) (<https://www.actorsequity.org/>)
- Screen Actors Guild (SAG)/American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) (<https://www.sagaftra.org/home/>)
- Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) (<https://sdcweb.org/>)

Accreditation

The BFA in Acting is accredited by the National Association of Schools and Theatre.

Founded in 1965, the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) is an organization of schools, conservatories, colleges, and universities with approximately 188 accredited institutional members. It establishes national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials for theatre and theatre-related disciplines, and provides assistance to institutions and individuals engaged in artistic, scholarly, educational, and other theatre-related endeavors.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF THEATRE (<https://nast.arts-accredit.org/>)

Contact

University Park

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<https://arts.psu.edu/academics/school-of-theatre/>