Performing Arts

Performing Arts at Washington University comprise dance (p. 1) and drama (p. 1).

Dance

Students may select dance (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/dance/) as a major through the Performing Arts Department. This course of study combines intensive studio work in the technique and theory of modern dance, ballet and composition with seminars that examine dance as a global phenomenon containing forms that reflect culturally specific historical, aesthetic and ethnological features. The program also includes a broad range of courses such as stagecraft, music resources, improvisation, anatomy for dancers, pedagogy, dance therapy, musical theater dance, world dance forms, jazz and tap. In addition, students may choose to minor in dance or in world music, dance and theater. The interdisciplinary minor in world music, dance and theater encourages students already interested in the performing arts to explore those outside of Euro-American traditions. A certificate program in somatic studies is offered through the University College division of Arts & Sciences.

The senior capstone experience is framed in consultation with Performing Arts faculty. In April, prior to registration for the fall semester, dance majors discuss the capstone requirement with their advisers. The dance capstone requirement can be satisfied by a senior honors thesis or a senior dance project. The format may range from a research paper or a written analysis of the student’s dance development to a project emphasizing movement expression (e.g., the creation of a video résumé, a performance or a choreographic project). In all cases, dance capstones have a written component.

Those who study dance at Washington University learn from faculty members who have both professional experience and academic degrees. Students also have the opportunity to study with guest artists-in-residence who teach master classes and set choreography.

Students may audition for the Washington University Dance Theatre, which holds annual auditions for students. Selected students will appear in faculty- and guest artist-choreographed concerts in Edison Theatre. Dance students particularly interested in performance may audition for the student repertory company, Washington University Dance Collective (WUDC). WUDC rehearses and performs throughout the year at area venues and on campus. Students may also participate in departmental drama productions as well as student work in choreography and theater. Each year, students have the opportunity to attend the regional American College Dance Conference to adjudicate work, perform, and take master classes.

Dance students may pursue study abroad at University of Auckland, New Zealand; University of Ghana, Legon; and Roehampton University, London. With approval from the Dance program, courses at these institutions may fulfill dance major and minor requirements. Courses in other disciplines taught at these institutions may also be accepted by Washington University.

Drama

The drama (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/drama/) major combines the historical, cultural and theoretical study of theater and performance with a full array of theater production courses, including acting, directing, performance art, design (i.e., set, costume, lighting, and sound) and playwriting.

The theater and performance studies faculty offer courses in theater history, performance studies, and dramatic and performance theory. Majors may also take cross-listed courses in such departments as African and African-American Studies; Classics; English; East Asian Languages and Literatures; and Film and Media Studies. Our courses analyze theater and performance as resonant and significant cultural practices, both historically and currently. Courses combine critical analysis with attention to the corporeal and material embodiment of actual performance.

In small, individualized classes (capped at a maximum of 16 students) characterized by a high number of weekly contact hours, professionally and academically trained faculty teach a rigorous system of production courses. A carefully graduated four-semester sequence in acting culminates in a class for seniors (Acting IV) that is focused on individual projects. A two-course directing sequence issues into a public showing of student-directed work, and some students have chosen to direct a fully designed production as their Senior Honors thesis. Recent graduates of the acting and directing sequence have been placed in prestigious MFA programs, in internships and jobs in regional American theaters, and in various professional schools and graduate programs. Our nationally recognized program in design and technical theater works students through a structure of costume, scene, lighting and sound design courses, with several electives on such topics as mask making and baroque costume that are informed by historical and cultural study. A highly successful playwriting program, enriched by the annual A.E. Hotchner Playwriting Competition and annual workshops run by leading American dramaturges, has produced playwrights whose work is now being performed in nationally recognized venues such as Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theater.

The culture of performance is abundantly rich at Washington University. A wide array of student theater groups, with a particular focus on improvisation, provides many opportunities for student-generated performance on campus.
Since 1991, the Performing Arts Department and Globe Education (London) have been running a national summer program held at Shakespeare's Globe in London. This four-week program includes a 3-unit course on the textual, historical and cultural study of Shakespeare; a 3-unit course on acting Shakespeare (with particular attention to acting on the Globe stage); master classes taught by Globe personnel; playgoing in London and Stratford; and more.

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Faculty

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PhD, Brown University
(Drama)

Professors
Robert K. Henke (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/robert-henke/)
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(Drama)

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PhD, Indiana University
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Associate Professors
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PhD, Brown University
(Drama)

Julia Walker (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/julia-walker/)
PhD, Duke University
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Assistant Professors
Joanna Dee Das (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/joanna-dee-das/)
PhD, Columbia University
(Dance)

Rhaisa Williams (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/rhaisa-williams/)
PhD, Northwestern University
(Drama)

Teaching Professors
Robert Mark Morgan (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/robert-mark-morgan/)
MFA, San Diego State University
(Drama)

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MFA, University of Virginia
(Drama)

Professors of Practice
Christine Knoblauch-O'Neal (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/christine-knoblauch-oneal/)
PhD, Texas Woman's University
(Dance)

David W. Marchant (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/david-marchant/)
MFA, University of Iowa
(Dance)

Jeffery S. Matthews (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/jeffery-matthews/)
MFA, Virginia Commonwealth University
(Drama)

Annamaria Pileggi (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/annamaria-pileggi/)
MFA, Brandeis University
(Drama)

Cecil Slaughter (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/cecil-slaughter/)
MFA, University of Iowa
(Dance)

William Whitaker (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/william-whitaker/)
MFA, Florida Atlantic University
(Drama)

Artist-in-Residence
Ron Himes (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/ron-himes/)
Henry E. Hampton Jr. Art-In-Residence
BSBA, Washington University
(Drama)

Senior Lecturer
Sean Savoie (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/sean-savoie/)
MFA, University of Cincinnati, College Conservatory of Music
(Drama)
Senior Lecturer/Senior Playwright-in-Residence
Carter W. Lewis (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/carter-w-lewis/)
MA, University of Oklahoma
(Drama)

Lecturer
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MFA, University of Cincinnati, College Conservatory of Music
(Drama)

Professor Emerita
Mary-Jean Cowell (https://pad.wustl.edu/people/mary-jean-cowell/)
PhD, Columbia University
(Dance)

Majors
The Performing Arts Department offers majors in dance and in drama. For the major in dance, visit the Dance (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/dance/#majors) page. For the major in drama, visit the Drama (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/drama/#majors) page.

Minors
The Minor in World Music, Dance and Theater
Required units: 17-19

Required courses:

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<td>Music 1021</td>
<td>Musics of the World</td>
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<td>Dance 331</td>
<td>Movement and Meaning: Dance in a Global Context</td>
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One to two of the following courses (3-5 units):

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<td>A History of African-American Theater</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Chinese 467</td>
<td>The Chinese Theater</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Drama 223</td>
<td>Cross-Cultural Women Playwrights</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance 343</td>
<td>West African Music and Dance in Context</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan 446</td>
<td>The Japanese Theater</td>
<td>3</td>
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Elective courses (8 units):

Additional Information
This is an interdisciplinary minor that draws on the distinctive methodologies and training inherent in several disciplines. This minor encourages the student already interested in the performing arts to explore those outside Euro-American traditions. However, students majoring in fields such as anthropology, political science, psychology, education, comparative literature, history and foreign languages may find this minor a useful complement to their primary discipline.

The Minor in Dance
For the minor in dance, visit the Dance (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/dance/#minors) page of this Bulletin.

The Minor in Drama
For the minor in drama, visit the Drama (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/drama/#minors) page of this Bulletin.

Courses

Dance
For dance courses, visit the Dance (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/dance/#courses) page of this Bulletin.

Drama
For drama courses, visit the Drama (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/undergrad/artsci/drama/#courses) page of this Bulletin.