

THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES - DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

The PhD in Theatre & Performance Studies is primarily designed for those who intend to be scholars working in an academic environment.

Our PhD in Theatre & Performances Studies is committed to performance as research as integral to the study of the history, theory and practice of theatre and performance from around the world. We approach performance simultaneously as an object of study, a way of knowing and a methodological tool, and are invested in the ways in which it can help us better understand—and challenge—the complicated legacies of our own academic disciplines and artistic practices. Our courses place dramatic texts, performance traditions, and applied performance from throughout history in conversation with contemporary performance. We ask: How might this performance work today? What challenges does it present to the contemporary scholar, maker or facilitator? What role do gender, race and/or coloniality play in this work? Why is it relevant today?

The program is designed to be completed in four years for students entering with a master's degree. The first through fourth semesters focus on coursework, the fifth semester is spent preparing for and taking the comprehensive examination and writing the dissertation prospectus and the sixth through eighth semesters are spent writing and defending the dissertation. It is possible for a student entering the PhD program with a master's degree to finish in three years.

Requirements

Prerequisites

Applicants to the PhD in Theatre & Performance Studies must have a master's degree in any subject. Students who apply to the PhD but will not have earned a master's degree prior to the start of the program will instead be considered for the MA in Theatre & Performance Studies.

Program Overview

To complete the program, students must:

1. Demonstrate proficiency in academic coursework.
2. Demonstrate reading competency in at least one foreign language equivalent to the completion of a second-semester college-level course.
3. Pass a comprehensive exam.
4. Prepare and successfully defend a dissertation.

Doctoral students in theatre complete 30 credit hours of coursework beyond the master's degree at the 5000 level or above. When approved by the student's advisor, credit hours from other departments on campus may count, provided the course is taught by a member of the graduate faculty in that department. In addition to the 30 credit hours of coursework, 30 dissertation credit hours (THTR 8999) are required.

Required Courses

The PhD program is based upon a core of required courses which emphasize the interrelatedness of theory, history and practice.

Required Courses and Credits

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Required Courses		
THDN 5010	Introduction to Performance Studies	3
THTR 5011	Seminar: Theory and Criticism	3
THDN 6009	Research and Teaching in Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies	2
Select three of the following:		9
THTR 6011	Theatre and Performance Histories 1	
THTR 6021		
THTR 6031		
THTR 6041	Theatre and Performance Histories 2	
THTR 6111		
Electives		
Additional courses to meet the 30-credit minimum.		13
Dissertation		30
THTR 8999	Doctoral Dissertation	
Total Credit Hours		60

Elective Coursework

PhD students are encouraged to take elective courses offered by theatre graduate faculty members in their area of research (e.g., performing voices of women, performance studies, directing, performance and community engagement), as well as graduate dance courses (e.g., graduate dance technique, advanced dance composition, African dance). When approved by the student's advisor, PhD students are encouraged to take courses in other departments, especially as they relate to the anticipated dissertation topic. Electives are determined by students and their advisors, consistent with Graduate School and departmental requirements.

Graduate Independent Study

Independent study is used for projects, research and educational opportunities both in and outside of the department. It may not be used as an avenue for taking undergraduate courses in the major department or replicating existing graduate classes. Although there is no limit to the number of independent study credit hours a doctoral student may take, they should be held to a minimum.

Production Research and Practicum Courses

These courses in acting, directing, design and dramaturgy may be taken for 1–3 credit hours. A limit of 3 credit hours in each category may apply toward the degree. All courses are supervised by members of the graduate faculty; regular meetings with the instructor of record are required.

Guidelines for flexible credit hours are:

- one credit hour for successfully completing the project
- two credit hours for completing the project and submitting a written record of it (e.g., an actor's journal, a director's regiebuch)
- three credit hours for doing all of the above and writing a pertinent 15 to 25 page research paper, with the topic to be determined in consultation with the advisor

Language Requirement

Reading competency in a foreign language is an important skill for a scholar. It allows the student to consider a dissertation topic beyond

the limits of English-speaking theatre, thereby significantly broadening their research and publishing possibilities. Doctoral students are required to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to the completion of a second-semester college-level course before taking the comprehensive exam. This requirement may be fulfilled by coursework taken within five years previous to the exam or by testing.

Dissertation

The PhD program culminates in the dissertation, a research document that makes a significant and original contribution to the field of theatre studies. The dissertation will be defended before a committee of five members.

Plan(s) of Study

Year One

Fall Semester		Credit Hours
THDN 6009	Research and Teaching in Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies	2
THDN 5010 or THTR 5011	Introduction to Performance Studies (5010 & 5011 are available alternating semesters) or Seminar: Theory and Criticism	3
On-Stage-Studies Seminar or Electives		3
Credit Hours		8

Spring Semester

On-Stage-Studies Seminar and/or Electives		8
Credit Hours		8

Year Two

Fall Semester

THTR 5011 or THDN 5010	Seminar: Theory and Criticism (5010 & 5011 are available alternating semesters) or Introduction to Performance Studies	3
On-Stage-Studies Seminar and/or Electives		4
Credit Hours		7

Spring Semester

On-Stage-Studies Seminar and/or Electives		7
Credit Hours		7

Year Three

Fall Semester

THTR 8999	Doctoral Dissertation	8
Credit Hours		8

Spring Semester

THTR 8999	Doctoral Dissertation	8
Credit Hours		8

Year Four

Fall Semester

THTR 8999	Doctoral Dissertation	7
Credit Hours		7

Spring Semester

THTR 8999	Doctoral Dissertation	7
Credit Hours		7

Total Credit Hours		60
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Learning Outcomes

Goal of the PhD Degree in Theatre & Performance Studies

To cultivate rigorous study, creative practice, and ethical teaching of theatre and performance within a vibrant culture of inquiry and innovation that is grounded in histories, builds towards equity, and expands with possibilities.

Measurable learning objectives based on these goals include:

- To know and critically analyze theory, practice, literature, histories, ethical implications and innovation within our expansive fields of theatre and performance studies.
- To creatively engage theory, practice, literature, histories, ethical implications and innovation within our expansive fields of theatre and performance studies (creative engagement could be realized through scholarship, dramaturgy, performance, design, direction, facilitation, co-creation and beyond).
- To develop individual strategies for teaching theory, practice, literature, histories, ethical implications and innovation within our expansive fields of theatre and performance studies.
- To learn and practice positive qualities as future professional colleagues.
- To learn methods, strategies and approaches for dismantling structural inequality and building more inclusive, accessible and equitable ways to research, create and teach.
- To demonstrate the ability to synthesize comprehensive knowledge of the field of theatre and performance studies, and contribute new knowledge of sufficient breadth and relevance to our field and beyond.

Indicators for Reaching Learning Objectives

We use the indicators below to measure the extent to which a student has reached the above learning objectives.

- Coursework
- Research and creative work
- Professional and outward-facing development
- Completion of comprehensive examination and dissertation
- Assessment of teaching