

Theatre Arts Graduate Handbook 2023-24

Important Department Telephone Numbers

(see “Faculty and Staff” for individual numbers)

Area code for all University phone numbers: (502)

Prefix for all University phone numbers: 852-

Department of Theatre Arts: 852-7682

Fax: 852-7235

Theatre Arts Box Office: 852-6814

The Playhouse: 852-7926

Costume Shop: 852-8449

Public Safety: 852-6111

University Information: 852-5555

UofL Acronyms

- A&S: College of Arts and Sciences
- DGS: Director of Graduate Studies
- GCAAT: Graduate Certificate in African American Theatre
- GNAS: Graduate Network of Arts and Sciences
- GSC: Graduate Student Council of the Graduate School
- PLAN: Professional Development, Life Skills, Academic Development, and Networking
- TA: Theatre Arts

Introduction

Department of Theatre Arts Overview

The Department encompasses drama, dramatic performance, and production. It includes the history of theatre, all forms of theatrical literature, and dramatic, performance, and cultural theory. Producing educated artists means training students in the fine art of theatre—voice, movement, scene study, design—and also giving students knowledge of theatre as a liberal art. The Department exposes students to the richness and diversity of national and international theatre in both concept and practice.

In 2015, the Theatre Arts Department adopted the following mission statement:

Our mission is to create Art in Action: theatre that is nationally recognized as engaged and inclusive, rigorous and enjoyable, thoughtful and transformative. Theatre Arts at UofL challenges students to become critical thinkers who take pleasure connecting with local, national, and global communities through live performance. Graduates explore the world with the courage, discipline, research and practical skills required of theatre artists—imagination, empathy, critical analysis, craftsmanship,

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problem solving, social awareness and collaboration.

The Department disseminates, preserves, and develops knowledge. This knowledge includes the ability to understand and appreciate the theatre arts and the vision and skill to create art that enhances the human condition. We also expose local communities to theatrical productions of high artistic merit. The Department of Theatre Arts is dedicated to creating and maintaining a community that recognizes and respects the unique character and achievements of all peoples. The Department is committed to equity and parity in access, representation, and resources. In class work, research, and performance we encourage and support a diversity of perspectives, opinions, and experiences.

A central component of the Department is the African American Theatre Program (AATP). The AATP was founded in 1993 to develop theatre artists knowledgeable of and trained in the traditions of Black theatre and able to contribute to the global arts movement. The AATP includes two Mainstage productions annually, as well as a total of nine courses for graduate and undergraduate students. Subjects include theatre history, dramatic literature, black performance theory, performance, and theatre practicum. All Theatre Arts students study African American theatre while pursuing their degree, whether they are a graduate or undergraduate student or a Theatre Arts major or minor. The AATP has a national and international reputation based on its engagement in the community and around the world.

A Graduate Certificate in African American Theatre (GCAAT) began in 2002. It is the country's only Graduate Certificate program in African American Theatre. The GCAAT requires 5 courses (15 credits) and can be completed in conjunction with the MFA in Performance.

In 2017, the Department adopted the following mission for our MFA in Performance:

Dedicated to Art in Action and offering the only Graduate Certificate in African American Theatre in the United States, the MFA in Performance program offers a three-prong approach. We train actors to act, teach, and make theatre that resonates locally, nationally, and internationally. Our students push boundaries of thinking and challenge conventions of theatre and society through exploration of classical, contemporary, and global dramatic forms. Marrying theory, practice, and engaged outreach, we encourage the application of research, creativity, and sustainability in embodied, socially-conscious performance.

The Department of Theatre Arts is part of the College of Arts and Sciences, whose essential goals include: 1) that all students undertake research so that they experience the excitement of new knowledge and change; 2) that all students are exposed to major ethical dilemmas they will face in the world; and 3) that all students look at the world through the eyes of someone different from themselves. In Theatre Arts classrooms and rehearsal rooms, we engage these lofty goals daily.

Department History

Theatre/Speech activity began on the Belknap campus in 1925 when the University hired Boyd Martin (theatre critic for *The Courier-Journal*) to found a Little Theatre on campus and to teach speech and drama classes, which were housed in the English Department. They remained there until 1970, when the new Department of Theatre Arts and Speech was spun off from the English Department. Later, Speech evolved into the Department of Communication. On April 1, 2005, the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) accredited the Theatre Arts Department.

Section I: Program Requirements and Procedures

Graduate Advising

Following admission to the program, each student is assigned a Major Advisor in the Department. Later, if a student so chooses, they may request to change their Major Advisor through submission of a memo of agreement between the student, the former advisor, and the new advisor. This is not uncommon. A standard advisor change memo of agreement is available in the main Department office.

Should the Major Advisor go on sabbatical or parental leave, the student should ask another faculty member to serve in that role.

The Major Advisor guides the advisee as to which classes to enroll in per semester, collates faculty and staff assessments of their advisees, and each semester provides their advisees with these written assessments. A Major Advisor also approves their advisee's Community Service Project. (See *Note on TA 654 Community Service in the Arts*)

Students who are pursuing the GCAAT should also consult the Director of Graduate Studies and Head of the AATP as to which classes to enroll in per semester.

The Department Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies are also de facto advisors for all MFA students.

Scheduled Assessments

After the middle of each term, first year MFA students and any second or third year MFA student on probation receives an informal review of their progress in all areas up to the midterm. This encourages each first year or probationary graduate student to improve upon suggested areas and/or meet with concerned professors and/or supervisors. If these concerns are not addressed, lack of follow-up could result in probation or, if on probation, dismissal from the program.

One meeting between each graduate student and the student's Major Advisor is scheduled at the end of each semester. It occurs after the end of classes, after the full faculty discussion of graduate students. The Major Advisor will meet with each graduate student to review performance and progress in each of the student's activities (e.g. artistic projects, academic performance, program of studies, assistantship duties).

Graduating third year MFA students are required to meet with their Major Advisor at the end of their final semester in the program.

Graduating third year MFA students receive an exit survey from the DGS towards the end of the Spring semester. They are required to fill out and submit the exit survey to the DGS before graduation.

Further information regarding assessments can be found in the Handbook under *Semester Evaluation* and *Academic/Assistantship Evaluation*. The MFA program rubrics located at the end of the Handbook detail the evaluative standards by which students are assessed.

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Academic Requirements for Graduate Students

The GRE is NOT required for the MFA in Performance.

General Requirements

- A. Six semesters in residence (Internships may be substituted with the permission of the student's Graduate Advisor. Internship opportunities are considered on a case by case basis.)
- B. 72 graduate hours;
- C. Successful completion of all courses on the plan of study with an overall grade point average of 3.0. Only 6 credit hours of "C" will generally be counted towards a degree. Approval of the Dean of the Graduate School must be secured to count additional hours with any grade of "C" in any required course. In no case may more than nine hours of "C" be used to fulfill degree requirements;
- D. Creative work of high quality according to program requirements. This must include a performance related to the MFA Candidate's written thesis during their final year of the program. (See Monograph and Thesis Defense)
- E. A written thesis (i.e. monograph). (See *Monograph* and *Thesis Defense*)

Performance Requirements

MFA students making satisfactory progress towards the degree must:

- A. Audition for **all** Mainstage productions each semester until cast and perform as cast in the first two years of study.
- B. Rehearse and perform at least one role each of five semesters of their residency. This requirement is usually fulfilled by performance in a Mainstage production. A Studio Theatre production, self-initiated performance project, or off-campus production may fulfill this requirement contingent upon the permission of: the student's Advisor; the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee (GRRCC); and the Department Chair.

A student interested in a self-initiated performance project will submit a 1-2 page formal proposal to their Advisor and the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee. The Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee will then collectively make a recommendation to the Department Chair as to whether the proposed project qualifies as a viable alternative to performing a role in a Mainstage production. The Chair will make the final decision. The 1-2 page proposal should include the following information: an identified director for the project; an identified performance space; a rehearsal schedule; and a reason for doing the project as it relates to the student's artistic and academic interests. In their course of study, students will be permitted to do up to two approved, self-initiated performance projects, and no more than one in their first year in the program.

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For the 6th semester, which is usually the semester in the third year in which a student is not doing a thesis performance, a student may opt to take on a non-acting role in a production, such as: stage manager; assistant director; dramaturg; coach, etc. For non-performance options, students must submit a 1-2 page proposal in advance of the production to their Advisor and obtain approval from their Advisor; the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee; and the Department Chair. (See *Performance Project Requirements*.)

C. Perform a thesis role in the final year of study. This requirement is usually fulfilled by performance in a Mainstage production

A thesis performance may be a project that is not a performance in a UofL Mainstage production pending approval from: the student's Advisor; the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee; and the Department Chair. Such projects must be performance-driven, with the understanding that performance is process-orientated and not necessarily product-orientated. For guidelines regarding the submission of a 1-2 page proposal for such a thesis performance project, refer to "B," "Performance Requirements" on page 4 of the *Handbook*.

In the Spring semester, second year MFA students are expected to email their thesis role preferences to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair two weeks after the production season for the following year has been announced. The email from the second year MFA students should include the following information: the role(s) in the play(s) to be produced in the upcoming season that they are interested in pursuing for their thesis performance role; and a 2-3 sentence statement articulating why they are interested in that role(s). While the Department cannot guarantee students will be cast in accordance with their stated preferences, faculty want to know which roles students are most interested in and what is fueling their artistic pursuits.

In addition to providing this information in the Spring semester of their second year of study, MFA students are encouraged to speak with the faculty on a regular basis. Training and growth as a theatre artist are enhanced when students take time outside of classes and rehearsals to communicate with as many faculty members as possible.

Satisfactory Progress

Students must make satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree requirements. Satisfactory progress is defined as maintaining:

- A. A cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0, in accordance with requirements of the Graduate School; if the average falls below 3.0, it must be raised to 3.0 by the end of the following semester;
- B. Grades of at least B- in all courses required for completion of the MFA;
- C. A record of approved creative work, as evaluated by the program faculty;
- D. A record demonstrating that they are effective collaborators who observe professional standards, protocols, and ethics appropriate to their discipline.

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E.Satisfactory competition of all assistantship duties.

Students failing to make satisfactory progress at any point in the semester are placed on probation and so notified by the Chair in writing. Depending on the circumstances, a probationary student may be given until the middle or the end of the current semester or until the end of the following semester to resolve the outstanding issues. Circumstances may also merit immediate dismissal from the program.

Assessment of Auditions, Performance, and Professionalism

Students' auditions are assessed on: preparation; introduction; demonstration of acting technique; tempo and rhythm; movement, voice, and clarity; and improvement.

Students' performance work is assessed on: preparation; professionalism; demonstration of acting technique; tempo and rhythm; movement, voice, and clarity; and improvement.

Students' professionalism is assessed on: time management; work habits; reception and application of constructive criticism; demeanor, and behavior that is consistent with the Department's commitment to inclusion, equity, and anti-racism.

For further details, refer to the MFA Audition and Performance Rubrics provided at the end of the *Handbook*.

Program of Study

Every student's program is composed of two elements: (a) course work; and (b) performance projects. Each student must successfully complete all work in these categories.

With the permission of the student's Advisor, the Graduate Curriculum, Retention, and Recruitment Committee, and the Department Chair, the course of study may vary slightly from the normal curriculum to address a student's specific needs, strengths, weaknesses, or interests.

Students pursuing the MFA must complete 72 semester hours of graduate work. The three-year curriculum consists of the following courses:

Academic Area (14 credits)

TA 610 Introduction to Graduate Studies	1
TA 611 Theatre Pedagogy	1
TA 665 Tools for a Global Theatre	3
TA 571 Playscript Interpretation	3
TA 620 Performance Theory	3
TA 664 Approaching African American Theatre	3

Performance Concentration (42 credits)

TA 681, 682, 683, 684 (Graduate Voice I,II,III,IV)	12
TA 686, 687, 688, 689 (Graduate Movement I,II,III,IV)	12
TA 691, 692, 693, 694, 695 (Graduate Acting I,II,III,IV,V)	18

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Project Area (10 credits)

TA 625 and TA 626 MFA Performance Projects TA 600	7
TA 600 Thesis Guidance	3

<u>Electives (3 credits)</u>	3
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Community Service

TA 654 Community Service in the Arts	3
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MFA Course Descriptions

The MFA courses in the UofL Graduate Catalog can be found at:

<https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/courses/ta/>

TA 610- Intro to Graduate Studies

Students are introduced to graduate studies, department requirements, life in the professional theatre, and tools for conducting research in the theatre.

TA 611- Theatre Pedagogy

This course is designed to prepare the advanced student of theatre for teaching in the discipline. It will be primarily hands-on, giving students the opportunity to teach, participate, and observe. Students will leave this class with increased practical knowledge of theatre skills, confidence in the role of "teacher," and the ability to articulate goals and expectations.

TA 665- Tools for a Global Theatre

Cultural issues, perspectives and approaches to theatre in various parts of the world will be addressed using both classical and contemporary texts.

TA 571- Playscript Interpretation

Advanced techniques of play analysis, emphasizing the theatre artist's response to text.

TA 620- Performance Theory

Historical study of major approaches to the aesthetics of acting and directing.

TA 624-Acting for the Camera

The student will explore the fundamentals of on-camera acting and learn the techniques of various genres of camera performance.

TA 664- Approaching African-American Theatre

Theoretical approaches and practical methods of performing, designing, staging and teaching theatre, literature, and art that springs from an afrocentric perspective. Designed to prepare students to integrate African-American topics into their teaching and to collaborate successfully as artists.

TA 681- Graduate Voice I

This is a graduate level course in voice for the actor. The focus will be on the connection between body, breath, and voice, including an understanding of the basic principles of the Alexander Technique, an understanding of body, breath, and vocal anatomy/articulators, and exploration of the pedagogy of voice.

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TA 682- Graduate Voice II

This is a graduate-level course in voice, speech, and text work for the actor. Its focus will be strengthening and building on students' foundational work in previous classes to provide them with the technical and creative tools necessary to bring any text to life.

TA 683- Graduate Voice III

This is a graduate level course in voice, speech, and the Alexander Technique.

TA 684- Graduate Voice IV

This is a graduate level course in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), Dialects and Accents for the stage.

TA 686- Graduate Movement I

This course develops increased flexibility, strength, and whole body (including voice & mind) presence and communication while exploring and experimenting in a Grotowski-based approach to actor training.

TA 687- Graduate Movement II

A course in movement analysis that focuses on progressing the actor's relationship with both the function and expression of movement using the lens of the four bodies (physical, energetic, emotional and intellectual, and the body in space).

TA 688- Graduate Movement III

This course develops approaches to character creation within a specific time or performance style, rather than solely acquiring skills or learning a single aspect of that period or style. To decolonize period movement, we break with the European/Western model as standard and investigate the construction of physical identity and the ways in which socio-cultural factors inform and shape physical expression during the period in question.

TA 689- Graduate Movement IV

Devising Theatre - explores approaches to collective creation of performance from a variety of text-based sources.

TA 691- Graduate Acting I

The student will become familiar with advanced study of the Uta Hagen, Sanford Meisner, and Michael Chekhov acting techniques.

TA 692- Graduate Acting II

The purpose of the course is to enable the students to begin to engage with fundamental techniques in exploring how the imaginative process aids in developing character from the outside in.

TA 693- Graduate Acting III

The purpose of this course is designed to provide the student with a fundamental approach to playing Shakespeare.

TA 694- Graduate Acting IV

This is an advanced scene study class in character building and development for performance.

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TA 695- Graduate Acting V

A practical course in developing materials and mindset to become a successful freelance artist. The course focuses on the following skills: building an online presence; writing pitches; searching for and honing application materials for arts grants and residencies; and weaving together an artistic community. al employment in theatre and film and sustaining one's career as an artist.

TA 625- Performance Project

Practical projects in theatre performance (acting, directing, stage management).

TA 626- Thesis Performance

Practical project in theatre performance (acting, directing, stage management) specifically associated with the writing of the Master of Fine Arts monograph.

TA 654- Independent Study in Community Service

Independent study linking the arts with service to the community.

This course includes Community-Based Learning (CBL). Students will engage in a community experience or project with an external partner in order to enhance understanding and application of academic content.

TA 660-Thesis Guidance

Note on Theatre History and Dramatic Literature

Students who enter less prepared in foundational areas important to their success in the program may be required to complete additional courses. Students whose undergraduate degree transcripts do not evince the successful completion of theatre history and literature courses will be required either to take two to three semesters of the Department's undergraduate theatre history sequence or to demonstrate competency in this area by passing a proficiency test. Consult the Director of Graduate Studies for further details.

Note on TA 654 Community Service in the Arts

Consistent with the Theatre Arts Department's mission to create Art in Action and the Graduate program's mission to train actors to act, teach, and make theatre that resonates locally as well as nationally and internationally, our MFA program requires all students to complete a community service project in the arts that is tailored to their artistic interests and the local communities that they wish to serve.

Community service projects are crafted by each MFA student in partnership with an arts or cultural organization. A list of possible community organizations can be obtained from the Director of Graduate Studies. These projects can take many different forms. They must be unpaid, occur outside the Department, and total at least 45 hours of service.

Projects must be approved by the student's Advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, both of whom will ascertain the appropriateness of the project. After consultation with all parties, the student should enroll in TA 654 and download the required community service application from the Blackboard course shell (it is also available on the "TA GTAs" Teams page). Applications must be signed by the Director of Graduate Studies, the student's Advisor, and the onsite supervisor. If the student is pursuing the GCAAT, the community service project must have substantial involvement with an African-descended community and the application must also be approved and signed by the Director of the AATP. For all

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community service projects, the Director of Graduate Studies will help to ensure communication with the onsite supervisor, evaluate the community service project, and assign a letter grade.

Representative Course Scheme for MFA in Performance

<u>First Semester</u>	<u>Credits</u>
TA 571 Playscript Interpretation	3
TA 610 Introduction to Graduate Studies	1
TA 686 Graduate Movement I	3
TA 681 Graduate Voice I	3
TA 691 Graduate Acting I	3
TA 625 Performance Project	<u>1</u>
	Subtotal= 14
<u>Second Semester</u>	
TA 611 Introduction to Pedagogy	1
TA 687 Graduate Movement II	3
TA 682 Graduate Voice II	3
TA 692 Graduate Acting II	3
TA 625 Performance Project	<u>1</u>
	Subtotal= 11
<u>Third Semester</u>	
*TA 620 Performance Theory, <i>or</i>	
*TA 665 Tools for a Global Theatre	3
*TA 688 Graduate Movement III <i>or</i>	
TA 683 Graduate Voice III	3
TA 693 <i>or</i> TA 694 Graduate Acting III <i>or</i> IV	3
TA 625 Performance Project	<u>1</u>
	Subtotal= 10
<u>Fourth Semester</u>	
TA 689 Graduate Movement IV <i>or</i>	
TA 684 Graduate Voice IV	3
TA 695 Graduate Acting V	3
TA 625 Performance Project	1
*TA 654 Community Service <i>or</i>	3
* Elective	<u>3</u>
	Subtotal= 13
<u>Fifth Semester</u>	
TA 620 Performance Theory <i>or</i>	
TA 665 Tools for a Global Theatre	3
TA 695 Graduate Acting V	3
TA 683 Graduate Voice III <i>or</i>	
TA 688 Graduate Movement III	3
TA 626 Thesis Performance	<u>2</u>
	Subtotal= 11
<u>Sixth Semester</u>	
TA 695 Graduate Acting V	3
TA 683 Graduate Voice IV <i>or</i>	
TA 689 Graduate Movement IV	3
TA 625 Performance Project	1

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TA 600 Thesis Guidance	3
TA 664 Approaching African American Theatre	3

Subtotal= 13

*Notes:

- Performance Theory, Tools for a Global Theatre, and Approaching African American Theatre are offered in rotation over the three years of the MFA.
- Community Service may be spread out over several terms, including summers, following completion of the first year of study.
- The Elective may be scheduled as fits the student's schedule.
- Students seeking the Graduate Certificate in African American Theatre (GCAAT) may earn the certificate while pursuing the MFA. Approaching African American Theatre (TA 664) is counted towards the GCAAT. Community Service (TA 654) may also count towards the GCAAT if course activities have substantial involvement with an African-descended community. Students who seek the GCAAT must gain approval from the Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of the African American Theatre Program for a Community Service project to count toward the GCAAT.
- Students pursuing the GCAAT must apply for the certificate and pay a one-time fee (\$40 as of June 2023). GCAAT application information can be found at <https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/programs-study/graduate-certificate-african-american-theatre/#admissiontext>.

Performance Project Requirements

All students are expected to be active in performance projects during each semester in which they are enrolled. Registration for TA 625 (Performance Project) is required for five semesters for assessment of the quality of the projects undertaken. During the semester of the Thesis Performance, students register for TA 626 (2 credits) rather than TA 625 (1 credit). Minimum expectations are the following:

Performance of at least one role in a Mainstage production per semester is required. Students cast in a show in the "swing slot" (the first show of the Spring semester, which begins rehearsal towards the end of the Fall semester) may, in consultation with their Advisor, count the role as the student's Fall or Spring semester Performance Project.

Recognizing that casting requirements and the availability of suitable roles may significantly affect a student's ability to meet this expectation, the faculty will apply the following policies in determining a grade:

(A) A student's grade may be based on a Studio Theatre performance if the student made an effort to obtain a role in each Mainstage production. The graduate student must consult with their Advisor about this in advance. In such an instance, a student would need to submit a 1-2 page proposal to their Advisor and the Graduate Curriculum, Retention, and Recruitment Committee. The Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee will then collectively make a recommendation to the Department Chair as to whether the proposed Studio Theatre production qualifies as a viable alternative to performing a role in a Mainstage production. The Chair will make the final decision. The 1-2 page proposal should include the following information: the director for the Studio Theatre production; the performance space; a rehearsal schedule; and a reason for doing the project as it relates to the student's artistic and academic interests.

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(B) If a student obtains prior approval from the Advisor and the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee to bypass one or more Mainstage auditions, such approval will constitute the required effort. Advance planning on behalf of the graduate student is necessary in this situation.

(C) In some situations, and with the prior approval of a student's Advisor, the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee, and the Department Chair, this requirement may be fulfilled through a self-initiated performance project or an off-campus production. A student interested in a self-initiated performance project or off-campus production will submit a 1-2 page formal proposal to their Advisor and the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee. The Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee will then collectively make a recommendation to the Department Chair as to whether the proposed project qualifies as a viable alternative to performing a role in a Mainstage production. The Chair will make the final decision. The 1-2 page proposal should include the following information: an identified director for the project/off-campus production; an identified performance space; a rehearsal schedule; and a reason for doing the project/off-campus production as it relates to the student's artistic and academic interests. In their course of study, students will be permitted to do up to two approved, self-initiated performance projects/off-campus productions, and no more than one in their first year in the program.

(D) If the graduate student obtains approval to perform in Studio Theatre, to pursue a self-initiated performance project, to perform in an off-campus production, and/or to bypass Mainstage auditions but does not perform in Studio Theatre, the off-campus production, or complete their independent performance project, a grade of "Incomplete" will be recorded. In the subsequent semester, the student must perform twice, once to make-up the "Incomplete" and again for that semester's TA 625 Performance Project.

If the graduate student does not obtain advance approval to perform in Studio Theatre, to perform in an off-campus production, to complete a self-initiated performance project, and/or to bypass a Mainstage performance, a grade of "F" will be recorded for that semester. This grade may not be replaced by subsequent work.

Thesis Performance Requirement

A thesis performance is part of a student's third year in residence, and must be performed through UofL except in extremely special circumstances and only with the prior approval of the student's Advisor, the Graduate Curriculum, Retention, and Recruitment Committee, and the Department Chair.

A thesis performance project that is not a performance in a UofL Mainstage production requires prior approval from: the student's Advisor; the Graduate Recruitment, Retention, and Curriculum Committee; and the Department Chair. Such projects must be performance-driven, with the understanding that performance is process-orientated, and not necessarily product-orientated. For guidelines regarding the submission of a 1-2 page proposal for such a thesis performance project, refer to "B," "Performance Requirements" on page 4 of the *Handbook*.

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The student enrolls in TA 626 Thesis Performance in support of the thesis role. The Department expects students to complete their thesis performance work by the end of the Fall semester or the start of the Spring semester of their third year of study.

Department policy permits the pre-casting of MFA candidates in thesis roles. Second year students are welcome to discuss with faculty possible plays, roles, or artistic challenges that they are interested in pursuing in their third year. Remember though that each season must address numerous departmental needs and responsibilities that include, but are not limited to, the need for thesis roles. Students can *propose*, but may not *choose*, their thesis role. Final decisions regarding thesis roles are made by the production's director in consultation with the student's Advisor, the DGS, and the Department Chair.

All students are welcome to propose a play for consideration in the forthcoming production season through the Department's annual production proposal submission process. Information concerning the submission process is shared via email, typically in the Spring semester. Students may also be invited to the Department meetings at which the season is discussed.

To help ensure faculty are aware of students' interests for their thesis role, in the Spring semester, second year MFA students are expected to email their thesis role preferences to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair two weeks after the production season for the upcoming year has been announced. The email from the second year MFA students should include the following information: the role(s) in the play(s) to be produced in the upcoming season that they are interested in pursuing for their thesis performance role; and a 2-3 sentence statement articulating why they are interested in that role(s). While the Department cannot guarantee students will be cast in accordance with their stated preferences, faculty want to know which roles students are most interested in and what is fueling their artistic pursuits.

The thesis performance role (or its approved equivalent) must be completed successfully to fulfill the MFA requirements.

"Successful completion" is defined as earning a grade of B- or higher. (See the Performance Rubric at the end of the *Handbook*.) An MFA Performance Project course with a grade of C+ or lower may not be used to fulfill degree requirements.

Written Thesis Requirement (Monograph)

The student enrolls in TA 600 Thesis Guidance in support of the written thesis (i.e. monograph). The Department expects graduate students to complete their written thesis before the end of their 3rd academic year.

Students must form a Thesis Committee to evaluate the completed written thesis. The Thesis Committee should ideally be formed by the end of the Spring semester of the student's second year of study. The MFA Thesis Committee is chaired by the Thesis Director, who is a tenured or tenure-track faculty member of the Theatre Arts Department with a terminal degree. As the Thesis Director, that faculty member is responsible for teaching TA 600, Thesis Guidance. Students request that another tenure-track or tenured Theatre Arts Department faculty member with a terminal degree serve as a second committee member. A third committee member must be solicited from among the graduate faculty outside the Theatre Arts Department. All Thesis Committee members sign a Thesis Advisory Committee

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Appointment form that students access on the UofL Graduate School website (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information>).

A student's Advisor may serve as the Thesis Director or as a second member of a Thesis Committee.

Faculty are not required to serve on a student's Thesis Committee. Faculty who do so are sharing their expertise and time in support of a graduate student's project. Students are encouraged to ask eligible Theatre Arts faculty in advance to serve on their committee. They are also encouraged to ask their faculty for third committee member recommendations.

The written thesis must be completed successfully to fulfill the MFA requirements.

"Successful completion" is defined as earning a grade of B- or higher. (See Written Thesis Rubric at the end of the *Handbook*.) A Thesis Guidance course with a grade of C+ or lower may not be used to fulfill degree requirements.

Parameters of the Written Thesis (Monograph)

An MFA thesis manuscript represents an important phase of development as a theatre artist. The faculty expects that each MFA written thesis will discuss (at least):

1. Research in a form and scope appropriate to the project;
2. The process that culminated in the project;
3. A retroactive analysis of the project.

Full details regarding the contents of the written monograph will be determined in consultation with the Thesis Director, and later the members of the Thesis Committee.

Students should also refer to the Written Thesis Rubric at the end of the *Handbook* for expectations of the monograph.

Possible Approaches to the MFA Written Thesis

Below is a description of some of the approaches that might be taken to the written thesis for the MFA in Performance. The following possible approaches to the thesis are not exhaustive:

—An academic study related to your thesis performance role. This could include an element(s) of applied research. It might also be the basis for a future publishable article in an academic journal in Theatre. Such an approach might situate one's performance work on a Mainstage show as a case study for a proposed approach to performing a certain genre, character, etc. Such a work would include a formal introduction, a series of chapters, a formal conclusion, and a bibliography.

—A creative project that is framed by a formal introduction and conclusion. Previous creative projects have included theatre curriculum and a guidebook for actors with learning differences. Others might include an original play, a dramaturgical packet, a translation of a play, etc. The introduction could possibly situate the creative work in relation to similar

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endeavors in the field and announce the project's goals. The conclusion could possibly address discoveries made from the project. Such a work would also include a bibliography.

—A play, character, and performance analysis approach related to your thesis performance role. Such a project would start with an introduction that unfolds the project's goals. The successive chapters might include the following: a structural analysis of the play, perhaps also including research on the play; an analysis of the character one is playing, perhaps also including research conducted to perform the character; a reflection on the process of playing the character, perhaps also including discussion of approaches used in performance; and a formal conclusion, perhaps discussing what you learned about the play, character, and/or acting from the process. The manuscript would also need a bibliography.

NOTE: The UofL Graduate School requires that a thesis have certain formal components. In addition to an introduction, chapters, and a conclusion, these include an abstract, bibliography, title page, table of contents, etc. These formal components and formatting for the entire manuscript are detailed in the Graduate School's *Guidelines for the Preparation and Processing of Theses and Dissertations*. Students are responsible for all the contents of this document, which can be found at <https://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-information>.

Thesis Defense

A successful defense of the thesis is required to earn the MFA. During the defense, the student will meet with the Thesis Committee (composed of the Thesis Director and the second and third committee members) to discuss the student's written thesis in detail. At the defense, the student will be expected to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of their written thesis, their thesis role, the student's performance process, the relationship of the role to the production as a whole, and any research that may be undertaken in support of their project.

Assessment of the Written Thesis

An MFA written thesis is assessed on: quality of the analysis; argument; research in support of the argument; organization of the material; and writing. Students should refer to the Written Thesis Rubric at the end of the *Handbook* for further details regarding assessment of the manuscript.

Graduate Certificate in African American Theatre (GCAAT)

(Minimum 15 credits)

History, Theory, and Literature (6 credits)

TA 566 Advanced African American Theatre History	3
TA 664 Approaching African American Theatre	3
<i>One of the following:</i>	3
TA 563 Advanced African American Women in Theatre	
TA 565 Advanced Theatre of the African World	
TA 557 Advanced Hip-Hop Theatre	
TA 562 Advanced Black Dramatic Literature	

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Performance/Production (3 credits)

One of the following:

3

TA 532 Advanced Directing the Black Experience

TA 547 Advanced Black Aesthetic on Stage

**TA 625 Performance Project in an approved play

TA 645 Production Project in an approved play

TA 655 Pedagogy in Acting the Black Experience

Electives (3 credits)

One of the following:

3

TA 650 Theatre Internship

TA 655 Independent Study on an approved topic

Approved courses in Pan African Studies

*TA654 Community Service in the Arts (3 credits)

*TA 654 Community Service in the Arts is required for the MFA. Community service projects must be unpaid, occur outside the Department, and total at least 45 hours of service. Projects must be approved by the student's Advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, both of whom will ascertain the appropriateness of the project. After consultation with all parties, the student should enroll in TA 654 and download the required community service application from the Blackboard course shell. Applications must be signed by the Director of Graduate Studies, the Major Advisor, and the onsite supervisor. If the MFA student is pursuing the GCAAT, the application must also be approved and signed by the Director of the AATP. The Director of Graduate Studies will help to ensure communication with the onsite supervisor, evaluate the project, and assign a letter grade.

**TA625 may not be counted towards the Certificate for any student enrolled in the MFA in Performance.

Note: Students pursuing the GCAAT must apply for the certificate and pay a one-time fee (\$40 as of June 2023). GCAAT application information can be found at <https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/programs-study/graduate-certificate-african-american-theatre/#admissiontext>.

GCAAT Course Descriptions

The GCAAT courses in the UofL Graduate Catalog can be found at

<https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/courses/ta/>

TA 566-Advanced African American Theatre History

Survey of African-American Theatre from 1820 to the present, its relationship to sociopolitical issues in America and its relationship to mainstream American theatre.

TA 664-Approaching African American Theatre

Theoretical approaches and practical methods of performing, designing, staging and teaching theatre, literature, and art that springs from an afrocentric perspective. Designed to prepare students to integrate African-American topics into their teaching and to collaborate successfully as artists.

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TA 563-Advanced African American Women in Theatre

Examines the full range of African-American women working in theatre including playwrights, performers, designers, theorists, academics, and directors. Includes examination of plays by women of African descent.

TA 565-Advanced Theatre of the African World

Cross-cultural examination of the drama of the African-descended playwrights in the African Diaspora.

TA 555-Special Topics in Theatre (Advanced Cultural Diversity in Performance)

Advanced study of specific areas of theatre arts.

TA 557-Advanced Hip-Hop Theatre

Advanced exploration of hip-hop theatre and forerunners of hip-hop culture and art--including its relationship to African-American, American multicultural and postmodern styles--through discussion, reading, research and performance exercises.

TA 562-Advanced Black Dramatic Literature

An examination of the drama of selected African-descended writers whose work stands out as exceptional in the realm of dramatic literature. The material will be explored by means of lectures, play readings, written responses, in-depth discussion, videos, student projects and presentations.

TA 532-Advanced Directing the Black Experience

Advanced techniques for staging plays from an African-centered perspective.

TA 547-Advanced Black Aesthetic on Stage

Exploration of scenic, costume, lighting, and sound design from an Afrocentric perspective.

TA 645-Production Project in an approved play

Practical projects in theatre production (design, technical theatre, theatre management).

TA 655-Independent Study (or approved courses in PAS, Humanities, and English)

Independent study in areas not covered by the regular graduate curriculum.

TA 650-Theatre Internship

An internship with professional arts organizations.

TA 654-Community Service in the Arts

This course includes Community-Based Learning (CBL). Students will engage in a community experience or project with an external partner in order to enhance understanding and application of academic content.

Graduate Student Evaluation and Retention

In all matters relating to retention, probation, dismissal, or evaluation, the burden of proof shall be upon the student to demonstrate that the student is making satisfactory progress towards completion of the MFA. Standards are established by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). (See *National Association of Schools of Theatre*.)

Students are also expected to follow the University's Code of Student Conduct and Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. These can be accessed at

<https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/university-policies-procedures/code-student-conduct/#text>.

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Midterm and End of Semester Evaluations

First year and any second or third year MFA student on probation receives written Midterm Evaluations. These written assessments provided by all faculty and staff working directly with the MFA student under assessment provide feedback on the student's progress up until the middle of the term.

All MFA students receive Final Semester Evaluations at the end of each semester. These written assessments provided by all faculty and staff working directly with the MFA students offer feedback on each student's work throughout the semester. The Chair sets a date at the end of each semester when the MFA faculty meet collectively to evaluate each student. Then, each Advisor collates the feedback per student provided by faculty and staff into a "Summary Evaluation," which is shared with individual graduate students ahead of the Advising meetings scheduled at the end of each semester. At each end-of-the-semester Advisory meeting, the student is given the opportunity to respond to the "Summary Evaluation."

Faculty and staff assessment tools include the Performance and Audition Rubrics provided at the end of the *Handbook*.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes and rehearsals as well as fulfilling assistantship responsibilities is essential for any student's development as a theatre artist. Unexcused absences and tardiness are unacceptable and put the student's success at risk. After one written warning from either the Advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Department Chair, students will be put on probation upon their next absence or tardiness.

Each student is allowed up to one excused absence per course for a professional engagement or a conference with the prior approval of the instructor of record. An absence for this one pre-approved professional engagement or conference will not negatively impact a student's grade in a course.

In general, a student absent for any unexpected reason should notify the professor by e-mail and/or telephone before the class meeting.

Thesis Performance Role Evaluation

The entire MFA faculty determines grades for thesis performance role (or its pre-approved equivalent). If a faculty member did not observe the thesis performance in question, they will not vote.

The director and/or supervisor of the performance project have the first opportunity to speak if they so wish. These remarks should include comments on both process and product.

Faculty members eligible to determine the student's grade will immediately vote, indicating the grade they consider appropriate.

The Chair will repeat the results of the vote and announce an average of those grades. The Chair then opens the floor for discussion. Upon completion of discussion, faculty eligible to determine the student's grade may choose to vote again. The grade awarded is then averaged from that vote.

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For further information concerning the assessment of performance, see the MFA Performance Rubric provided at the end of the *Handbook*.

Performance Grades

In assigning grades in TA 625 and TA 626, the faculty assesses only the performance projects under consideration and does not use the grade to assess the student's overall progress toward completion of the degree. However, the faculty assesses the projects in the context of the student's level of training in the MFA program, judging them against standards appropriate to that level.

Graduate student performances are assessed on: preparation; professionalism; demonstration of acting technique; tempo and rhythm; movement, voice, and clarity; and improvement. For further information concerning the assessment of performance, see the MFA Performance Rubric provided at the end of the *Handbook*.

Grades in Academic and Other Courses:

The grade of "A" will be awarded for work that is clearly above the standards of accomplishment normally considered appropriate to the student's level of training.

The grade of "B" will be awarded for work that matches the standards of accomplishment normally considered appropriate to the student's level of training.

The grade of "C" will be awarded for work that is below the standards of accomplishment normally considered appropriate to the student's level of training.

The grade of "X" will be awarded for work that the instructor regards as requiring more than one semester to complete.

The grade of "D" will be awarded for work that is seriously deficient.

The grade of "I" will be awarded for work that has been deferred due to illness or other extenuating circumstances.

The grade of "F" will be awarded for null performance.

Grades should not have the same meaning for a graduate student in a professional program as they did when that student was an undergraduate. Instead of focusing on grades per se, graduate students are encouraged to concentrate on their artistic growth and their development of skills at a professional level, with a professional attitude to match. This will enhance their chances of success in the theatre and also serve them in other spheres of life.

Course/Assistantship Evaluation

At the end of each semester, the faculty discusses the students' production work, performance in classes (academic and performance), assistantship duties, and any other Departmental activities. The observations of faculty and staff members who have direct contact through production supervision, supervision of assistantship duties, and/or classroom contact shall be discussed.

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Each student's Advisor collates a written "Summary Evaluation" of the feedback provided by the faculty and staff. Prior to each Advisory meeting at the end of the semester, the student is presented with the "Summary Evaluation." At each end-of-the-semester Advisory meeting, the student is given the opportunity to respond to the "Summary Evaluation."

The Advisor shall consider whether to restate the evaluation and, if the evaluation is revised, shall present a copy of its final draft of its "Summary Evaluation" to the student. A copy of the "Summary Evaluation" is placed in the student's permanent file.

The graduate student is strongly encouraged to follow up on suggested areas of improvement with professors and supervisors.

The Department generally has too few assistantships to award one to each deserving student. Students awarded assistantships are expected to distinguish themselves artistically and academically each semester in order to maintain this financial support.

At each Advisory meeting, the Advisor may revise the student's proposed program of studies and shall inform the student whether they intend to recommend retention, probation, or dismissal. At that time, the student has the opportunity to respond to the Advisor's recommendation and has a right to submit any evidence or commentary.

All recommendations shall be written and include sufficient support. A copy of all recommendations will be given to the student.

Productive Theatre Attitude

Graduate students are expected to set an example of collaborative, productive behavior in the theatre by their words and actions. Whether directed at another student, faculty, or staff or to the public, an attitude or action that negatively impacts a production process or learning environment is unacceptable and is reason alone for probation and expulsion.

Continuance, Probation, and Dismissal

Satisfactory progress is required for a student to be in good standing.

A student who is not making satisfactory progress will be counseled by their faculty, Advisor, DGS, and/or Chair regarding areas of concern. This may happen at any point in the semester, including in the mid- or final semester evaluations.

At any point in the semester, students not making satisfactory progress may be put on probation and/or dismissed from the program. Students put on probation or dismissed will be informed in writing. Dismissal results in the loss of the assistantship; probation may also result in the loss of the assistantship.

Depending on the circumstances, students put on probation may also be provided in writing with steps that must be taken to demonstrate sufficient progress in the affected areas. If so and sufficient progress is not made by a specified period, students may be dismissed from the program.

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If dismissal from the program is recommended by the faculty, the Chair or DGS submits that recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School, who makes the final decision. The Dean sends an official letter notifying the student of the dismissal action.

Among the reasons students may be placed on probation and/or dismissed from the program are:

- (1) not making satisfactory progress towards the degree;
- (2) not completing creative and/or production work satisfactorily;
- (3) not progressing toward the degree at the appropriate rate;
- (4) not sustaining satisfactory progress in courses and creative work;
- (5) a cumulative GAP below 3.0;
- (6) academic dishonesty (as defined by the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities);
- (7) failure to successfully complete assistantship duties;
- (8) behavior or attitude that hampers a production process and/or learning environment.

Graduate students placed on probation may lose their assistantship or other Departmental support as a consequence of probation even when assistantship duties themselves are in good standing.

Appeals

Students dismissed from the program may appeal in writing to the Chair, who will rule on the case. Students who wish to appeal the decision of the Chair may do so according to the "Academic Grievance Procedures" of the Graduate School. For more information, visit [http:// louisville.edu/graduatecatalog/academic-grievance-procedure](http://louisville.edu/graduatecatalog/academic-grievance-procedure).

Dismissed students who are supported by assistantships lose that support. They *may* regain it if they are formally reinstated into the program.

Students placed on probation may follow the same appeal process.

Forced Withdrawal from Class

If a student's work or behavior in a production or classroom setting proves deficient to an extent that it seriously impedes the work of others, the Department reserves the right to require the student to withdraw from the production and/or class. The director and/or instructor of the class directing the student to withdraw initiates this process.

Students wishing to appeal the director and/or instructor's decision shall write their Advisor explaining the basis of their appeal. They shall give a copy of this communication to the director/instructor. The Advisor will meet with the director/instructor, and then make a recommendation. If either the director/instructor or student disagrees with this recommendation, they may appeal to the Chair.

If the appeals process takes more time than allowed for absences in graduate courses, arrangements may be made between the Department Chair and the director/instructor to make up course work.

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Personal Emergencies and Leaves

Students who encounter an emergency due to health, family, or personal circumstances should first contact their Advisor. If unable to do so, they should contact the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and/or the Chair. The graduate student's Advisor in consultation with the DGS and Chair will then consider such options as a short-term leave or withdrawal.

UofL Code of Student Conduct and Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

All UofL students are expected to abide by the University's Code of Student Conduct and Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. These can be accessed at <https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/university-policies-procedures/code-student-conduct/#text>.

Self-Evaluation for the Graduate Student

A recent graduate student prepared a series of questions for classmates to pose to themselves following each production. These questions, with amendments from faculty, can be found below. MFA candidates are strongly encouraged to use these and other thoughtful questions to critically reflect upon their own artistic process and product.

This self-evaluation process can also be applied to a student's assistantship duties.

Process:

Was I prepared to execute my role fully and on time throughout the entire production period? Why or why not?

Did I challenge myself to do the best work possible? If not, how might I have further challenged myself?

Did I work with peers collaboratively in a way that stimulated creativity? If so, what specific practices made the collaboration so successful? If not, how might I work more collaboratively and creatively in the future?

Was I able to sustain excellence in other areas of the program (such as classes and assistantship) while successfully completing required production work? If so, how? If not, how might I have been more successful at sustaining excellence in all areas of my graduate work?

Product:

Does the product indicate that I am a promising artist or craftsperson, whose vision and skills are appropriate for someone at my level of training? Why or why not?

Does the product indicate that I am growing as an artist or craftsperson? Why or why not?

Does the product indicate that I am able to successfully apply the lessons learned in class? If not, why not? If so, what specific classroom lessons did I successfully apply to my work on the production?

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Does the product indicate that I will be able to work successfully as a professional upon completing this program? Why or why not?

Course and Performance:

Another graduate student suggested that students consider the following question after completion of each course or production:

While I may have completed my assignments or my production role in a timely and efficient manner, did I make the most of the assignments/role and go beyond what was required so as to experience growth as an artist? If so, in what specific ways did I go beyond what was required and how did I grow? If not, how could I have gone beyond the requirements and grown as an artist?

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

The Department of Theatre Arts views Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) as a valuable form of pedagogical training and as a means of supporting some highly-qualified graduate students in the pursuit of their degrees. The Department determines the initial assignment of assistantship duties on the basis of promise for successful graduate work and in consideration of the Department's budget and needs. The Department determines reassignment of duties and/or reductions of stipends principally on the basis of a graduate student's performance. However, inadequate performance of assistantship duties may also lead to the discontinuation of assistantship support or removal from the program, depending on the circumstances.

In addition to Graduate Teaching Assistantships, Graduate Research Assistantships are sometimes available. These may include a combination of the assistantship areas listed below *except* teaching.

Outside commitments for graduate assistants are not routinely permitted. Exceptions are rare and must include prior written approval from the student's Advisor and the Department Chair. Conflicts arising from any such commitments will not be accepted as an excuse for failure to fulfill academic or assistantship responsibilities. Any outside commitments, whether paid or not, must be approved in advance and in writing by a student's Advisor and the Department Chair. Outside work for pay during the academic year must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Working outside the Department for pay without prior approval from Chair and the Dean of the Graduate School may lead to the loss of a student's Graduate Student Assistantship.

Graduate assistantships are coveted. Both the University and the Department treat these awards seriously and assume that recipients will do the same. Graduate assistants are expected to fulfill all their responsibilities. In the case of illness or an excused absence for a professional commitment or conference, graduate assistants may be required to cover each other's classes or sections. In case of illness for missed assistantship hours, time must be made up within five business days of a graduate student's return. This is to be arranged with assistantship supervisors.

General Information, Hours, Reporting, and Demands of Graduate Assistantships

The assistantship stipend (paid on a 10-month basis, August-May) should help enable students to pay for rent and food without taking focus away from their studies at the

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University. If the stipend is not enough to support a student, student loans and/or financial aid are recommended resources.

All UofL students receiving graduate assistantships are expected to work 20 hours each week, on average, fulfilling assistantship responsibilities.

Graduate school is demanding. Graduate assistantships diminish, and can sometimes eliminate, the financial burden of graduate school; however, a graduate assistantship also adds to the demands on students. Careful planning to manage this workload is essential. This planning is especially important when production and assistantship responsibilities are most demanding. Classes, production work, and assistantship responsibilities are all equally important.

In managing their work, students who accept assistantships should remember that assistantship responsibilities cannot earn academic credit. Moreover, the extensive demands of theatre production are not part of an assistantship.

Communications

Graduate students must use their UofL email address to access Department email and Microsoft Teams on a daily basis. It is imperative to check the TA GTAs Team regularly for interdepartmental communications and postings. (Also see “Callboard and Bulletin Board” in the *Handbook*.)

Graduate assistant responsibilities begin the week before the first day of classes in August and continue the week after the last class in May. Travel plans at the beginning and end of the school year and at the beginning and end of the Fall, Winter, and Spring vacation breaks must not encroach on any duty of one’s assistantship.

It is your responsibility to contact your assistantship supervisor for details about work once you have received your assignment.

Graduate teaching assistants may request one personal day/semester by submitting a request in writing to the Chair at least two weeks in advance.

The value of a Graduate Teaching Assistantship exceeds \$35,000 per year, including stipend, medical insurance, and out-of-state tuition. This translates into more than \$50 an hour.

Graduate Assistantship Areas

The following is a list of assistantship areas and general duties for each. This list is by no means exhaustive. Other types of assistantships may be created to cater to a student's strengths or to the Department's needs. Students will generally have responsibilities in at least two areas annually.

Teaching

Normally, every first-year graduate assistant is given teaching duties in TA 207 Enjoyment of Theatre, a general education course that introduces non-major undergraduate students to theatre. These teaching duties may include leading weekly discussion groups, grading

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student work, attending lectures to take notes and assist the faculty professor, and monitoring exams. In their second semester, first-year acting students enroll in TA 611 Acting Pedagogy to prepare for second-year teaching duties as instructors of TA 224 Introduction to Acting as Communication, a beginning, undergraduate acting class. GTAs are expected to keep Office Hours each week. A minimum of 2 hours per week is required. Be sure to forward your office hours to Stephan Carpenter in the Department office.

GTAs often include other duties, such as those described on the following page.

Repertory Company (RepCo)

The University of Louisville Repertory Company offers graduate assistantships in acting. Ordinarily, only second- and third-year students are eligible. The "Rep Company" rehearses its one to two shows during the first weeks of Fall classes, and then performs daily during the Fall and Spring semesters (with occasional days off) for schools and civic organizations throughout the Louisville area. Performances are generally scheduled in the morning and never interfere with MFA classes. This is the only assistantship position the Department offers that is applicable to a professional performance resume. These positions are given only to the most responsible graduate students.

Assistant to the Director of the African American Theatre Program

This position involves clerical work and requires significant engagement with the region's African American communities. AATP assistants should have excellent telephone and email etiquette, social media experience, well-honed "people skills," a diligent work ethic, strong organizational abilities, and a deep appreciation for all dimensions of difference. This position helps with mass mailings for the AATP, arranging community events, developing relationships with local schools, hosting guest artists, tutoring, promoting the AATP across social media platforms, and other responsibilities.

Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies

This position involves clerical work, organizational skills, a strong work ethic, and excellent communication skills. The DGS assistant helps with all recruitment efforts for the MFA in Performance program, such as mass mailings, arranging the annual Open House, scheduling online meetings/auditions with applicants, creating excel spreadsheets to track application materials, answering applicant inquiries, developing materials for the website, creating recruitment packets, and other responsibilities.

Box Office

Box Office Assistants help staff the Box Office during normal weekday hours (10 AM to 4 PM) and before Mainstage performances. They also assist with other front-of-house responsibilities such as house management, preparing theatre programs, creating lobby displays, and distributing publicity materials via social media and other outlets. Evening and weekend requirements include Box Office and front-of-house presence during Mainstage productions.

Costume Production

Duties may include sewing and general maintenance in the costume shop. Evening requirements include 5-6 PM costume parades and costume strikes (usually held on Sunday nights) each academic year.

Production Buyer

Duties assisting the Production Manager and/or Costume Shop Manager can include gathering information, ordering tools and scenic materials, driving to supplier locations, and purchasing production materials. Students are reimbursed for the mileage incurred; please see Jessica Key for details. Professional attitude is mandatory for the Production Buyer position due to direct contact with vendors. Procurement card training and bookkeeping skills are mandatory for this position.

Section II: Department Information

Callboard and Bulletin Boards

Located in the main hallway of the HPES/Studio Arts Building, these boards are a central communications system for Department and production information. They include: audition opportunities; Studio Theatre information; cast lists; rehearsal schedules; costume fittings; Departmental events; production postings; announcements; undergraduate information; and other matters of interest, including jobs, internships, and material about theatres throughout the country and around the world.

A copy of all information to be posted should first be given to the Departmental Main Office since many inquiries are directed there. When posting any information, please respect other postings by not covering or removing any postings.

If you are involved in a production, you must check the Callboard daily.

Casting

Auditions for the Department productions are open to all members of the academic community and to Louisville residents. On occasion, guest actors may be employed. Roles in Mainstage productions are not pre-cast except for occasional contracted faculty assignments, MFA thesis projects, or honors projects. Casting individuals from outside the University must be discussed with the Department Chair and approved in advance.

Coordinated auditions are often held for all or most of the productions in the academic year at the start of the Fall semester, or for all or most of the productions in a given semester at the very beginning of the term. Partial or full auditions for the first show of each semester might also be held near the end of the semester prior to the production.

The educational mission of the Theatre Arts Department is to provide equal training opportunities for all students. Directors strive to cast productions as inclusively as possible. Directors are encouraged to use identity-conscious casting, or casting that is conscious of the ways in which race, ethnicity, and gender are read in performance and that is respectful of the ways in which the actor may self-identify.

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The director of each production has full authority and responsibility for casting. The only exceptions occur when (1) casting from the community is permitted; (2) casting would conflict with another production's performance or rehearsal time; or when (3) students facing academic difficulty or probation are provided extra time to improve their standing. In all cases, the final arbitrator is the Department Chair.

If a graduate student is to be cast in more than one show in a given semester, they must request permission to do so from their Advisor. In consultation with the Department Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies, the Advisor will make a decision regarding the request.

Students cast in a “swing slot” show (the first show in the Spring semester, which begins rehearsals towards the end of the Fall semester) may, in consultation with their Advisor, have the role count as their Fall or Spring Performance Project.

Company and Cast Lists

Cast lists for productions are posted on the callboard. When cast lists are posted, a copy is provided to the main office. Cast lists include the names of all characters and the student assigned to each role. Cast members acknowledge role assignments by initialing the cast list.

Be sure to read any notifications on your cast list.

Following casting, the Stage Manager will contact the cast regarding rehearsals.

Costume/Scenery/Property Use

Department costumes, scenery, and properties may **not** be borrowed for classroom projects or outside activities.

Rehearsal Blocks

Black blocks are designated for room 133 and white blocks for room 131. Classroom and Departmental furniture (i.e., rehearsal blocks, tables, classroom chairs, and lobby furniture) are **not** to be used for productions and must **not** be removed from their assigned classrooms or hallway.

Food and Drink in Classrooms

All food is prohibited in Department classrooms, studios, and theatres. Bottled water may be drunk in these spaces.

Guest Artists

Periodically, guest artists visit the Department to meet with students during class hours. They are always announced in advance. These individuals are an important link between the University and the profession. Dedicated students should seize such opportunities to learn from the experiences of our guests.

Keys and Access to the Building

GTAs are given keys to their office and may be given keys to any rooms for which they need access for assistantship duties. In the 2nd year, GTAs are issued a copy room key. This gives access to the paper cutter and photocopier. The Department does not keep extra keys and must make extras if a student loses their keys. The student will be charged \$15 for any lost key.

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Be careful leaving the building at night as the doors automatically lock after hours, over weekends, and during holidays. With Department permission you may have your student ID encoded as a key to enter the building after hours. See Jessica Key for details.

Mailboxes

Each graduate student is assigned a mailbox their first year. This is not an official U.S. mailbox and cannot be used as a mailing address. Faculty, staff, and students use it to leave information. Faculty, staff, stage managers, and the Repertory Company also have boxes. Additional boxes may be created for special needs. Please check your box daily and keep it clean so others may easily leave items there. Mailboxes are in an open area and are not secure; do not leave important valuables in any mailbox.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the University campus. Both Theatre Arts buildings share access with Louisville streets; therefore, you must be at least 50 feet from either building entrance if you are smoking on the street near the Thrust or Playhouse.

During production, actors must never leave the building or smoke in costume.

If a production, Studio Theatre or otherwise, requires smoking on stage, you must confer with the Department Technical Director, Braden Blauser.

Photocopy Machine

Graduate students receive a key to the copy room. (See Stephan Carpenter for keys.) Copies are to be made for departmental purposes only, such as for a class a GTA is teaching. Copy limits are set each semester according to a student's anticipated need (assistantship duties factor into this). If a student reaches their maximum before the end of the semester, they may not be allotted any more copies until the following semester.

Recycling

If students need to make photocopies to fulfill their responsibilities as a graduate assistant, please conserve paper. A recycling bin is located in the photocopy room. Everyone is encouraged to recycle paper by double-siding photocopies and by using the clean side of a used sheet of paper whenever possible.

If there is no paper in the photocopy room, please see Stephan Carpenter or Jessica Key.

Performance Spaces

The University of Louisville has two theatres: The Playhouse; and the Thrust Theatre.

The Playhouse is a 348-seat proscenium theatre that primarily serves Mainstage productions. Originally located on the site currently occupied by the Ekstrom Library, it was disassembled in 1977 and reconstructed in 1980 at its present location between 2nd Street and 3rd Street at Cardinal Boulevard.

The Thrust Theatre is a 164-seat facility that opened in 1992. This stage serves both Mainstage and Studio Theatre productions.

Production Season

Mainstage

Mainstage productions are fully funded with technical, design, and publicity support. Directed by faculty or guest artists, Mainstage productions usually receive six performances. Runs usually last for one or two weeks.

MFA students are required to attend at least one performance of any Mainstage production that they are not cast in.

Season Selection

Through its Mainstage season, the Department produces works of high quality in a wide variety of styles and forms. The season provides for the artistic development of students and presents a varied theatrical season for the off- and on-campus community at large.

Committed to developing the relationship between the Mainstage season and the needs of students, the Department strives to reflect the variety and inclusive focus of its curriculum by producing work from different countries, periods, and theatrical styles and by authors representative of diverse racial, ethnic, national, gender, and sexual identities.

The Mainstage season can include 4 fully-produced productions, two of which can be AATP productions. The Department also produces one to two Repertory Company productions and houses 5 to 6 Studio Theatre weekend productions each year.

Program Bios (Biographies)

Theatre programs for Mainstage productions may include space for brief bios of key personnel, including actors, directors, designers, and dramaturgs. Bios must conform to professional standards by focusing on theatre credits and educational objectives. All bios are subject to editing and to conforming to University and Department guidelines. Purely personal statements, dedications, and attempts at humor will not be printed.

Program bios sometimes appear only online.

Studio Theatre

Studio Theatre is an RSO (Recognized Student Organization) operated through the University of Louisville. The student-run company's "mission is to provide University of Louisville students with an outlet that allows them to explore their creative energies in a performance setting. Through production of performance art we hope to provide every willing student with the opportunity to work on, participate in, and enjoy the theatrical process. Studio Theatre has and will always provide this service free to the public, making the arts accessible to all" (<http://louisville.edu/theatrearts/about/studio-theatre>).

Studio Theatre typically produces 2-3 slots each semester, with 2 or 3 shows per slot. Plays are proposed, directed, acted, designed, and sometimes written by students. Students who have taken a directing class or have otherwise demonstrated directing ability may be encouraged to propose to direct a Studio Theatre production. Faculty and staff sometimes direct in Studio as well. Proposals can be discussed with the Studio Theatre officers.

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Periodically, theatre artists from the Louisville-Metro community are invited to direct. However, this is rare due to financial considerations.

Studio Theatre provides graduate and undergraduate students with an opportunity to experiment. You could perhaps show that play you've written and hidden, find out if you really want to direct, perform a role you have always wanted to play, or get your first shot at realizing a costume, scenic, or lighting design. It's also another valuable venue through which to have your performance work seen on stage by your peers, the faculty, and the public.

Studio Theatre productions may, upon demonstrating a specific need, borrow a limited number of props and costumes from the Department's stock. Some lighting and sound support is available. Support from production shops must be set up in advance (2 weeks recommended) to ensure Studio Theatre needs are met. Members of the production staff are also available as advisors. All costume, furniture, and properties loaned for Studio Theatre are subject to approval by the Technical Director and the Costume Shop Manager. Loans are set up with the Technical Director specifically during normal production shop hours. Students may be required to post a small deposit, and they are responsible for anything borrowed. This includes keeping the items locked in a secure place when not in use. Costumes have to be laundered or dry cleaned before being returned, as directed by the Costume Shop Manager. Any necessary cleaning will be done at the expense of Studio Theatre's production budget or the individual. Alteration of borrowed pieces is not allowed without specific prior permission from the Technical Director or Costume Shop Manager. All items must be returned to the scene or costume shop and checked in by the Technical Director or the Costume Shop Manager.

Failure to abide by these rules will result in individual student directors replacing any lost/broken item at their own expense and being prohibited from borrowing stock again.

Publicity is the responsibility of Studio Theatre.

The Chair and the Production Manager schedule Studio Theatre production dates. Performances are generally held in the Thrust Theatre and run three or four nights of a single week.

Rehearsal Process and Production Terms

Rehearsals

Mainstage productions are usually mounted with 4-6 weeks of rehearsal before technical rehearsals begin. Because the Department does not intend to overburden students in productions, it has established guidelines governing rehearsals. Prior to technical rehearsals, rehearsals will end by 11:00 P.M., including note sessions. Actors will be scheduled to ensure that they have at least one day off per week. Once a production is on stage and in technical rehearsals, the cut-off time for rehearsals is 11:30 P.M., including notes. If a rehearsal is not finished at that time, the company may expect to be called in before the next technical rehearsal to complete the work from the previous evening. The stage manager may email notes, so be sure to check your email before the next rehearsal.

Costume Parade

Scheduled two weeks before dress rehearsal, dress parade occurs when the director and costume designer first see actors in costume as a group and under stage lights. Notes for finishing costumes are taken at this time. Participation in the costume parade is mandatory for all actors in a given production. Costume parades are closed to the public. No photographs may be taken and no information or images about the costume design/costumes themselves may be posted online at any time during the costume parade. All actors must wear undergarments to the costume parade that they plan on wearing on stage for approval by the designer. All actors must wear undergarments when wearing costumes on stage.

Load-In

Beginning the week before opening, scenery is moved into the theatre, assembled, and finished on stage; and lights are hung, cabled, focused, and cued. The costume shop generally will load-in costumes to the performance space the Thursday before first dress rehearsal. Costume items cannot be used before first dress unless the costume designer has given prior permission for specific pieces.

Dry Tech

During the dry tech, lighting and sound cues are set with the Director, Designers, and Stage Manager present, but without the actors.

Technical Rehearsal

Usually the Saturday before opening, actors, technical elements (scenery, props, lights, sound), and crews are brought together for the first time. Technical rehearsals are intended to coordinate these elements and work out exact procedures and timing for cues, props, scene changes, and so on. These rehearsals are usually stop-and-start and can sometimes be tedious. Patience and good humor make them more pleasant for everyone.

Dress Rehearsal

On the Sunday (sometimes Monday) before opening, costumes are added. The look of the actor (in full costume, hair, and makeup) and of the production are completed. All actors must have the proper undergarments required and makeup kits for this rehearsal (see *Costume Shop Policies*.) Quick costume changes and any final problems are worked out at this time. A rehearsal for quick costume changes will happen prior to the run with the Costume Crew and Wardrobe Master.

Performance and Attendance

Mainstage productions usually run one to two weeks. Some productions also have a Monday night performance and/or a Thursday or Friday morning matinee for local high schools.

MFA students must attend at least one performance of any Mainstage production in which they are not performing.

Talkbacks/Post-Show Discussions

Selected performances may be followed by a talkback discussion with the audience. The protocol is as follows:

- When the show is over, actors should remove their full costume and makeup and then report to the Technical Director.

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- Actors may be asked to participate in the talkback once they are out of costume.
- Crew begins post-show responsibilities as quietly and thoughtfully as possible, but they should not wait until after the talkback.
- The talkback moderator begins the discussion as the crew work continues.

Strike

After the last performance, the production is disassembled. All members of a company (running crew, shop crew, and actors) are expected to participate in strike. Actors should remove their costumes before beginning strike. The Production Manager strives to complete strike within one hour, but this is not always possible.

Strike procedures should be announced to the cast at the first tech. These include:

- Breaking down scenery and lights;
- Helping costume crew get costume items together and checking with wardrobe master;
- Getting dressing rooms and backstage in order.

Before leaving strike, actors must check with the Production Manager or his representative.

Rehearsal Spaces

Because of the shortage of space, rehearsal rooms must be reserved in advance.

Reservations are made in the Department's Main Office. First choice for rehearsal times may not be available. Classes have priority over productions. Mainstage productions have priority over all other productions. Mainstage productions going up first have priority over subsequent Mainstage productions. Spaces available for reservation include: Room 133; Room 131; and Room 115. Use of the Thrust requires the Chair's prior permission.

Other spaces not in the reservation book may also be available. Be advised that disturbing a class will force an end to any rehearsal. Potential rehearsal spaces at the Playhouse include the basement under the stage, the lobby, and the green room. Contact Braden Blauser about the availability of space and access to the Playhouse after hours.

Calendars, Scheduling, and Department Meetings

School-Year Calendar and Vacation Schedules

The calendar for each academic year is posted on the UofL website: www.louisville.edu.

Remember that graduate student responsibilities—especially for those holding assistantships—begin in early August and continue the week after finals in May. Travel plans at the beginning and end of the school year, and at the beginning and end of the Fall, Winter, and Spring vacation breaks, must not encroach on any class, performance, or assistantship duties. If in doubt, check with your Chair or Major Advisor before making travel plans or reservations.

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Faculty Meetings

Department faculty meetings are generally held once monthly on Tuesdays, from 12:45-2:15 PM. Academic and production issues, season selection, and the general business of the Department are discussed during these meetings.

2nd year graduate students planning upcoming thesis projects may be invited to meetings dealing with season selection. Inquires about these season selection Departmental meetings should be directed to the Department Chair. (See *Thesis Performance*)

Town Hall Meetings

Occasional Town Hall meetings may be held to announce upcoming events and auditions, to share experiences and information, and to build a sense of community throughout the Department. Town Hall meetings are held in response to the initiative and demonstrated interest of students. All Theatre Arts students are encouraged to attend, as are Department faculty and staff. These meetings are intended to facilitate free communication among the students and to improve communication between students, faculty, and staff.

Off-campus Theatre Opportunities

Summer Internships and Professional Opportunities

A bulletin board in the hallway outside Room 131 is devoted to summer internships at professional theatres. Many successful theatre artists first entered the profession through such internships. The Department strongly recommends that students pursue these opportunities during the summer. Although many are unpaid or low paid, such internships can jumpstart your career and add credibility to your resume.

A student interested in undertaking an internship during the academic year must get prior approval from their Advisor and the Department Chair.

Theatre and Other Opportunities in Louisville

Graduate Students in the MFA program must obtain permission from their Advisor before auditioning outside the University or seeking jobs. MFA students with assistantships seeking additional employment during the academic year must receive written permission to do so from their Advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Additional employment during the academic year is acceptable only if it does not conflict with **any** Departmental obligations and, if a student has a GTAship, only with written authorization from the Dean of the Graduate School.

Students on probation but not dismissed from the program may not audition externally except under extraordinary circumstances with written approval from their Advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Department Chair.

Graduate students with assistantships should refer to the section of this handbook titled *Graduate Teaching Assistantships* to understand the limitations on outside work, whether paid or unpaid.

Section III: Production Policies

General Information

1. Food and drinks are allowed *only* in the Green Room. Never eat, drink, or smoke in a dressing room, and never do so in costume. Dispose of all food containers and trash in the appropriate waste/recycling containers located in the lobby. Do not leave food out since it will quickly attract pests. Do not try to hide food/perishables in the drawers of the Thrust Theatre dressing rooms. Only re-sealable water bottles are allowed in the dressing room.
2. Guests are not allowed in the Green Room, dressing rooms, or backstage before or during a performance. After a Playhouse performance, guests can be met in the Green Room, but not in dressing rooms or backstage. At the Thrust, guests should be met in the lobby. Actors should remove full costumes and put them away properly before meeting the public.
3. The Green Room and backstage areas must remain quiet before and during performance. Conversation above a whisper in the Green Room, dressing rooms, halls, and vomms can be heard in the house, especially at the Thrust Theatre. If lights are off or dimmed, it means you are in a quiet area. **Do not** change the lights. If you must move backstage during performance, move carefully and quietly. Never run backstage.
4. A call sheet is posted backstage. It is important that all company members sign in upon arriving at the theatre.
5. Parking is not allowed in the Playhouse or Thrust loading dock. Park on 3rd Street, Floyd Street, or neighboring areas. During performances, the dock area is classified as a fire lane, and cars will be towed.
6. Smoking is not allowed in any University facility or on any part of the campus. In addition, the University of Louisville Student Handbook defines standards of student conduct, including the possession and use of alcohol and/or controlled substances. Persons in violation of these regulations are subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from a production.
7. The callboard is the communication system for the Theatre Arts Department. The main callboard is located in the Studio Arts Building outside Room 131. Each show currently in production has an area on the callboard. Rehearsal calls, schedules, and information pertaining to shows will always be posted there first. Never remove information from the callboard, unless you are permitted to do so. Make sure to check the callboard daily.

The Role of the Stage Manager

In Pre-production and in Rehearsals

The Stage Manager is the center of communications in the production process. As the key organizer and expeditor for the director, the Stage Manager ensures that necessary information is processed and relayed to all members of the production company: director; actors; dramaturg; designers/artistic staff; crew heads; and technical staff. The Stage Manager plays a key role in scheduling and managing all aspects of the production.

In the Theatre

From technical rehearsals until the end of the run, the Stage Manager is in charge of all aspects of the production as they come together on stage. Stage management is often considered the most demanding position in a theatre company. The Stage Manager is responsible for overseeing everything that may happen in the production once the production moves into the theatre. All actors and crew report to the Stage Manager. As a leader and motivator within the company, it is up to the Stage Manager to establish the standards of common courtesy and respect among the artists and craftspeople involved in a production. Graduate students are expected to set a positive and professional example of attitude and behavior to aid the Stage Manager in their leadership of the production.

Production Procedures and Advice for Actors

1. Check the callboard daily for calls, rehearsal schedules, costume fittings, and other important communications.
2. Arrive on time and ready to work for all calls (rehearsals, fittings, etc.).
3. The Stage Manager is your first source of information in rehearsal and in the theatre. Once the show opens, the Stage Manager is the final authority for all production questions. Show due respect to the Stage Manager's authority.
4. Notify the Stage Manager immediately of possible delays or absences. Never leave the rehearsal hall or theatre without the consent of the Stage Manager.
5. Inform the Stage Manager of any unusual physical or vocal warm-up needs for performance that might disturb the audience. In the Thrust Theatre, actors cannot use the halls after 7:00 without being seen by audience members.
6. The Stage Manager gives time calls before the show. Please respond when you receive a call by saying, "Thank you" and repeating the call time (ex. "Thank you ten!" for the ten minute call). Time calls are given: one hour before curtain; at half-hour before curtain (when the house opens); at fifteen minutes before curtain; at ten minutes; at five minutes; and at places. Places means that you are to proceed immediately to your pre-show position. If you are not in position, the show will start without you.
7. During a performance, it is an actor's responsibility to be in place and on time for all cues, entrances, and exits.
8. Check personal and pre-set props and costumes before each performance.
9. After a performance, return all props to the tables and hang all costumes and pieces properly.
10. If you have a question, do not hesitate to ask. If something doesn't work or you are having difficulty with a prop or costume, notify the Stage Manager so that the problem can be fixed. Costume notes must be written on the sheets provided in the dressing rooms or hallways.

11. Remember that scenery, costumes, and properties are the contribution of other artists in the production. Do not move or change things without approval from the Stage Manager. Under no circumstances are you to leave the building in a costume, unless granted permission from the Costume Designer.

12. Food, incense, candles, and anything that might damage costumes or props may not be brought into the dressing rooms or backstage. Eating in costume is not allowed. You may drink only water (carefully) in costume.

13. No personal items should be left on the prop tables.

14. Do not loiter backstage during scene changes or distract crew members while they are working.

15. On matinee days, do not leave the building between performances without first checking first with the Stage Manager.

16. You are required to be available for photo calls. Announced by the Stage Manager with a minimum 24-hour notice, they begin immediately after a dress rehearsal or a performance, starting at the end of the show and working backward. Photo calls are usually kept to 30 minutes. In lieu of a photo call, the designers may opt to take photos during final dress rehearsal. This is the only time photos may be taken during a performance, unless approved by the Chair.

17. You are expected to participate in the strike after the final performance. After removing costumes and makeup, you should report to the Technical Director.

18. Treat actors, crew, and all members of the company as you wish to be treated. Common courtesy and the words “Please” and “Thank you” will take you a long way in the theatre.

Box Office Policies

General Information

The Box Office is located in the HPES/Studio Arts Building. The Box Office hours are Monday Friday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. The Box Office also opens one hour before each Mainstage performance at the venue where the production is being held.

Tickets are \$10 for UofL Students; \$15 for Students, Senior Citizens, and UofL Faculty/Staff, and \$20 for everyone else.

Complimentary Tickets

Students with Work Scholarship and Work Study and GTAs receive one complimentary ticket in advance at the physical Box Office.

The cast and crew of a Mainstage production and Theatre Arts faculty/staff receive two complimentary tickets in advance.

“In advance” tickets must be reserved before the week that the production opens. That means that the Friday before tech weekend is the last day that you can obtain your complimentary tickets.

Cast and crew complimentary ticket requests must be arranged in advance through the Stage Manager and the Box Office Manager. Stage Managers of Mainstage productions should check in with the Box Office Manager before rehearsals begin to receive a sheet for cast and crew to request their allotted comps. Again, the deadline to obtain complimentary tickets is the Friday before opening.

Costume Shop Policies

Required Items

The costume shop will provide a production’s cast with information regarding costume policies and actor requirements at the first rehearsal, at which time a representative of the costume area may be present to answer any questions.

The University of Louisville Costume Shop requires each actor to have the following items for use during rehearsals and performances:

- 1.Character Shoes
- 2.Rehearsal Clothing
- 3.a Ben Nye Theatrical Makeup Kit (about \$55).
- 4.Proper undergarments for fittings and performances (ex. a supportive bra or dance belt. Any questions about this should be directed to the Costume Designer.)

Kneepads, if desired for rehearsal or performance, are the students’ responsibility.

Costume Procedures that are Responsibility of the Actors

1.Measurement Appointments: After being cast in a show, you must call the shop or come by to make an appointment to have your measurements taken. You must do this for every show, even if the shop has previously taken your measurements. This allows designers to check for weight shifts and to determine new measurements for characters wearing body padding. Measurements must be completed once the cast list has been posted. Please let the costume shop staff know about any allergies you have pertaining to costumes.

2.Scheduling Costume Fittings: You will be required to come in for a minimum of 2 costume fittings per production. Costume fittings are different and separate from a measurement appointment. Fittings can be scheduled either by signing up through the Stage Manager, signing up on the callboard, and/or by using Sign-up Genius online. Please note that you may be required to come in for more than 2 fittings, as determined by the costume designer. Attending fittings is to be taken seriously. An absence holds up work that needs to be done in the costume shop. This may in turn result in not having all costume pieces ready for tech week.

3.Costume Fittings/Appointments: Once you have scheduled a fitting either by signing up at rehearsal through the Stage Manager, on the callboard, or through Sign-up Genius, you must keep your fitting and be on time. The costume shop has made the day's schedule around your fitting. Please be prompt. For the fitting, you will need to bring your character shoes and the proper undergarments that you plan on wearing during the run of the play (no sports bras unless required by the costume designer).

4.Makeup: Each graduate student is required to have a Ben Nye Theatrical Kit (about \$55). These can be purchased at Caulfield's Novelty, 1006 W. Main Street in Louisville (<https://caulfields.com/>). Students with questions about which kit to purchase should contact Professor Zhanna Goldentul at z.goldentul@louisville.edu. If a production requires specialty makeup for your look, the costume shop will provide it. In addition to the theatrical makeup kit, each actor will need to provide moisturizing lotion for the face from makeup-induced breakouts. All performers must have mascara in their kit if not included. The costume shop does not pay for manicures or pedicures (unless otherwise stated by the costume designer).

5.Hair: Whenever possible and/or appropriate, the costume designer will explore the option of using an actor's own hair. Each actor will sign a contract on the back of their measurement form pledging not to make any changes to their hair while in the given production. In other words, altering your hair from how it appeared at the time of your audition will require permission of the costume designer in advance. If the production requires the actor to change the look of their hair, the director will discuss this at the first fitting with the costume designer. If possible, the costume shop will provide a wig to change the look of the hair. Actors with long hair to be put up under a wig cap must provide their own hair ties and bobby pins for pin curling. If you are unfamiliar with the technique of pin curling to fit hair underneath a wig, the costume shop will provide training. If the actor is asked to change their own look, the costume shop will pay for the cut, color change, braids, extensions, etc. If the hair needs a routine cut (ex. trim a current style), this is not considered a huge change and will be paid for by the individual actor.

6.Costume Parade: Each actor must bring required shoes, undergarments, and hair supplies to the costume parade. All costume parades are closed to the public; no one may take photographs before, after, or during the costume parade without permission from the costume designer (this also includes video and other postings on social media). You must be on time for the parade call. In general, costume parades are on Wednesday evenings from 6pm-9pm in the Thrust Theatre. When you arrive, report to the costume shop, room 123, to collect your costume pieces. Once dressed, take your accessory box and come to the Thrust Theatre; you should not sit in your costume. Stay in the theatre quietly so that the designer and the director may do their job quickly. The personal opinion of actors about the look of their clothing is inappropriate and not welcome at this time. You are wearing someone's design, which is the designer's artistic contribution to the production. Please inform the designer immediately if a costume is hurting you in any way or if the costume restricts your movement.

7.Dress Rehearsals: Each actor must bring full makeup and hair supplies (hair spray, hair dryer, etc.) to the first dress rehearsal. Special supplies will be provided as part of your costume. Please be on time. Please leave personal valuables at home, including money, jewelry, good luck charms. UofL is not responsible for lost or stolen items. You may not burn incense or candles of any kind or spray perfumes or body sprays in the dressing rooms. You may not have food of any kind or drink other than bottled water with a resealable cap in the dressing rooms.

If you have questions concerning your wardrobe, direct them to the costume designer or the assistant designer. Your TA 350 crew and the Wardrobe Master will be present at the first dress rehearsal. Introduce yourself and inform them what your preset list is for the performance. Remind crew members of your quick changes (you will be asked to rehearse quick changes before the run with the crew and Wardrobe Master). If there are problems with your costume or you are missing something, please record your concerns on the costume repair list in the dressing room or hallway. You must hang up your costume behind your nametag and place all accessories in your accessory box before leaving the theatre each night. Shoes go on the floor under your station or on your chair. Although this may seem specific, it gives the TA 350 crew students a point of reference for reviewing inventory each night and allows them to do their job faster each night.

8. Kindness will get you far in this business. The backstage crew is the backbone of how costume changes run. They are part of the team, not runners or servants.

9. You may not change anything about your costume unless you have had specific instructions from the costume designer. This includes makeup, hair, and clothing, and the sequence they come in.

Section IV: University Information

For further information about University policies and procedures, consult the current University of Louisville catalog or the Student Handbook provided by Orientation Services to incoming students. Most regulations and guidelines are also posted online at www.louisville.edu.

Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating

Academic dishonesty is prohibited at the University of Louisville. It is a serious offense because it diminishes the quality of scholarship, makes accurate evaluation of student progress impossible, and defrauds those in society who must ultimately depend upon the knowledge and integrity of the institution and its students and faculty.

As defined by the *MLA* 9th edition, “Plagiarism is presenting another person’s ideas, information, expressions, or entire work as one’s own. Plagiarism may sometimes have legal repercussions (e.g., when it involves copyright infringement) but is always unethical” (96). On an individual level, “plagiarism reflects poorly on a person’s judgment, integrity, and honesty”; on a social level, “it erodes public trust in information” (97).

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches in any community. In the Theatre Arts Department, they will result in grade reduction or failure and other serious penalties, including expulsion from the Department or University.

The following are examples of plagiarism or cheating:

1. Presenting the ideas of others as your own without giving credit to the source. This includes paraphrasing a source without citation.
2. Use of quotations without quotation marks and without crediting the source.

- 3.Participating in a group project where the work presented is not each student's own, unless the instructor assigned a group project as part of your work for the class. If so, you must give credit to the entire group for the end product.
- 4.Submitting the same paper or assignment for credit in more than one course without discussing this option in advance with the instructor(s) involved.
- 5.Submitting material written by someone else as your own. This includes purchasing a term or research paper or submitting an assignment generated through AI.
- 6.Submitting a paper or assignment for which you received so much help that the ideas and writing are not your own.
- 7.Copying someone else's exam or homework.
- 8.Referring to a text, class notes, or other material during an exam without being authorized by the instructor to do so.
- 9.Purposefully allowing another student to copy your work or to submit work you have written as their own.
- 10.Collaborating with others on a take-home exam or spending more time than that specified by the instructor on a take-home exam (unless it is a group project).

Defenses Against Plagiarism

If you are unsure about the proper use of sources or the extent to which collaboration on an assignment, exam, or direction is permissible, talk to your instructor.

When in doubt, always credit outside sources of information, ideas, or wording, including Internet sources. Students are not penalized for giving too much credit to the work of others.

Disciplinary Action by the Instructor

An instructor who suspects a student of plagiarism or cheating must inform that student as soon as possible. Instructors who detect plagiarism or cheating will decide whether to reduce the grade for the assignment or for the entire course, even to an F. A written report of the facts in the case and the action taken is given to the student's Advisor, the DGS, and the Department Chair; a copy is given to the student.

Disciplinary Action by the Graduate Advisor, DGS, and Chair

The Advisor, DGS, and Chair may uphold, as the offense may warrant, the following or other penalties: placement on disciplinary probation; suspension from the program for a semester or longer; dismissal from the program; or recommendation to the President for expulsion from the University.

Appeals

If you feel that the finding of plagiarism or cheating is in error or the penalty unjust, you may request a hearing. Check with the Graduate School for further information regarding the appeals process.

Sexual Harassment

Title IX/Clery Act Notification

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sex discrimination violate University policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain **confidential** support from the PEACC Program ([852-2663](tel:852-2663)), Counseling Center ([852-6585](tel:852-6585)), and Campus Health Services ([852-6479](tel:852-6479)). To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact the Dean of Students ([852-5787](tel:852-5787)) or University of Louisville Police ([852-6111](tel:852-6111)).

Disclosure to **University faculty or instructors** of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on campus, in a University-sponsored program, or involving a campus visitor or University student or employee (whether current or former) is **not confidential** under Title IX. Faculty and instructors must forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the University's Title IX officer.

For more information, see the Sexual Misconduct Resource Guide (<http://louisville.edu/hr/employeerelations/sexual-misconduct-brochure>)

Office of the Ombudsperson

The Office of the Ombudsperson exists to deal with such issues as: grievance procedures; access to facilities; grading practices; disputes about fees; disciplinary matters; discrimination; sexual harassment; campus housing; health and safety concerns; and any other issue that is of concern to faculty, staff, and students. The Office of the Ombudsperson serves as a prompt, impartial, and confidential means of facilitating dialogue between any opposing parties on campus. The Ombudsperson's mission is to ensure that all members of the University community receive fair and equitable treatment within the University system. The Ombudsperson has no power to order changes in rules, regulations, policies, procedures, or the behavior of others. However, the Ombudsperson can often provide an effective route in solving problems. For more information, visit <http://louisville.edu/ombuds>.

Student Concerns Regarding Faculty and Staff Actions/Behavior

The procedures described below apply to complaints about any member of the teaching staff in the College of Arts and Sciences. Complaints may concern grading grievances, inequities in assignments, inappropriate faculty contact, assignment of grades, or incompetence in oral communication. Students with complaints are responsible for the following procedures:

1. Ordinarily, students should first attempt to resolve the matter with the instructor.
2. If the complaint is not resolved and the instructor is a teaching assistant, go to the Course Supervisor.

- 3.If the instructor is a faculty member, go to the Department Chair.
- 4.If this does not resolve the issue, the student may consult the Department Ombudsperson.
- 5.The University can also call upon professional facilitation, which may be arranged through the Chair.
- 6.If the complaint cannot be resolved through these procedures, a student may file a formal complaint under the procedures established in Chapter 6 of the *UofL Redbook*, Student Governance and Student Affairs Administration.
- 7.If your complaint involves sexual harassment, you need not follow these procedures. (See the *Title IX/Clery Act* section)

Alcohol, Firearm, and Drug Policy

University policy bans possession or use of alcohol, firearms, or drugs on school grounds, except in the case of alcohol publicly available at officially-sponsored University functions.

The Department specifically prohibits the use of alcohol, firearms, or drugs in class, rehearsals, or performances. The safety of others and the integrity of the work process must be respected. Anyone found under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the extent that their performance is impaired or is affecting the performance of others will be asked to leave the premises. If necessary, the Department of Public Safety will be called. In the case of academic classes, it is the instructor's responsibility to determine evidence of impairment or possession of banned substances or items. In the case of rehearsal or performance, students may be dismissed from the production with a failing grade, when applicable.

Open Flame Policy

The burning of candles, sparklers, incense, paper leaflets, combustible figurines or pyrotechnic devices is prohibited on University property and is subject to confiscation. Theatrical performances and ritualistic ceremonies involving the use of open flames, smoke foggers, and barbecue grills must be pre-approved by the Department of Public Safety. For more information, contact Department of Public Safety/University Fire Marshal at 502-852-3473 or at <http://louisville.edu/firesafety>.

Registration

The first step in registering for classes is to consult the Schedule of Courses at <http://htmlaccess.louisville.edu/classSchedule/setupSearchClassSchedule.cfm>

Students should use the Schedule of Courses to build their schedules, in conjunction with advice from their Advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies and, if they are pursuing the GCAAT, the Director of the AATP.

If students need to add or drop a class after the normal registration period at the beginning of each semester, they need to fill out a form available online and forward it to the Registrar's office (502-852-6522). Details can be found at: <https://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students>.

Remember, all University fees and fines must be paid before you can register.

Students pursuing the GCAAT must apply for the certificate and pay a one-time fee (\$40 as of June 2023). GCAAT application information can be found at <https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/programs-study/graduate-certificate-african-american-theatre/#admissiontext>.

Adding/Dropping Courses

This can be done either with a form or over the phone (see the *Registration* section above).

Blackboard

UofL requires all instructors, including GTAs, to post their syllabus on Blackboard at least one week before the start of classes. Blackboard training is available through the Delphi Center. Visit <http://louisville.edu/delphi> for more information.

Email

The University provides students with an email account free of charge. You are expected to check your University email at least once per day.

Address Changes

Student must provide the Department of Theatre Arts Main Office with an up-to-date address, email, and phone number for both the academic year and the summer.

You can change your address with the University online through Ulink. Please also notify the Department of Theatre Arts Main Office of any such changes.

Student Health Services

Graduate assistants who meet certain criteria will receive the University-sponsored student health insurance program at no charge. This is a supplemental insurance plan and cannot be removed or refunded to you. Coverage begins the first day of the month you are hired and terminates on the last day of the month that you work for UofL during the academic year only (August-May). This plan does not provide dental or vision coverage. For more information, visit <http://louisville.edu/campushealth/>.

Student ID Cards

The student ID card is a permanent identification to be used while you are a student. To receive an ID, or to report one lost or stolen, students should visit the Campus Card Office in the lower level of the Houchens building. You will be charged a fee for its replacement. For more information, visit <http://louisville.edu/cardinalcard/>.

Student ID cards can be activated through the Department of Public Safety to provide after-hours access to the classroom building. There is a \$20 charge to replace a lost key.

University Counseling Service

Counseling services are confidential and, in most cases, free to University students. Professionally-trained psychologists staff the University Counseling Service. Counseling topics include careers, academic and study skills, and personal and interpersonal relationships. Couples' counseling and group therapy are also available. Appointments can be made in person or by telephone (852-6585).

Vehicle Registration/Parking

Students who own or operate a motor vehicle (car, motorcycle, or scooter) and want to park in UofL lots are required to register their vehicle and obtain a parking permit.

Parking permits are available in the Parking Office at 2126 Floyd Street Suite 100. The Parking Office is located on the ground floor of the Floyd Street Parking Garage on Floyd Street, between the Thrust Theatre Building and the Student Activities Center. There are several types of passes. The two of most interest to students are the green permit and the blue permit. You may purchase the blue permit only if you are teaching and have a letter from the Department Chair stating so. See Jessica Key for more information about obtaining a blue permit.

Parking Permits may be purchased online or in the Parking Office. Contact the Campus Parking Office (852-7275) for current prices, maps of lot locations, and other parking rules and regulations, or visit louisville.edu/parking.

Under no circumstances are students allowed to park in any Theatre Arts loading zone, unless they have obtained the temporary permit to park there for Theatre Arts purposes. If you park in the loading zone, your car may be ticketed or towed at your own expense.

The University blocks students with unpaid parking tickets from graduating.

It is possible for the truly determined to park on side streets or at parking meters. It is also possible to walk, carpool, or ride a bike to school. There are convenient bike racks near both theatres.

Section V: Additional Department Information

Faculty Directory

Braden Blauser (Playhouse, 852-8688)
Assistant Professor, Production Manager, and Technical Director
braden.blauser@louisville.edu

Catron Booker (HP 127A, 852-8576))
Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts and Co-Head of the African American Theatre Program
Catron.Booker@louisville.edu

Dr. J. Ariadne Calvano (HP 112, 852-8447)
Assistant Professor of Acting and Movement
ariadne.calvano@louisville.edu
<https://www.ariadnecalvano.com/>

Rachel Carter (HP 120, 852-8446)
Assistant Professor of Acting and Voice
rachel.hillmer@louisville.edu

Kevin Gawley (The Playhouse, 852-8748)
Associate Professor
Resident Scenic, Lighting, and Projection Designer
Director of Undergraduate Studies
kevin.gawley@louisville.edu.

LaShondra Hood (HP 130, 852-8562)
Assistant Professor (Term) and Co-Head of the African American Theatre Program
Lashondra.Hood@louisville.edu

Zhanna Goldentul (HP 127, 852-8579)
Assistant Professor (Term) Resident Costume and Makeup Designer
z.goldentul@louisville.edu

Jennifer Pennington (HP 115, 852-8576)
Assistant Professor of Acting
jennifer.pennington@louisville.edu

Dr. Janna Segal (HP 113, 852-8445)
Associate Professor of Theatre History, Dramatic Literature, and Dramaturgy and Director of Graduate Studies
janna.segal@louisville.edu

Shona Tucker (MITC Suite 109 Office 119 in Fall 2023, and HP 116 thereafter; 852-8444)
Department Chair and Professor of Acting
shona.tucker@louisville.edu

Jerome Wills (The Playhouse, 852-8683)
Assistant Professor (Term) of Technology and Design
jerome.wills@louisville.edu

Staff Directory

Stephan Carpenter (MITC Suite 109 Office 120 in Fall 2023, and HP 117 thereafter; 852-7682)
Program Coordinator, Box Office Manager
stephan.carpenter@louisville.edu

Miranda Cisneros (she/her/hers) (The Playhouse)
Technical Production Manager, Shop Supervisor
miranda.cisneros@louisville.edu

Jessica Key (HP 118, 852-5922)
Program Coordinator, Sr.
jessica.key@louisville.edu

Melissa Kenney Shepherd (HP 128, 852-8441)
Costume Shop Manager, Part-Time Faculty
melissa.shepherd@louisville.edu

Department of Theatre Arts' Social Media

UofL Theatre Arts Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UofLTheatreArts>
UofL Theatre Arts Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/uofltheatrearts/>
UofL Theatre Arts Youtube:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpC_hxGYWBBOa4a8xdSzmew/featured
AATP Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/officialuoflaatp>
AATP Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/officialuoflaatp/>
AATP Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1b6peBZIFGmCCWgTWI19bg>

Alumni Listserv

Shortly before graduation, students may join the University of Louisville Theatre Faculty and Alumni Listserv, an online service established to foster connections among alumni of the Department. Members working across the United States and abroad share information about job opportunities, artistic activities, and current productions. This service can facilitate networking into the theatre world.

To join, send an email from the address you intend to use for the listserv. The email should be addressed to listserv@listserv.louisville.edu. The message should read: SUB theatre, your first name, your last name.

Alumni Networking

In addition to the Department's social media pages listed below, alumni are encouraged to join

LinkedIn.

UofL Theatre Arts Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UofLTheatreArts>

UofL Theatre Arts Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/uofltheatrearts/>

UofL Theatre Arts Youtube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpC_hxGYWBBOa4a8xdSzmew/featured

AATP Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/officialuoflaatp>

AATP Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/officialuoflaatp/>

AATP Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1b6peBZIFGmCCWgTWIi9bg>

National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST)

Founded in 1969, NAST is an organization of schools, conservatories, colleges and universities. It has approximately 140 accredited institutional members, including UofL. It establishes national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials in theatre. Institutional Membership is gained only through the peer review process of accreditation. For further information visit <http://nast.arts-accredit.org>.

Covid Precautions

Students are expected to abide by the University's Covid-19 policies, which are available here: [On-Campus COVID-19 Policies — Office of Admissions \(louisville.edu\)](#).

Because our work requires people to be in close contact with each other, students are strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated and regularly receive boosters. To help protect all our community members, testing may be required during rehearsals and productions.

Masking in Theatre Arts classes, shops, rehearsals, and performances is voluntary *unless mandated by an instructor or supervisor*. Should the region's community spread level shift to "medium" or "high" on the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services Covid Resource website (kycovid19.ky.gov - kycovid19.ky.gov (egov.com)), this policy will be re-examined and may be changed based on prevailing conditions.

Handbook Revisions

The Graduate Handbook is periodically updated. Any changes to this handbook made in the students' course of study are the students' responsibility.

Section VI: Additional Theatre Information

Theatre Associations and Conferences

Students should become familiar with theatre associations and conferences that provide opportunities for the presentation of research and creative work. Some of these include:

AFTA: African Theatre Association
ASTR: American Society for Theatre Research
ATHE: Association of Theatre in Higher Education
BTN: Black Theatre Network
CDC: Comparative Drama Conference
LMDA: Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas
MLA: Modern Language Association
SAA: Shakespeare Association of the Americas
TCG: Theatre Communications Group

Theatre Publications and Information

Students should become familiar with publications that provide useful information about professional theatre and opportunities in it. Some of these include:

American Theatre, which focuses on not-for-profit resident theatre and is available to read through the Ekstrom Library or through discounted student subscriptions

ArtSearch, an online publication with information on jobs and internships

Backstage (www.backstage.com) for news and casting information

The New York Times for reviews and information on New York theatre

PerformInk (www.performink.com), which bills itself as “Chicago’s Entertainment Trade Paper”

Black Masks (www.blackmasks.com), an African American performance and entertainment magazine.

Section VII: MFA Rubrics

The following rubrics are assessment tools faculty use to measure student growth in the program’s primary evaluative areas. Students are encouraged to refer to these rubrics for self-assessment.

Audition Rubric

Score Levels	Preparation	Introduction	Demonstration of Acting Technique	Tempo and Rhythm	Movement, Voice, and Clarity	Improvement
A	Actor has critically read and is extremely familiar with the play. Text is delivered flawlessly and fluidly from memory (if applicable).	Introduction is clear and confident. It contains all required elements (actor's name, play title, playwright's name).	Strong character choices are made motivated by the actor's imagination, the text, and (if applicable) the other actor(s).	Actor understands and uses beats of the text. Tempo and rhythm are appropriate to text and have logical build.	All choices as to how and when to move are specific and based on motivation of character, not on actor's individual habits. Actor is clear, easy to understand, and shows vocal variety.	Actor successfully incorporates feedback from previous auditions and classwork. Actor shows significant growth in acting choices, voice, and movement.
B	Actor has carefully read the play. The text is delivered from memory (if applicable).	Introduction contains the required elements, but lacks some confidence and clarity.	Mostly strong character choices are made, motivated by the actor's imagination, the text, and (if applicable) the other actor(s).	Actor understands and uses most beats of the text. Tempo and rhythm are generally appropriate to the text.	Most choices as to how and when to move are specific and based on motivation of character, not on actor's habits. Actor is mostly clear, easy to understand, and shows some vocal variety.	Actor utilizes feedback from previous auditions and classwork. Actor shows growth in acting, voice, and movement.
C	Actor has read the play, but not carefully. The text is mostly delivered from memory (if applicable).	Introduction is missing one or more of the required elements and lacks some confidence and clarity.	An adequate amount of motivated character choices are made.	Actor has an adequate understanding of beats of the text. Tempo and rhythm are only sometimes appropriate to the text.	Some choices as to how and when to move are specific and based on motivation of character. Actor is usually clear, but lacks much vocal variety.	Actor adequately applies feedback from previous auditions and classwork. Actor shows growth in two areas of acting, voice, and movement.
D	Actor has done a cursory reading or only read part of the play. The text is not delivered from memory (if applicable).	Introduction is missing two or more of the required elements and lacks confidence and clarity.	Only a few character choices are made, and most are not motivated.	Actor struggles to use beats and rhythm of the text. Tempo and rhythm are only occasionally appropriate to the text.	Few choices as to how and when to move are specific and based on motivation of character. Actor is occasionally clear, and lacks vocal variety.	Actor shows some growth, but only in one area of acting, voice, and movement.
F	Actor has not read the play. The text is not delivered from memory (if applicable).	There is no introduction.	Character choices are not clear or motivated.	Actor does not understand or use beats of the text. Rhythm is not appropriate to the text.	Choices as to how and when to move are not specific or based on motivation of character. Actor is not clear and lacks vocal variety.	Actor shows no growth in any areas of acting, voice, and movement.

Performance Rubric

Score Levels	Preparation	Professionalism	Demonstration of Acting Technique	Tempo and Rhythm	Movement, Voice, and Clarity	Improvement
A	The actor's thorough analysis of and research into the performance text has led to an imaginative interpretation of the character that supports the production. All lines are clearly memorized and word perfect.	The actor collaborated extremely well with the director and ensemble, and worked professionally at all times with all members of the production team.	Strong character choices are made motivated by the actor's imagination, the text, and the other actor(s). Relationships in the performance are firmly established and evident. Actor remains present and aware in themselves and with scene partner(s) and audience.	Actor understands and uses beats of the text. Tempo and rhythm are appropriate to text and have logical build.	Actor makes non-habitual text, voice, and physical choices. Observable and free flow of breath connecting breath to each thought. Actor is clear, easy to understand, and shows vocal variety.	Actor has made and continues to make discoveries in the rehearsal and performance process. Individual has grown throughout rehearsal and incorporates notes and feedback from rehearsals and coachings.
B	The actor's analysis of and research into the performance text has led to a clear interpretation of the character that supports the production. All lines are clearly memorized and mostly word perfect.	The actor collaborated well with the director and ensemble, and worked well with all members of the production team.	Mostly strong character choices are made, motivated by the actor's imagination, the text, and the other actor(s). Relationships in the performance are evident. Actor mostly remains present and aware in themselves and with scene partner(s) and audience.	Actor understands and uses most beats of the text. Tempo and rhythm are generally appropriate to the text.	Actor makes some non-habitual text, voice, and physical choices. Observable and free flow of breath and mostly connecting breath to each thought. Actor is mostly clear, easy to understand, and shows some vocal variety.	Actor has made discoveries in the rehearsal process and mostly demonstrates them in performance. Individual has grown throughout rehearsal and incorporates most notes and feedback from rehearsals and coachings.
C	The actor has done some analysis of and research into the performance text that has led to some clear character choices that support the production. Most lines are memorized.	The actor usually collaborated well with the director and ensemble, and usually worked professionally with all members of the production team.	An adequate amount of motivated character choices are made. Relationships in the performance are sometimes evident. Actor sometimes remains present and aware in themselves and with the scene partner(s) and audience.	Actor has an adequate understanding of beats of the text. Tempo and rhythm are sometimes appropriate to the text.	Actor makes few non-habitual text, voice, and physical choices. Observable breath and sometimes connecting breath to each thought. Actor is usually clear, but lacks much vocal variety.	Actor has made discoveries in the rehearsal process and demonstrates these in performance. Individual has grown somewhat throughout rehearsal and incorporates some notes and feedback from rehearsals and coachings.
D	The actor has done little analysis of and research into the performance text. As a result, few character choices have been made. The actor struggles to remember their lines.	The actor struggled to collaborate with the director and ensemble, and struggled to work professionally with all members of the production team.	Only a few character choices are made, and most are not motivated. Relationships in the performance are unclear. The actor is rarely present and aware in themselves, scene partner(s), and audience.	Actor struggles to use beats and rhythm of the text. Tempo and rhythm are only occasionally appropriate to the text.	Actor makes very few non-habitual text, voice, and physical choices. Breath is limited and rarely connects to thought. The actor is occasionally clear, and lacks vocal variety.	Actor makes few discoveries in the rehearsal process and rarely demonstrates these in performance. Individual rarely incorporates notes and feedback from rehearsals and coachings.
F	The actor has done no analysis of and research into the performance text. As a result, no character choices have been made. The actor has not memorized the lines.	The actor did not collaborate with the director and ensemble, and did not work professionally with all members of the production team.	Character choices are not clear or motivated. Relationships in the performance are unclear and not established. The actor is not present and aware in themselves, or with scene partner(s) and audience.	Actor does not understand or use beats of the text. Rhythm is not appropriate to the text.	Actor only makes habitual text, voice, and physical choices. Breath is limited and not connected to thought. The actor is not clear and lacks vocal variety.	Actor makes few to no discoveries in the rehearsal process. Individual does not incorporate notes and feedback from rehearsals and coachings.

MFA Written Thesis Rubric

Score	Conceptual	Thesis Statement and Introduction	Support	Organization	Writing
A	Offers an incisive, sophisticated, and original analysis of the thesis performance work. The analysis demonstrates the student's exceptional ability to critically read, analyze, and interpret a performance text. Exceeds the requirements of the written thesis.	Both contain a strong argument that is specific, relevant, and complex. The thesis introduction clearly delineates the steps by which the argument will be proven) such that the path of the ensuing analysis is justified and supportive to the central argument.	Exceptional use of research materials, including the performance text, in support of the thesis statement. Research materials are relevant, effectively analyzed, and well-integrated into the writing to support the development of original ideas. Exceptional use of description, interpretation, contextualization, and evaluation of the performance text and of other pertinent sources.	The exceptionally well-organized manuscript has an apt, seemingly inevitable sequence of chapters, sections, and paragraphs, all of which support the development of the central argument. Body paragraphs have strong topic sentences that introduce an argument related to the thesis statement. The transitions are clear.	The writing is excellent. The diction is apt and precise, the sentence structure is varied, coherent, and effective, and there are no spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors. The manuscript is in proper MLA format, with in-text citations used appropriately and corresponding to a correctly MLA-formatted Works Cited page. The writing demonstrates significant growth over the course of the thesis writing process.
B	Offers a good analysis of the thesis performance work. The analysis demonstrates the student's strengths at critically reading, analyzing, and interpreting a performance text. The analysis goes beyond the obvious, and it fulfills all of the requirements of the written thesis.	Both contain a clear argument and rationale. The outlined steps by which the argument will be proven support the analysis and determines the structure of the manuscript.	Good use of research materials, including the performance text, in support of the thesis statement. Research materials are appropriate, well analyzed, and integrated into the writer's development of ideas. Good use of description, interpretation, contextualization, and evaluation of the performance text and of other relevant sources.	The well-organized manuscript has distinct units of thought coherently arranged in a logical sequence of chapters, sections, and paragraphs. The structure serves to develop the central argument. Body paragraphs are unified, and there are transitions. The organization demonstrates applied feedback and student's growth in this area during the thesis writing process.	The writing is good. There is some variety of syntax and sentence structure, and the writing effectively communicates the writer's meaning. There may be some wordiness, awkward syntax, or other mechanical problems, such as spelling, grammar, punctuation, or MLA-formatting errors. The writing demonstrates applied feedback and student's growth in this area during the thesis writing process.

C	Offers an adequate analysis of the thesis performance work. The analysis demonstrates an adequate ability to critically read, analyze, and interpret a performance text. The analysis may have some factual, interpretative, or conceptual errors or irrelevancies. Meets most of the requirements of the written thesis.	Both contain an overly general thesis statement and give little indication and/or justification of the organization to follow.	Provides some research and an analysis of the performance text in support of the thesis statement; however, the research is not always relevant, sufficient, or integrated into the writing. The description, interpretation, contextualization, and evaluation of the performance text and of other research materials is adequate.	The uneven organization does not consistently support the development of the central argument. Some chapters, sections, and paragraphs may be effective, but some are brief, weakly unified, or underdeveloped. There may be awkward or missing transitions. The organization demonstrates adequate application of feedback and some growth during the thesis writing process.	The writing is adequate. The writer's meaning is understandable, but there are repeated writing errors that detract from the analysis. These errors may include: occasional major (ex. tense) and frequent minor (ex. articles) grammar errors; occasional imprecise diction; awkward syntax; wordiness; repetitive phrasing; and MLA-formatting errors. The writing demonstrates adequate application of feedback and some growth during the thesis writing process.
D	Offers an insufficient analysis of the thesis performance work. The analysis demonstrates an inadequate ability to critically read, analyze, and interpret a performance text. Confuses some significant concepts and does not meet all of the basic requirements of the written thesis.	Both contain a vague or irrelevant thesis statement. The organization to follow is unclear and/or unjustified.	Insufficient research and analysis of the performance text has been conducted to support the thesis statement. The evidence from the performance text and from other sources is narrative or anecdotal, or is used as a substitute for the writer's own development of ideas. The description, interpretation, contextualization, and evaluation of the script and of other sources is inadequate.	The organization does not support the development of the central argument. Chapters, sections, and paragraphs are brief, weakly unified, or underdeveloped. The transitions may also be illogical. The analysis is repetitive and/or wanders. The organization demonstrates little application of feedback and minimal growth in this area during the thesis writing process.	The writing is inadequate. The writer's meaning is often obfuscated by repeated writing errors. These errors may include: frequent major and minor grammar problems; frequent imprecise diction; wordiness; awkward syntax; and repetitive phrasing. The in-text citations and/or Works Cited page do not adhere to MLA guidelines. The writing demonstrates little application of feedback and minimal growth in this area during the thesis writing process.
F	Offers little analysis of the thesis performance work. The analysis demonstrates no ability to critically read, analyze, and interpret a performance text. Misunderstands significant concepts, and does not meet the basic requirements of the written thesis.	There is no discernible thesis or clear organization to follow.	Little or no research has been conducted to support the thesis statement. Research materials may be misrepresented or misinterpreted. There is little to no description, interpretation, contextualization, and evaluation of the performance text and other sources.	There is no clear organization. The chapters, sections, and paragraphs are arbitrarily arranged. There are no or illogical transitions, and the analysis is difficult to follow. The organization does not apply feedback and lacks growth during the thesis writing process.	The numerous grammatical errors and stylistic problems prohibit the writer from communicating their ideas. There are writing errors in every sentence. There is also a failure to provide MLA-formatted citations for sources and/or no corresponding Works Cited page. The writing does not apply feedback and lacks growth during the thesis writing process.

