Theatre Arts

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Degree Awarded
M.F.A. in Dramaturgy, M.A. in Theatre, Accelerated B.A./M.A. in Theatre Arts

Description of Theatre Arts

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.A. Program in Theatre Arts

For admission to the M.A. program in Theatre Arts, 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 returned work, 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. If a student accepted into the M.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, he or she must present transcripts and other supporting materials for consideration by the graduate program director before the end of his or her first semester in the program (see Transfer of Credit from Other Universities).

Theatre Arts Facilities
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.A. Degree in Theatre

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 510 and THR 521 Western Theatre History and South and Southeast Asian Theatre and Drama or

THR 511 and THR 520 Far Eastern Theatre and Drama and Western Dramatic Literature

THR 535 Theories of Theatre or

THR 635 Theories of Performance

THR 550 Teaching Practicum

THR 590 M.A. Thesis (6 Credits)

In addition, students select from among a range of courses in consultation with the graduate program director and a faculty advisor. A minimum of 30 credits is required for graduation.

B. Examination

Successful completion of the M.A. exam is required, normally at the end of the second semester of full-time residence.

C. Foreign Language

Proficiency in a foreign language must be demonstrated.

D. Teaching Experience

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

E. Master’s Thesis

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

F. Residency Requirement

This program is normally completed in one to two years of full-time residency. Students may be enrolled in the M.A. program on a full-time or part-time basis.

G. Time Limitations

Depending on the student’s first-time, matriculated enrollment in the Graduate School, full-time students must complete all degree requirements within three years, part-time students in five years.

Theatre Art Faculty

Associate Professors

Baldwin, Phillip, M.F.A., 1987, Yale University: Scene design; interactive media; cultural studies.

Lutterbie, John, Director of Graduate Studies, Ph.D., 1983, University of Washington, Theatre history: performance theory and criticism; dramaturgy; directing.


Mayo, Deborah, Director of Undergraduate Studies, M.F.A., 1973, Yale School of Drama: Acting.


Lecturers

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
Prusslin, Norman L., Director of Media Director, B.A., 1973, University at Stony Brook: Broadcast management.

Faculty Members from Participating Departments
Levy, Jonathan, Distinguished Teaching Professor.1 Ph.D., 1966, Columbia University: Playwrighting; theatre for children; dramatic criticism; Italian Renaissance drama.
Rosen, Carol.2 Ph.D., 1975, Columbia University: Dramatic theory and criticism; dramaturgy; comparative modern drama.
Kim, Theresa, Professor Emeritus, Ph.D., 1988, New York University: Music, performance, composition

Number of teaching and graduate 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.