The Theatre and Drama MFA program offers specialized preparation for careers in professional theatre. The foundation of MFA acting area courses offers a strong base in voice, speech, movement, and acting styles. The core of this specialization focuses on classical text-based acting and Stanislavski/Michael Chekhov techniques balanced with emerging theories and methodologies of actor training. Curricular interests in Asian stage discipline, multicultural theatre, theatre for youth provide additional opportunities for students to enhance their performance study. In addition to required core classes, electives provide students the ability to explore individual areas of interest in theatre and performance. Directing courses emphasize an advanced understanding of the elements of play analysis, composition, and conceptualization. By combining studio work, production, observation, and classroom studies, the acting specialization encourages the development of an individual artistic voice in both acting and directing.

The MFA specialization in scene design, costume design, lighting design, or theatre technology strives for a balance of professional training and the practical application of skills through numerous collaborative experiences, both onstage and in the classroom. Students in all four disciplines are encouraged to be creative problem solvers through both an appreciation of the history of their craft and a curiosity about the contemporary world of theatre, design, and the application of new technologies. Numerous opportunities for realized work, studio collaborations and individualized mentoring affords the MFA student the opportunity to grow and develop as an articulate and collaborative theatre artist.

Funding opportunities for graduate work vary, but tend to be highly competitive. Please contact the department for more information on student financial support.

**Requirements**

**Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress**

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

**Master of Fine Arts Degree**

**MFA**

**Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement**

75 credits

**Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement**

33 credits

**Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement**

At least 50% of credits must be in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

**Prior Coursework Requirements: Graduate Work from Other Institutions**

With program approval, students may count no more than 18 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions.

**Prior Coursework Requirements: UW–Madison Undergraduate**

With program approval, students may count up to 7 credits numbered 300 or above.

**Prior Coursework Requirements: UW–Madison University Special**

With program approval, students may count up to 15 credits numbered 700 or above.

**Credits per Term Allowed**

15 credits

**Program-Specific Courses Required**

Required courses vary by subdiscipline.

**Overall Graduate GPA Requirement**

3.00 GPA required

**Other Grade Requirements**

No other specific grade requirements.

**Probation Policy**

Each of the MFA Specializations in Acting, Costume Design, Lighting Design, Scene Design, and Theatre Technology conducts separate reviews of students each semester by portfolio and/or oral examination. Students may be placed on probation if program faculty determines that they are not meeting the expectations of their specific degree requirements.

**Advisor / Committee**

A thesis or final creative project must be prepared under the direction and guidance of a major professor.

Committee consists of four members—advisor and three other committee members.

**Assessments and Examinations**

Design and Technology students must pass two candidacy portfolio examinations in the first year of residency. They must pass two comprehensive-progress, portfolio examinations in both the second and third years of residency.

Acting candidates are required to pass an oral review of their work and study at the end of each semester.

A research or creative thesis is required for Design and Technology candidates.
Acting candidates must complete a final creative/research project.

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

The MFA Specialization in Acting follows a three-year cycle with a sequential curriculum. Only in exceptional circumstances the A/D faculty may approve a variance in this time frame.

The MFA Specializations in Costume Design, Lighting Design, Scene Design, and Theatre Technology generally follow a three-year timeline and variations from this must be approved by the degree program head.

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

No language requirements.

**ADMISSIONS**

The department requires a clear statement of purpose outlining plans for graduate study. The MFA program requires evidence of creative accomplishment; applicants must request detailed application instructions from the department.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Exhibit exceptional skill and professional competence in theatre practice exemplified by a knowledge and achievement signified by a large body of work.
- Applies advanced analytical levels of inquiry and investigation in the creation, performance, production, or communication of theatre practice.
- Possesses a broad knowledge of theatre literature as well as visual and cultural history and applies that knowledge to the production process.
- Demonstrates the requisite artistic and technical skills to meet professional standards.
- Formulates ideas, concepts, designs, performances and/or techniques that advance the field.
- Articulates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

- Recognizes and applies principles of ethical and professional conduct.
- Collaborates effectively, creatively, and generously through respect for the contributions of others.

**PEOPLE**

**Faculty:** Professors Archbold (chair), Boyette, Furumoto, Saldivar, Sims; Associate Professors Brassard, Peterson; Assistant Professors Fan, Lisowski