

# THEATRE

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## THE 100 The Art of Theatre Design (4 Credits)

The course is designed to explore the nature of design in theatre and the visual arts. Students study the elements of set, costume, lighting and sound design while looking at the work of some of the most influential designers, past and present. Especially designed for those with a limited background in theatre, it involves discussions about assigned plays and projects, as appropriate to the topic. It is open to all students but particularly recommended for first-year students and sophomores. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

## THE 141 Acting I: Fundamentals of Acting (4 Credits)

Introduction to physical, vocal and interpretative aspects of performance, with emphasis on creativity, concentration and depth of expression. Enrollment limited to 14. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

## THE 142 Voice for Actors (4 Credits)

An introduction to the study of voice, exploring the connections between thought, feeling and vocalization through exercises that strengthen and enhance an actor's (or speaker's) understanding and command of vocal expression. Enrollment limited to 15. {A}

**Spring**

## THE 153 Play with Light: An Introduction to the Culture of Light (4 Credits)

This course explores the culture of light as an illuminating, form-giving and artistic medium. Students study the physics of light and the history of lighting. The course examines the leap from representation of light in paintings where light is portrayed through imitation, to reality of light as an agent giving meaning in contemporary light art. The course approaches some of the theatre designers who transformed the look of the modern stage and goes beyond theatre to investigate ways in which light continues to capture and spur human imagination in creative fields such as cinematography, architecture and digital graphics. Enrollment limited to 18. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

## THE 154 "Reading" Dress: Archival Study of Clothing (4 Credits)

How do we "read" clothing? How accurate is our interpretation? What clues do we miss or misread, especially in dress from an era unfamiliar to us? What information can we look for to "explain" the significance or meaning of the garment? This course is an introduction to a methodology for the study of dress as material culture, examining physical structure, terminology, technology of production and some of the historical, social and cultural variables shaping- and shaped by- these objects. It is a class using objects from the Smith College Historic Clothing Collection. Each student will study several similar garments, identifying common features as well as distinctions that may reflect different classes, aesthetic choices and industrial influences.. Enrollment limited to 20 students. {H}

**Fall**

## THE 198 Theatre History and Culture: Ancient Greece to English Restoration (4 Credits)

This course surveys the history of theatre, drama and performance from Ancient Greece to the 18th century. The main focus is on the theatres of Europe and their relationship to their respective cultures. Non-Western issues in regards to Asian theatres are also discussed. Lectures and discussions are complemented by video screenings of recent productions of some of the plays under consideration. {A}{H}{L}

**Fall**

## THE 199 Theatre History and Culture: 18th Century to the Present (4 Credits)

This course surveys the history of theatre, drama and performance from the 18th century to the present. The main focus is on the theatres of Europe and the United States and their relationship to their respective cultures. Non-Western issues in regards to African, Australian and South American theaters are also discussed. Lectures and discussions are complemented by video screenings of recent productions of some of the plays under consideration. {A}{H}{L}

**Spring**

## THE 200 Theatre Production (1 Credit)

This is a studio course which gives one credit for participation in a Theatre Department production. Most positions are designed for people with no previous experience. Offerings within the course cover all areas of theatre production, on stage and off, including positions as stage crew, light and sound board operators, dressers, stage managers, design assistants, box office assistants, props charges, electricians or actors. May be taken four times for credit, with a maximum of two credits per semester. There is one general meeting at the beginning of the semester. Attendance is mandatory. Attendance at weekly production meetings may be required for some assignments. S/U only.

**Fall, Spring**

## THE 201 Theatre Production (1 Credit)

Same description as THE 200. There is one general meeting . Attendance is mandatory; attendance at weekly production meetings for some assignments may be required. S/U only.

**Fall, Spring**

## THE 213 American Theatre and Drama (4 Credits)

This course discusses issues relevant to theatre history and practices, as well as dramatic literature, theories and criticism in 18th-, 19th- 20th- and 21st centuries United States of America, including African American, Native American, Hispanic American and Latinx, Asian American, LGBTQ +, the American musical, political, feminist and contemporary theatre and performance. Lectures, discussions and presentations are complemented by video screenings of recent productions of some of the plays under discussion. {A}{H}{L}

**Spring**

## THE 217 Modern European Drama 1870s–1930s (4 Credits)

The plays, theatres and playwrights of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe. A leap from Büchner to Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw, Chekhov, Wedekind and Gorky onwards to the widespread experimentation of the 1920s and earlier avant garde (e.g., Jarry, Artaud, Stein, Witkiewicz, Pirandello, Mayakovsky, Fleisser, early Brecht). Special attention to issues of gender, class, warfare and other personal/political foci. Attendance may be required at selected performances.

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 218 Modern European Drama 1930s–present (4 Credits)**

Pioneering and influential contemporary theatre in Europe from the 1930s to the present. The playwrights to be studied may include later Brecht, Camus, Sartre, Anouilh, Gombrowicz, Carr, Kirkwood, Beckett, Ionesco, Genet, Pinter, Duras, Handke, Fo, Havel, Schimmelpfennig, Page, Mrozek, Loher and Churchill. Special attention to issues of gender, class, warfare and other personal/political foci. Attendance may be required at selected performances. {A}{H}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 220 Colloquium: Asian American Drama (4 Credits)**

In this course, students survey plays written by American writers of East Asian, South Asian and Southeast Asian descent, starting with the first wave of Asian American playwrights in the 1960s to more contemporary work. Students will learn the fundamentals and vocabulary of dramaturgical analysis and employ these skills in class discussion and written assignments. Intersectional identities are emphasized and readings include work by biracial, queer and transgender writers. While the focus is on reading plays, students also explore the socio-historical context of each work via reading assignments that will include critical essays, writings on the history of immigration to the U.S. from Asia and writings on the representation of Asian Americans on stage. Enrollment limited to 18. (E) {A}{L}

**Fall, Variable**

**THE 224 Digital Theatre Workshop (4 Credits)**

Students will produce Shakespeare's Julius Caesar in a digital format that includes live and taped performance, along with elements of design (costume, set, lights, animation), editing on virtual platforms, and music. Working together with directors, design faculty and production staff, students will engage in intensive study of Julius Caesar, collaborate on all aspects of the production, with each student performing a selected role (acting, directing, designing, editing) to form a cohesive company, and develop performance that combines digital presentation and live performance. The interterm intensive course culminates in a short-form version of the play, recorded for broadcast. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 236 Colloquium: Anti-Racist Theatre (4 Credits)**

In this course we look at the practice, the history and the future of theatre as an anti-racist activity. We seek to define and understand the concept of anti-racism and to look at how theatre—through performance, through structure, through training, and in other ways—can be racist or anti-racist. We look most of all at contemporary thinking, writing, organization and making around this topic. Learning together, we seek to explore and imagine how theatre—in professional, educational and other settings—can be part of the work of anti-racism. Prerequisite: One previous course in the Theatre Department. (E) {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242ad Acting II: Acting and Directing Actors for the Camera (4 Credits)**

What is the particular nature of acting for the camera? This course examines film and television production, and develops an acting approach suited for work in film and television. Students act on camera and examine the results of their work. We work with particular emphasis on the building of a performance through the process of the shoot. A limited number of students can, with instructor approval, take the course with an emphasis on directing for the camera. Prerequisite: THE 141 or FMS 280. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242im Topics in Acting II: Improv for Actors (4 Credits)**

In this class, students will learn and build upon the principles and rules of theatrical improvisation. Through theatre games and improvisational experiences, students will work towards freeing themselves physically, vocally, emotionally, and mentally, to stimulate spontaneity, creativity, imagination, self-expression and the collaborative spirit. Prerequisites: one semester of acting or one semester of dance. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242pt Acting II: Physical Theatre (4 Credits)**

This course explores significant points of access to Physical Theatre for actors and directors, including experiential research and practice in the Method of Physical Actions, Viewpoints, Composition, Laban Movement Analysis and Authentic Movement. Additionally, we explore the demands and expressive potentials of physically distinct styles of performance (commedia dell'arte, melodrama, corporeal mime). Prerequisites: one semester of acting or one semester of dance. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242ss Topics in Acting II-Scene Study (4 Credits)**

An in-depth exploration of selected scenes from a range of theatrical works. The course will cover character development and relationships through examination, analysis, and lab based performance exercises. Prerequisite: THE 141. Enrollment limited to 16. (E)

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 242va Acting II: Verse (4 Credits)**

This is a course in performance, focusing on poetic expression and heightened language in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Students research, analyze and compare selected works with particular attention to top unifying themes, rhetorical strategies and historical perspectives, attempting to understand the requisites of performance. The class has a studio component designed to develop skills in textual analysis, physical and vocal expressiveness and theatrical imagination. The course will culminate in a publicly presented production. Prerequisite: THE 141. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Fall, Variable**

**THE 252 Introduction to Set Design (4 Credits)**

The course develops overall design skills for designing sets for the theatre. After reading assigned plays, students learn to develop their designs by concentrating on character analysis and visualizing the action of the play. Visual research, sketches, basic drafting skills and model building are some of the areas in which students learn to develop their ideas. This course also emphasizes the importance of collaborating with every member of the creative team. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**THE 253 Introduction to Lighting Design (4 Credits)**

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of stage lighting design. Over the semester, the course cultivates sensitivity towards the expressiveness of light and the relationship between light, form and space, eventually learning to manipulate light to articulate ideas. Through script analyses and design projects, students learn to understand the power of light in enhancing stage presentations, acquire skills in illuminating the drama and apply such skills to collaboration with the production team at large. Through hands-on exercises in the lab and in the theatres, students also become familiar with the mechanical aspects of lighting: instrumentation, control systems and safe electrical practice. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Spring**

**THE 254 Intro to Costume Design (4 Credits)**

The elements of line, texture and color, and their application to design and character delineation. Research of clothing styles of various cultures and eras. Enrollment limited to 15. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 261 Writing for the Theatre I (4 Credits)**

The means and methods of the playwright and the writer for television and the cinema. Analysis of the structure and dialogue of a few selected plays. Weekly and biweekly exercises in writing for various media. Goal for beginning playwrights: to draft a one-act play by the end of the semester. Plays by students are considered for staging. Writing sample and instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 262 Writing for the Theatre II (4 Credits)**

Intermediate and advanced script projects. Prerequisite: THE 261. Writing sample and instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 312ld Topics in Masters and Movements in Performance: Contemporary Latine Drama (4 Credits)**

From Chavez Ravine in LA to a Brechtian telenovela set in Mexico, Contemporary Latine Drama explores Latine stories as told through the lens of dramatic performance. Readings and discussions will engage with different forms of theatre; from standard plays and one-person shows to a radio play and more. This course will cover a variety of subject matter from recent history up to the present. Spotlit writers include: Karen Zacarías, Octavio Solís, Isaac Gomez, Culture Clash, María Irene Fornés, Tanya Saracho, Luis Alfaro, Eduardo Machado, y más. (E) {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 312vd Topics in Masters and Movements: Performance-Verbatim Documentary Theatre (4 Credits)**

This course explores—through reading, viewing and making—theatre created using documentary sources, including interviews, found texts, historical documents and other sources. Students explore the dramatic, social and political implications of this work, while considering notions of authenticity and authority derived from direct testimony, documentary sources and community involvement. Students also explore the tension between maintaining truth and creating dramatic shape, theatricality and audience engagement. Readings and viewings will include the work of theatre-makers such as Anna Devere Smith, Moises Kaufman and many others. Students in the course also create original work. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 312ya Topics in Masters and Movements in Performance: Theatre for Young Audiences (4 Credits)**

In this class, students will work with a variety of teaching styles focused on introducing elementary and middle school-aged children to the creative and collaborative process of theater. Through games, improvisation and the fundamentals of theatrical storytelling, classmates will also have the opportunity to adapt, design, rehearse and perform an original script appropriate for elementary through high school-aged students. Diversity, inclusion and Equity will be incorporated as students navigate the ways in which these principles become part of both a storytelling curriculum and a theatrical setting. Enrollment limited to 16. Prerequisite: Any course in Theatre or Education. (E) {A}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 313ts Masters and Movements in Drama: Contemporary Dramatizations of Teacher-Student Dynamics (4 Credits)**

Educational dynamics in teacher/student relationships as dramatized on stage from the mid-20th century to the present. Discussions of race, gender, social class and cultural differences constitute central points of exploration and intersection. Plays by BIPOC playwrights occupy a significant portion of the syllabus. e.g. Marie-Irene Fornes, Adrienne Kennedy, Dominique Morisseau, Anna Devere Smith, Eleanor Burgess, Nilaja Sun, Idris Goodwin and Julia Cho. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**THE 316 Contemporary Canadian Drama (4 Credits)**

Michel Tremblay and contemporary Canadian playwrights. Emphasis on plays by and about women, within the context of political and personal issues of gender, class, race, sexuality and cultural identity in English Canadian and French Canadian and Native Canadian drama of the past five decades. Other playwrights explored are Judith Thompson, George Walker, Erika Ritter, David French, Rene Daniel DuBois, Margaret Hollingworth, Anne-Marie McDonald, Sally Clark, Tomson Highway, Hannah Moscovitch and Sharon Pollock. {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 344 Directing I (4 Credits)**

This course focuses upon interpretative approaches to dramatic texts and how they may be realized and animated through characterization, composition, movement, rhythm and style. Prerequisites: THE 141 or FMS 280. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Spring**

**THE 352 Set Design II (4 Credits)**

This course looks at the advanced challenges when designing sets for ballet, music theatre and opera. What must the set designer consider when live music is added to each of these performing arts? Students have the opportunity to pick which ballet, music theatre and opera they want to design for from a list of productions provided by the instructor. The syllabus can also be customized to address a specific interest of a student with the instructor's permission. The objective of this course is to build a portfolio of set designs showing the specific needs in all of the performing arts. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 353 Lighting Design II (4 Credits)**

This course further explores light as a tool to illuminate, sculpt and articulate ideas and their execution on and off stage. We examine various contemporary approaches to designing for a diverse range of performing arts such as drama, dance, concert and opera. We also probe light as an expressive medium in creative realms beyond theatrical venues, and investigate its role in cinematography, digital animation, architecture, interior design, industrial design, etc. Students design lighting for the annual Spring Dance Concert and develop research and creative projects under the instructor's individual guidance. Interdisciplinary projects are strongly encouraged. Can be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: THE 253. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}  
**Spring**

**THE 354 Costume Design II (4 Credits)**

The integration of the design elements of line, texture, color, gesture and movement into unified production styles. Further study of the history of clothing, movement in costume, construction techniques and rendering. Production work may be required outside of the class meeting time. Prerequisites: THE 254. Instructor permission required. {A}  
**Spring**

**THE 360 Production Design for Film (4 Credits)**

Filmmaking is storytelling. This story can be told by the actors or by its visuals. Every film employs a production designer who, with the director and cinematographer, is in charge of the visual design of the film. In this class we learn how a production designer breaks down a script to determine which scenes should be shot on location and which should be built as sets. Each student makes design choices for the entire script. Whether picking out locations or creating sets to be shot on a soundstage, this class examines what makes one design choice better than another. Students also learn the basic skills to communicate their designs through storyboards, photo research and drafting. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}  
**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 361 Screenwriting I (4 Credits)**

The means and methods of the writer for television and the cinema. Analysis of the structure and dialogue of a few selected films. Prerequisite: THE 261 or THE 262 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to 12. Writing sample required. {A}  
**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 362 Screenwriting II (4 Credits)**

Intermediate and advanced script projects. Prerequisite: THE 361. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}  
**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 400 Special Studies (1-4 Credits)**

For qualified juniors and seniors. Admission by permission of the instructor and the chair of the department.  
**Fall, Spring**

**THE 430D Honors Project (4 Credits)**

This is a full-year course.  
**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 431 Honors Project (8 Credits)**

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**THE 432D Honors Project (6-12 Credits)**

This is a full-year course. Please consult the director of honors or the departmental website for specific requirements and application procedures.  
**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**THE 512 Advanced Studies in Acting, Speech and Movement (4 Credits)**

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 515 Advanced Studies in Dramatic Literature, History, Criticism and Playwriting (4 Credits)**

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 580 Special Studies (4 Credits)**

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 590 Research and Thesis Production Project (4 Credits)**

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**THE 590D Research and Thesis Production Project (4 Credits)**

This is a full-year course.  
**Fall, Spring, Annually**