

# THEATRE (THEA)

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## THEA 500: Theatre Research: Sources and Procedure

3 Credits

Source materials and techniques as applied to theatre research; the form and content of theses and monographs.

## THEA 501: Dramaturgy Seminar

3 Credits

Emerging theatre artists necessarily focus on skill, craft, and presentation. This course proposes a parallel path of artist-scholarship to enrich the student's portfolios, communities, and fields. Focusing on writing and presentation, students experience research as a dramaturg might; that is, as a rigorous but practical approach to scholarship.

## THEA 502: Creative Collaboration

3 Credits

Theory and process of creative collaboration between the theatre artistic and production staffs.

**Prerequisite:** MFA theatre candidate

## THEA 503: Theatre of the Americas

3 Credits

This course is an exploration of American theatre, in South, Central and North America, and the points of connection and conflict between European theatrical styles, indigenous and diasporic cultures, and governmental and anti-governmental performance. Through encounters with plays, primary sources, and current scholarship, students will investigate the varied meanings of the contested term 'American' and discover theatrical practices of other times, cultures and artists that were used to create art that engaged with questions of defining and redefining the American theatre.

## THEA 504: Modernism and Postmodernism in the Theatre

3 Credits

This is a course in 20th-21st century modernism and postmodernism in the theatre. It surveys evolving modernist/postmodernist theatre practices in their cultural and intellectual contexts, paying particular attention to the aesthetic evolution from one artistic philosophy to the next. Along the way Naturalism, Symbolism, Futurism, Expressionism, and Dada are explored, as well as Marxism, Structuralism, Poststructuralism, Orientalism, Postcolonialism, and several other theatrically influential aesthetic and theoretical ISMs. Course readings include plays, manifestos, and aesthetic theories. Course methodology focuses on explication of historical performances and their relationship to the social and political circumstances in which they occurred.

**Recommended Preparations:** THEA 501; THEA 803

## THEA 505: Masterpieces in Production I

3 Credits

Dramatic structure, theatrical validity, production viability of great plays from Greek to eighteenth-century. Drama as blueprint for production.

## THEA 506: Masterpieces in Production II

3 Credits

Dramatic structure, theatrical validity, production viability of masterworks of theatre. Drama as the blueprint for production. Offered in London, England. THEA 506 Masterpieces in Production II (3) This course functions as a component of the core sequence on text analysis and dramatic literature required of all graduate students in the School of Theatre. As the course is offered only in London, England, it also functions as a core component of the international field studies program. While in residence at University Park, the focus of the course will be on literature and theory. Graduate students will then take up residence in London, England, where they will experience and analyze plays in production, focusing on production techniques and application of theory in the real world of the theatre.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 500 , THEA 505

## THEA 507: Masterpieces in Production III

3 Credits

Dramatic structure, theatrical validity, production viability of major American plays from Tyler to the present. Drama as blueprint for production.

## THEA 508: Experiential Analysis of Italian Design Styles

3 Credits

Applications of Historical and Cultural Perspectives in Dramatic Production. Offered in Italy.

## THEA 509: Experiential Analysis of Eastern European Styles

3 Credits

Applications of Historical and Cultural Perspectives in Dramatic Production. Offered in Prague and Budapest.

## THEA 510: Experiential Analysis of Period Style

3 Credits

Applications of Visual/Spatial History in Dramatic Production. Offered in London, England. THEA 510 Experiential Analysis of Period Style (3) This course is taught in tandem with the second course of the core sequence on text analysis and dramatic literature required of all graduate students in the School of Theatre. As the course is offered only in London, England, it also functions as a core component of the international field studies program. Prior to taking up residence in England, students will explore films and dramatic texts set in periods ranging from the middle ages to the present day. Discussion will focus on the historic context for each dramatic work. Topics covered will include background information on historical events, an introduction to the visual world of each period, and the social/cultural ideology reflected in the period design. While in England, students will participate in tours of museums and historical sites. Class discussion will focus on establishing connections between the social/cultural content previously presented and the tactile, spatial

experiences gained through seeing actual sites and artifacts from each period. The primary objective of the course will be to enhance the practical and intuitive understanding of period dramatic action in theatre students of all disciplines by guiding them through actual experience of period artifacts and spaces.

THEA 524: Acting V

2 Credits

Advanced scene study and class projects; development of individual student repertoires.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 523A

THEA 529: Performance Monograph

1-2 Credits/Maximum of 4

The development and presentation of M.F.A. monographs in acting, design/ production, or directing.

**Prerequisite:** permission of graduate supervisor

THEA 530: Rehearsal Methods for the Director

3 Credits/Maximum of 3

Theory and practice in approaches, procedures, and techniques in mounting a play.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 410 , THEA 434 , permission of instructor prior to registration

THEA 531: Directorial Styles and Approaches

2 Credits

Seminar in advanced theory and directorial practice. Designed for the advanced student of directing.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 530

THEA 532: Directing Seminar

2 Credits

Career orientation: resume preparation, interviewing, unions, survey of directorial opportunities, and review of major contemporary directors and practices.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 531

THEA 539: Projects in Directing

1-2 Credits/Maximum of 2

Approved directing projects for the M.F.A. directing student.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 410 ; admission to the M.F.A. directing program

THEA 543: Projects in Playwriting

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Preparation of the script for revision during and following production of the student's original play.

**Prerequisite:** production approval

THEA 553: Scene Design IV

3 Credits

Design of plays for proper theatre and mass media.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 552 , MFA theatre design candidacy

THEA 559: Portfolio Presentation

1 Credits/Maximum of 2

Current practice in portfolio development and presentation to client and employer.

**Prerequisite:** prior approval of faculty

THEA 569: Costume Construction: Crafts

3 Credits

Exploration and development of various crafts techniques with application to costume construction (i.e. masks, jewelry, armor, millinery, footwear, wigs).

THEA 571: Stage Lighting Design IV

3 Credits

Course addresses individual problems in the stage lighting design process concentrating on the development of skills necessary for professional examination.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 570

THEA 585: Theatre Planning

3 Credits

Processes and problems in planning and designing theatres: performance, audience, and technical requirements.

THEA 589: Design/Production Monograph

1-4 Credits/Maximum of 4

The development and presentation of M.F.A. monographs in design/ production.

THEA 590: Colloquium

1-3 Credits/Maximum of 3

Continuing seminars which consist of a series of individual lectures by faculty, students, or outside speakers.

THEA 595: Internship

1-3 Credits/Maximum of 3

Professional field experience in theatre performance, production, and management assignments.

**Prerequisite:** approval of internship by instructor prior to registration

## THEA 596: Individual Studies

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Creative projects, including nonthesis research, which are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.

## THEA 597: Special Topics

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Formal courses given on a topical or special interest subject which may be offered infrequently.

## THEA 597A: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

1 Credits

## THEA 597B: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

6 Credits

## THEA 597C: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

3 Credits

## THEA 597D: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

3 Credits

## THEA 597F: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

2 Credits

## THEA 597G: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

2 Credits

## THEA 597I: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

1-3 Credits

## THEA 597K: \*\*SPECIAL TOPICS\*\*

3 Credits

## THEA 600: Thesis Research

1-15 Credits/Maximum of 999

No description.

## THEA 602: Supervised Experience in College Teaching

1-3 Credits/Maximum of 6

Teaching of theatre and film classes under senior faculty supervision.

## THEA 610: Thesis Research Off Campus

1-15 Credits/Maximum of 999

No description.

## THEA 803: Pedagogy Seminar

3 Credits

Each generation of theatre artists, technicians, and scholars trains the next generation. This seminar has two goals: 1) to cover the nuts and bolts of preparing and teaching a theatre course, and 2) to do so in a

way that proceeds from personal artist/citizen values. These two goals can be difficult to reconcile. Many if not most theatre instructors learn from key teachers of practice who teach the skills they know. This is one necessary dimension of teaching-imparting knowledge-but this course stretches the idea of teaching beyond this idea. The goal of this course is for students to discover how they fit into the field as a teacher and scholar, and how they might develop a portfolio of materials to be a successful job candidate and a successful teacher.

## THEA 811: International Studio Intensive

1-9 Credits

The course enhances the ability of the actor to meet the voice and speech demands for the performance of Shakespeare. THEA 811 International Studio Intensive (1-9 per semester) The objective of the course is two-fold. The first part of the class deals with the vocal skills necessary for successful acting of the Shakespearean play. The actors work on a series of rigorous voice and speech exercises, and master an intense and complete warm-up that prepares them to deal with the text. The second portion of the course deals with the play-script itself and examines the relationship between the voice and the text. Working with sonnets and monologues, the student is introduced to scansion, imagery, alliteration, and other text related skills.

## THEA 811A: International Production Studio Intensive

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Intensive studio application of processes and procedures within specific theatre disciplines as influenced by the work of international professionals.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 500 , THEA 505

## THEA 820A: Acting I

4 Credits

Exercises, monologue, and scene study. Principal focus on realism. THEA 820A Acting I (3 per semester) THEA 820A is a laboratory or practicum course requiring active student presentation of assigned acting projects. Outside preparation and homework are required for all sessions. Working in pairs, each student will participate in improvisational scenes on a daily basis. In addition, each actor will be required to independently prepare and present various acting exercises, scenarios, and finally, a comprehensive play and character analysis for a scripted scene from contemporary realism (that will be performed with an acting partner the following semester). Critiques of each actor's work will be given on a daily basis and the student will be expected to rehearse outside of class to address any issues raised and to have them remedied for the next viewing.

**Prerequisite:** admission to the MFA performance acting program

## THEA 820B: Movement for Actors I

2 Credits

Techniques and skills in physical expression, awareness, control, and stage movement. THEA 820B Movement for Actors I (2 per semester) A fundamental movement class designed to strengthen, prepare, and align the body for maximum freedom of expression. Emphasis is on concentration, flexibility, balance, coordination, relaxation and sensitivity to the impulses stimulated from outer and inner resources. Techniques may include but are not limited to time tested modalities such as Yoga,

Alexander, Tai Chi, Pilates, Feldenkrais, and Modern Dance. Included in the course are units on nutrition, time management, and the proper care and maintenance of the physical instrument. Students will be evaluated according to their acquisition of skills and professional attitude.

**Prerequisite:** admission to MFA performance acting program

THEA 820C: Voice and Speech I

2 Credits

Vocal techniques for the actor: articulation, voice control, support, and projection. THEA 820C Voice and Speech I (2) THEA 820C is the first in a sequence of voice and speech courses for the actor. This first semester installment will focus on awareness and conditioning activities related to breath, posture, resonance and articulation. Prose and poetry readings will be used for application activities. Students will experience activities that will heighten their physical awareness of vocalizing. Most activities will involve a re-learning of how they speak, bringing to their conscious awareness the processes of voice/speech which were initially learned through early childhood nurturing. Class events will include awareness of breath patterns and the means to release inhibitive behaviors related to spinal posture, head and neck alignment, and musculature along the breath/vocal tract. Students will also gain awareness of how breath relates to their expressive/emotional system.

**Prerequisite:** admission to the MFA performance acting program

THEA 821A: Acting II

3 Credits

A continuation of THEA 520A. THEA 821A Acting II (3) The foundational work of the first semester continues with its application to scripted material, primarily drawn from contemporary drama. The actor's skills in contact, communication, and inventiveness are further developed, along with personalizing the given circumstances of the dramatic text. The concept of character is introduced and students will begin the exploration of bringing truthful behavior to viewpoints different than their own. Each student will be paired with an acting partner and perform three scenes during the semester. A written, comprehensive script and character analysis will be required for each scene. Critiques of each actor's work will be given on a daily basis and the student will be expected to rehearse outside of class to address any issues raised and to have them remedied for the next viewing.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 820A

THEA 821B: Movement for Actors II

2 Credits

A continuation of THEA 520B. THEA 821B Movement for Actors II (2) Through the study and discipline of learning precise corporeal skills, the actors gain confidence and clarity of expression. This clarity is applied toward the creation of mimetic illusions, mask-work, tableaux, and various animal and effort shaping studies aimed at developing characters for the stage. Characters may range from the fantastic to the most real. Improvisation and specific exercises are developed to encourage bold physical choices and the liberation of the creative imagination. Actors work in individual, team, and ensemble situations to apply techniques toward meaningful rendition of ideas.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 820B

THEA 821C: Voice and Speech II

2 Credits

A continuation of THEA 520C. THEA 821C Voice and Speech II (2) THEA 821C is the second in a sequence of voice and speech courses for the actor. This second semester installment will continue the focus of voice/speech training addressed in THEA 820: focus on awareness and conditioning activities related to breath, posture, resonance and articulation. Prose and poetry readings will be used for application activities. Students will experience activities that will heighten their physical awareness of vocalizing. Most activities will involve a re-learning of how they speak, bringing to their conscious awareness the processes of voice/speech which were initially learned through early childhood nurturing. Class events will include awareness of breath patterns and the means to release inhibitive behaviors related to spinal posture, head and neck alignment, and musculature along the breath/vocal tract. Students will also gain awareness of how breath relates to their expressive/emotional system. Class activities will also include physical awareness of the consonant and vowels sounds and their phonetic transcriptions. Each event will strive to improve actors' intelligibility and increase musicality of speech. Through application assignments with word lists, sentences, poetry and prose, students will increase language sensitivity. This semester will also address voice quality issues directly and how they relate to the above. Specific events will focus on vibratory awareness in primary resonators and how to apply this awareness in all vocal life. Issues of vocal health, projection and emotional demands will be addressed. Students will be evaluated upon preparedness, work ethic, focus, openness to change, growth, degree of self-reliant recall and creative application of new skills. This studio performance class offers opportunity for assessment from the instructor in each class session. Periodic assignments will be made to assess self-reliant application of the work.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 820C

THEA 822A: Acting III

3 Credits

This course will focus on the research and development of skills necessary to perform the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. THEA 822A Acting III (3) THEA 822A is designed to take the skills acquired in the movement, voice and acting studios in the first year of the graduate actor training program and apply them to the lush words, passionate images, and intense emotion required by the elevated texts of playwrights such as Shakespeare. The process requires the reduction of modern vocal and physical parasites and their replacement by a higher standard of speech and a classically open, expressive body. Truthful behavior in action is still the goal - the challenge is to embrace Shakespeare's truths. In the weeks devoted to scene study, the actors must learn to be comfortable with classical works, to confront any predisposition about style, and see that their vocal and physical instruments need to be strengthened in order to fully play classical characters. Because THEA 822A is a laboratory performance course, one in which students must be sharing what they are learning or performing on a daily basis, on-going assessment takes place through faculty feedback in working sessions, through faculty and peer critique of work presented, through an oral evaluation at mid-semester in conference with the graduate acting faculty, and through an extensive written evaluation and formal conference with the head of the School and the head of the acting program at semester's end. Other faculty will observe midterm and

end of semester presentations to offer insights. Students thus receive assessment on many occasions in the course of the semester.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 821A

THEA 822B: Movement for Actors III

2 Credits

Advanced techniques and skills in physical expression. THEA 822B Movement for Actors III (2) Building upon the character work of the previous semester, actors delve into the specific demands of farcical comedy and the development of European clown characters. Comic devices, timing, exaggeration, and invention are studied and applied to specific texts dealing with farcical movement demands. Clown characters are devised and guided toward specific invention work aimed at developing skills needed for a wide variety of comic situations. Building upon the previous work, an ensemble improvisation piece is developed to enable actors to apply techniques to an invented world with many different and demanding situations. Linking to the classical work in the acting studio, the actors will finish with a unit dealing with comic and dramatic physical demands and pitfalls inherent in working within the world of Shakespeare's plays.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 821B

THEA 822C: Voice and Speech III

2 Credits

Advanced voice and speech training for the actor: articulation, resonance, and vocal technique related to verse and heightened language drama. THEA 822C Voice and Speech III (2) THEA 822C is the third in a sequence of voice and speech courses for the actor. This third semester installment will focus on review of speech and voice techniques and application of those techniques in the performance of Shakespearean drama text and other heightened language plays. Scansion of poetic meter, syntax, lexicon resources, and sound patterns will be the primary informative elements of vocal performance. Students will be assigned sonnets, monologues and scenes as vehicles for application in the studio. Students will be evaluated upon preparedness, work ethic, focus, openness to change, growth, degree of self-reliant recall and creative application of new skills. This studio performance class offers opportunity for assessment from the instructor in each class session. Periodic assignments will be made to assess self-reliant application of the work.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 821C

THEA 823A: Acting IV

3 Credits

Students prepare audition material for their New York Showcase for theatrical agents. THEA 823A Acting IV (3) The objective of the course is the selection, rehearsal, and performance of audition material for the New York Showcase for theatrical agents. Students begin the semester by bringing large amounts of potential audition material into a peer review format where their fellow students and the instructor, evaluate the monologues and scenes and give specific feedback on its suitability. During the course of the semester, the students decide on a core of eight monologues and four scenes from which the final Showcase will be crafted. The monologues are performed for the class and the School of Theatre faculty.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 822A

THEA 823B: Movement for Actors IV

2 Credits

Fundamentals of unarmed and armed stage combat with emphasis on enactment of safe and effective stage fights. THEA 823B Movement for Actors IV (2) Actors learn the basics of unarmed and armed stage combat techniques. Applying the standardized and time-tested safety measures derived from the Society of American Fight Directors, each actor must master kicks, slaps, punches, grabs, holds, rolls, and all other unarmed techniques. They must also learn how to wield a quarterstaff, rapier and dagger, and broadsword with confidence: safely and effectively enacting various styles of stage combat choreography. Designed to train specific techniques while raising kinetic awareness, the course also introduces the historical background for each weapon style.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 822B

THEA 823C: Voice and Speech IV

2 Credits

A study of stage dialects. THEA 823C Voice and Speech IV (2) THEA 823C is the fourth in a sequence of voice and speech courses for the actor. This fourth semester installment will apply the articulation, phonetics and resonance skills addressed in prerequisite classes toward the acquisition of stage dialects and accents. For each dialect the student becomes aware of the resonance, phonetic transcription, inflection, and rhythmic changes necessary to perform dramatic text with an accent or dialect. Vocal agility, phonetic recall and the ability to integrate the altered vocal behavior to the demands of acting are the primary goals. Each dialect unit will have an introductory instruction, a review session, and a presentation of a reading of a dialect monologue. The final project will be the performance of two dialect monologues. Students will be evaluated upon preparedness, work ethic, focus, openness to change, growth, degree of self-reliant recall and creative application of new skills. This studio performance class offers opportunity for assessment from the instructor in each class session. Periodic assignments will be made to assess self-reliant application of the work.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 822C

THEA 824: Acting for the Camera

6 Credits

This course introduces the actor to the skills necessary for successful performance in television, film, video and commercial venues.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 823A , THEA 823B , THEA 823C

THEA 825A: Acting Professionally/NYC Showcase

3 Credits

Development of audition repertoire; study of business topics; development, rehearsal and performance of NYC showcase. THEA 825A Acting Professionally/NYC Showcase (3) THEA 825A is a capstone course that brings closure to the actors' studio training and prepares them for entrance into the competitive world of the entertainment industry. The first half of the semester the students will locate, edit and present audition material for weekly critique. The students will also become aware of business practices related to the acting profession such as union membership, contracts, working with agents/casting directors, etc.



During the second eight weeks the students will rehearse and eventually perform an audition showcase in NYC for talent agents and casting directors. Students will receive daily criticism of their work by faculty and peers and will be graded upon the applied aspects of the course, in audition tour of professional regional theatres and the NYC showcase performance.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 823A , THEA 823B , THEA 823C

THEA 825C: Professional Repertory Performance

3 Credits

Rehearsal and performance of theatre productions at Penn State featuring third year MFA actors and professional guest artists. THEA 825C Professional Repertory Performance (3) The professional performance experience is the equivalent of a masters degree thesis. It is the culminating event for three years of full-time study, rehearsal, and performance. The season is chosen to demonstrate the acting skills of each student in the third year of the M.F.A. program. These plays are chosen to be the first professional experience for the acting students as they work alongside professional guest artists.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 823A , THEA 823B , THEA 823C

THEA 830: Interdisciplinary Theatrical Design Studio

3-6 Credits/Maximum of 36

Advanced analysis, graphic, and presentation techniques for evolving and communicating design for the stage.

THEA 831: Theatrical Costume Technology Studio

3-6 Credits/Maximum of 6

Advanced mastery of both traditional and modern techniques in costume creation for live performance This course will combine the instruction of all aspects of theatrical costume execution for the stage into a single studio. Upon completion of diagnostic exercises, costume faculty will work with students, providing project based instruction specific to the student's developmental level and necessary industry skill sets. Innovative methodologies and new technologies are also explored. This course will encourage a professional standard in skills and techniques, and promote a greater understanding of the creative and collaborative relationship between the technologist, costume designer, and performer.

THEA 840: Music Directors Studio

3 Credits/Maximum of 18

This is the core foundation studio for the music direction area of the MFA in Theatre. It involves small group and individual instruction, in which every skill and knowledge set necessary to the professional theatre music director is developed to a professional standard, through discussion, practice, and practicum in the form of membership in the music staff of a Centre Stage musical.

THEA 841: Music Direction for Musical Theatre 2nd/3rd-year Studio

3 Credits/Maximum of 6

The student will spend half of each semester coaching and accompanying 2nd-year musical theatre undergraduates in their Acting the Song studio course, and the other conducting and music directing

3rd-year musical theatre undergraduates in their Musical Theatre Ensemble studio course.

THEA 842: Music Direction for Musical Theatre 4th-year Studio

2 Credits

This course introduces the graduate music director to some of the behind-the-scenes work that goes into creating and rehearsing musical material for special events or individual performers, including instrumental arranging, musical theatre notation conventions and techniques, and working with musical theatre performers to create, rehearse and perform bespoke arrangements.

THEA 857: Scenic Design for Production

1 Credits/Maximum of 6

Design and execution of production design projects.

THEA 861: Costume Design and Construction

1-6 Credits/Maximum of 18

Advanced special projects for the graduate designer and costumer.

**Prerequisite:** THEA 461 or THEA 560

THEA 863: Costume Construction: Draping

3 Credits

Exploration and development of various draping techniques with application to costume construction.

THEA 865: Costume Construction: Period Reconstruction

3 Credits

Exploration and development of reproduction techniques relating to period clothing, and their application to costume construction.

THEA 866: Costume Construction for Production

1 Credits/Maximum of 6

Execution of production in construction and shop management.

THEA 867: Costume Design for Production

1 Credits/Maximum of 6

Design and execution of production design projects.

THEA 877: Lighting Design for Production

1 Credits/Maximum of 6

Design and execution of production design projects.

THEA 890: Colloquium

1-3 Credits/Maximum of 6

Continuing, professionally oriented seminars that consist of a series of individual lectures by faculty, students, or outside speakers.

## THEA 895: Internship

1-15 Credits/Maximum of 15

Supervised, professionally oriented, off-campus, nongroup instruction, including field experiences, practicums, or internships. Written and oral critique of activity required.

## THEA 896: Individual Studies

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 12

Creative projects with a professional orientation, including non-thesis research, that are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.

## THEA 897: Special Topics

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 18

Formal courses given on a topical or special interest subject with a professional orientation that may be offered infrequently.