Theatre Arts Department
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Degree Awarded
M.F.A. in Dramaturgy
Theatre Arts Department

The Department of Theatre Arts offers two graduate programs, a 30-credit Master of Arts in Theatre and a 60-credit Master of Fine Arts in Dramaturgy. The M.F.A. and M.A. programs at Stony Brook University foster practical and theatrical approaches to the creation of new and innovative work for the theatre through an interdisciplinary, collaborative curriculum encompassing playwriting, directing, emerging forms, and innovative technologies. Our program offers graduate students the opportunity to produce their own work, serve as dramaturgs for department productions, and participate in the Stony Brook New Play Festival. In the third-year of the M.F.A. professional training program, our graduate students not only work in close contact with our faculty but undertake internships with professional theatres. Among the world class faculty are directors, actors, playwrights, theorists, and dramaturgs, all of whom work closely with graduate students. Finally, we have recently developed an Art and Technology Laboratory in conjunction with the departments of Music and Art. Our graduates can get training in computer graphics, interactive media studies, and digital performance.

The goals of the M.A. program are (1) to study the dramatic tradition and the history of the performing arts, (2) to develop an understanding of the vital relationship between theatre theory and onstage practice, and (3) to prepare students qualified to matriculate in programs of study at the M.F.A. or Ph.D. level.

The M.F.A. program of the Department of Theatre Arts focuses on the work of the dramaturg, sometimes called the literary manager. In the United States and throughout the world, the dramaturg takes a vital part in the direction of professional theatre. He or she is responsible for advising on choice of repertoire, choosing or commissioning translations of foreign plays, collaborating with directors and dramatists in research of many kinds, and making public statements about policy and productions. The dramaturg must be well informed in historical, critical, and comparative studies, and sensitive to every aspect of theatre practice. Students are also introduced to the art of devising new work in collaboration with faculty and students from Art and Music. In a three-year M.F.A. professional training program, our graduate students work in close contact with our faculty and with professional theatres. Training in dramaturgy is useful even to students who later decide to pursue other careers in the theatre or other media, or in teaching at the university level. Professional dramaturgs often become directors, producers, administrators, drama critics, teachers, or playwrights, and many combine two or three different careers. Therefore, the Stony Brook program offers opportunities for students with a wide range of interests in theatre practice and dramatic criticism to pursue individual development within a professional orientation. As this program is built on the bond between theory and practice that we believe must lie at the heart of dramaturgical training, the program culminates in the professional internship and the M.F.A. project.

Interested students should request information from the department and find application information at http://www.grad.sunysb.edu/admissions/app_info.shtml. Students are encouraged to apply as early as possible, especially if they plan to apply for financial aid.

Admission to the M.F.A. Program in Dramaturgy

This M.F.A. program is intensive, and admission to it is highly selective. An on-campus interview is required for all students. For admission, the following, in addition to the minimum Graduate School requirements, are normally required:

A. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university.
B. Advanced undergraduate courses in theatre history, dramatic literature, and/or theatre practice.
C. Undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0.
D. Three letters of recommendation.
E. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores.
F. Supporting materials must include a sample of the applicant’s writing as well as other materials such as scripts, essays, publications, portfolio, etc. (For the return of this work sample, the applicant must include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the completed application.)
G. Acceptance by both the Department of Theatre Arts and the Graduate School.
H. Applicants who already hold an M.A. in Theatre Arts from another institution may be admitted provisionally to the second year of the M.F.A. program. Such students are required to fulfill M.F.A. first-year course requirements not taken as part of their M.A. training elsewhere.
I. If a student accepted into the M.F.A. program wishes to offer, either for credit toward the degree or for exemption from enrollment in courses required by Stony Brook, analogous courses taken at another university, transcripts and other supporting material must be presented for...
consideration by the graduate program director before the end of the student’s first semester in the program (see Transfer of Credit from Other Universities).

J. If so indicated on the application, an applicant for the M.F.A. program in dramaturgy can also be considered for admission to the one-year (30-credit) M.A. program in theatre arts, which runs parallel to the first year of the M.F.A. If such an applicant is admitted instead to the M.A. program, he or she may then be considered, upon successful completion of the M.A., for admission to the second year of the M.F.A. program.

K. Students in the M.F.A. program are evaluated at the end of each year of study before permission is granted to continue. If a student completing his or her first year of study is not given permission to continue, he or she may instead be redesignated as a candidate for an M.A. degree. He or she must then fulfill all requirements for that 30-credit degree.

Facilities of Theatre Arts Department

The Theatre Arts department is located in the Staller Center for the Arts, which houses a 1,106-seat proscenium stage and three black box theatres. Additional theatre spaces are also available on campus. A newly acquired studio/theatre space in the basement of the Staller Center is the home of the Graduate Student Cabaret. This flexible, intimate, 50-seat performance space can also be used as a studio/classroom. The Cabaret serves M.F.A. Dramaturgy students as a production space and theatrical laboratory. The department has a Laboratory for Technology in the Arts and an Electronic Classroom.

The University Library is adjacent to the Staller Center and holds in excess of 27,000 volumes related to the study of theatre arts. Special collections of play texts, including translations, and theatre archives are being developed continually. Manhattan is an easy commute by train, bus, or car, and its many theatres, exhibitions, archives, and libraries (most notably the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center) are easily accessible.

Requirements for the M.F.A. Degree in Dramaturgy

In addition to the minimum Graduate School requirements, the following are required:

A. Courses
Courses required for the degree are:

THR 500 Introduction to Graduate Studies
THR 505 Dramaturgy I
THR 506 Dramaturgy II
THR 510 and THR 511 Western Theatre History and Far Eastern Theatre and Drama
THR 520 and THR 521 Western Dramatic Literature and South and Southeast Asian Theatre and Drama
THR 535 Theories of Theatre
THR 550 Teaching Practicum
THR 590 Thesis
THR 635 Theories of Performance
THR 680 Dramaturgy Workshop
THR 690 M.F.A. Internship
THR 691 M.F.A. Project

Recommended courses are:

THR 507 Performance Dramaturgy
THR 523 Theatre in New York
THR 560 Acting: Theory and Practice
THR 570 Directing: Theory and Practice
THR 640 Scenography and New Media
THR 650 Playwriting Workshop
THR 660 Acting Workshop
In addition, students select from a range of courses in consultation with the graduate program director and a faculty advisor. Students must seek a balance between theoretical and practical coursework, based on prior background and experience. A minimum of 60 credits is required for graduation.

B. Examination
Successful completion of the M.F.A. exam is required, normally at the end of the second semester of full-time residency.

C. Projects
Successful completion of the following projects is required:

THR 680 Dramaturgy Workshop (6 credits)
THR 690 Internship (3 credits)
THR 691 M.F.A. Project (3 credits)

D. Foreign Language
Proficiency in a foreign language must be demonstrated usually through the translation of play.

E. Teaching Experience
Teaching for at least one semester at the University level is required of all graduate students.

F. Residence Requirement
This program is normally completed in three years of full-time residency. One semester of the last year is spent in a professional internship program.

G. Time Limitation
The M.F.A. program is normally completed in three years. The time limit for completion of the M.F.A. program, given unusual circumstances, is six years.

H. Master’s Thesis
A master’s thesis must be successfully completed under the direction of a faculty advisor.

University Requirements
The granting of master’s degree is based upon the completion of any special departmental requirements in addition to the items listed below:

A. Courses and Grade Point Average
A student must achieve a 3.0 overall grade point average for a minimum of 30 credits of graduate work to receive the M.A. degree and 60 credits for the M.F.A. degree.

At the discretion of the department, a student who retakes a course for which an F grade was received may replace the F grade with the new grade in the G.P.A. calculation. The student may use this option for one F grade only.

B. Teaching
At least one semester of supervised teaching experience is required except for those programs in which teaching is not germane to the degree objectives.

C. Registration
Degree candidates must be registered in the program granting their degree for at least one credit in the semester in which the diploma is awarded.

Faculty of Theatre Arts Department

Associate Professors
Baldwin, Phillip, M.F.A., 1987, Yale University: Scene design; interactive media; cultural studies.
Lutterbie, John, Ph.D., 1983, University of Washington: Theatre history; performance theory and criticism; dramaturgy; directing.
Mangano, Nick, Chairperson. Columbia University: Directing.

Lecturers
Marsh, Steve, M.F.A., 2000, Stony Brook University, Dramaturgy.
Morin, Margaret, M.F.A., 2001, Stony Brook University: Dramaturgy, costume/technical theatre,
Adjunct Faculty
Gibson, Julia, M.F.A., 1984, New York University: Acting

Faculty Members from Participating Departments
Kim, Theresa, Professor Emeritus, Ph.D., 1988, New York University: Music, performance, composition

Number of teaching, graduate, and research assistants, fall 2010: 13

1) Recipient of the State University Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1991
2) Department of English

NOTE: The course descriptions for this program can be found in the corresponding program PDF or at COURSE SEARCH.