

Curriculum

Ph. D. in Theatre & Performance Research

The Ph.D. in Theatre & Performance Research is designed as a five-year program (10 semesters). It provides students with foundational coursework as well as opportunities to devise individual research trajectories and projects. Students are encouraged to pursue interdisciplinary research and to work at the intersections of theatre and performance practice and scholarship.

Coursework:

Required Core (18 units)

- Research and Bibliography
- Methods of Theatre Criticism
- Historiography
- Performance Theory
- Race, Gender, Performance
- Theatre Pedagogy, Curriculum, and Professional Development

The required core provides students with a strong background in methods and theories of theatre and performance analysis; the practice of criticism; and the writing of history. The core also familiarizes students with professionalization in and beyond the field of Theatre and Performance Research. This allows students to engage with and analyze a wide range of performances, texts, objects of critique, activist work, archives, and historical practices. This foundational work on critical theory demonstrates that political and ethical engagement is integral to work in an expanded field of theatre and performance research.

Minimum two courses in History (6 units)

- Classical and Medieval Theatre History
- Early Modern Theatre History
- Performance in the Historical Avant-garde
- U.S. Theatre History
- History of African American Theatre and Performance
- History of Acting and Directing
- Musical Theatre History
- Special topics in History

Minimum two courses in Literature (6 units)

- British Theatre
- Continental European Theatre
- Documentary Theatre
- Contemporary US American Theatre
- Women in U.S. Theatre
- The Anti-canon
- Sex and Drama
- African Theatre and Performance
- Caribbean Theatre and Performance
- Performance in/from the Global South
- Special topics in Literature

Minimum two courses from Practices & Practical Methodologies (6 units)

- Dramaturgy
- Practice-based Research
- Directing
- Performance Ethnography
- Projects in Performance Research (may be taken twice)
- Students may also engage in 3 units of directed independent production work – including directing, dramaturgy, design, stage management, etc.

The equal attention given to these three areas – History, Literature, and Practices & Practical Methodologies – ensures graduates are conversant in theatre history, and that they may draw from a wide range of theatre and performance literatures, forms, and practices across historical periods and geographies. The program also provides training and experience in the practices of theatre production and performance research. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the School of Theatre’s top-ranked theatre production program and its opportunities for graduates to develop practical techniques in theatre production, build their mentoring and artistic skills, and use performance practice itself as a basis for research.

Minimum one course in Technical Theatre Methods and Practice (3 units)

- Stage Management
- Lighting Design
- Costume Design
- Technical Production
- Production Design
- Theatre Management

The required course in Technical Theatre Methods and Practice facilitates collaboration between PhD students and the production work of the School of Theatre. This course emphasizes the

practical knowledge of theatre production, which supplements students' academic scholarship and provides working experience with the languages of theatrical production.

Additional electives outside the School of Theatre (6 units)

Electives outside the School of Theatre offer students the opportunity to pursue interests in complementary disciplines, network with world-renowned faculty in other departments, and hone skills that will take them into a wide array of positions beyond the academy. Examples include courses in media studies, popular entertainment, literature, history, grant-writing, religion, library science, dance dramaturgy, entrepreneurship, human rights, and more.

Beyond Coursework:

Comprehensive Exams (9 units)

Comprehensive exams are fully integrated into the curriculum wherein they facilitate the development of an original research proposal and a publishable essay. As part of their comprehensive exams, students will practice skills in oral presentation and pursue intellectual inquiry in their own specializations. In concert with program coursework, these mentored exams prepare students to write a dissertation and to succeed in and beyond the degree.

At end of their first year:

- Students present a revision of a paper written in their first year. The full faculty will offer individualized feedback to each student.
- Students propose a second-year project to be advised by a faculty member.

During year two:

- Students work with their faculty advisor to develop their research project.
- Students submit their first draft to the full faculty for feedback.
- Students present their revised work at a School of Theatre colloquium.

During year three:

- Students prepare two reading lists for oral examination in Theory and History.
- Students select their reading topics and advisors based on their own research interests.

Upon passage of these exams, students are admitted to doctoral candidacy and may begin their dissertation research.

Total: 54 units (without dissertation)

Additional Requirements

- Students must demonstrate reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.
- Students must complete an assignment in production work within the School of Theatre.
- Students must complete 24 hours of dissertation research.