

Theater and Performance Studies

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Degree Requirements

Master of Arts in Theater and Performance Studies

Total units required: 36 units (12 courses at the 500 level)

Note: Students must be enrolled in 9 graduate credits each semester to retain full-time status.

I. Required courses: 18 units (6 courses)

1. **Drama 5101 Intro to Graduate Study in Drama.** As a general introduction to advanced scholarship in theater and performance studies, this course is designed to familiarize first-year graduate students with expectations for advanced research and professional writing. It is also intended to provide an overview of theater and performance studies, focusing on the relationship between these two scholarly domains, major works of scholarship that have defined the field, and current debates redrawing its contours.
2. **Drama 5303 Performance Theory.** This course introduces students to contemporary theories of performance, with "performance" understood as both metaphor and event. From a multidisciplinary perspective, students will consider how cultures produce meanings — and, indeed, perform those meanings — to create and/or disrupt their own social coherence. Theorists studied include J.L. Austin, Victor Turner, Erving Goffman and Judith Butler.
3. **Drama 5305 Seminar in Dramatic Theory.** An in-depth exploration of core works of dramatic theory from the ancient world to the present, this course focuses on texts that enunciate what theater is, has been and should be. Readings address theater's role in society, the anti-theatrical prejudice, the aesthetic pleasures of drama and theater, theater as a means of educating the citizen, and the relationship between dramatic form and social and political revolution.
4. **Theater/Performance History.** One 500-level historically-based seminar from a list of approved courses taught *within* the Performing Arts Department. (Topics vary by semester.) Students are encouraged to meet this requirement with Drama 506 Topics in Contemporary Arts Practice Research or Drama 507 Topics in Contemporary Theoretical and Historical Research

5. **Theater Practice.** At least one (but no more than three) 500-level course(s) in theater practice: dramaturgy, directing, playwriting or design. Students may meet this requirement with Drama 506 Topics in Contemporary Arts Practice Research.
6. Master of Arts students in Theater and Performance Studies should develop knowledge of and appreciation for aesthetic forms, intellectual paradigms, and cultural conditions beyond the largely white, Eurocentric approaches that have prevailed in the modern university curriculum. To that end, students will complete at least **one graduate-level course examining drama, theater, and/or performance that emerges from racial and/or ethnic communities whose contributions have been historically underrepresented in our field.** Eligible courses include those home-based in the Performing Arts Department as well as approved courses offered through other Arts & Sciences departments.

II. Electives: 15 units (5 courses)

Students are invited to develop a broad-based or specialized curriculum in theater and performance studies, choosing courses from within the Performing Arts Department (including Dance) or as many as four courses (12 units) from departments outside the Performing Arts Department. The program works closely with faculty affiliates in other departments, including Anthropology; Classics; English (and non-Anglophone languages and literatures); Film and Media Studies; Music; Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; and the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts.

III. Master's Research (3 units)

The capstone to the master's degree is the completion of an essay of publishable length (typically 25 double-spaced pages) and quality. This essay is based on a seminar paper written during the student's first three semesters in the program, which must be extensively revised and expanded under the guidance of an advisor. After the revised seminar paper has been submitted to and approved by the director of graduate studies, the student will meet with a committee of three faculty members for an oral exam.

Accelerated Master of Arts in Theater and Performance Studies

This program allows qualified Washington University undergraduates to complete a Master of Arts (AM) degree in a one-year accelerated program after earning the Bachelor of Arts (AB) degree in drama. The undergraduate and graduate degrees are awarded sequentially, if approved, with admission to the Accelerated AM program occurring during the fall semester after completion of the AB degree during the preceding December, May or August. Applications may be submitted at any time during the student's senior year through March 15, and GRE tests are not required. The program is available only to senior students and only for continuous enrollment the next year. There is no option for deferred admission.

The requirements for the Accelerated AM are identical to those for the traditional AM, as detailed above. To complete the AM in one year, students may apply five undergraduate courses at the 400 level or above (a maximum of 16 units) toward the master's degree. Undergraduate courses must be acceptable to the director of graduate studies, and they must be completed with a final grade of B or higher.

Interested students should contact the director of graduate studies, Paige McGinley (pmcginley@wustl.edu) (pmcginley@wustl.edu), during their sophomore or junior year for additional information and application instructions.