



Theatre Arts

School of Arts & Communication

Theatre Arts at UW-La Crosse offers an invigorating and fresh approach to undergraduate theatrical training. Our degree programs allow a wide range of opportunity while creating a focused and individual area of study for each student. We strive to balance vigorous classroom learning with practical production experience allowing for a well-rounded college experience with an emphasis on the collaborative and creative process. The Theatre Arts curriculum allows concentrations in six distinct areas of study: General Theatre Studies, Design/Technical, Performance, Music Theatre, Stage Management and Arts Administration. Students at UW-La Crosse can choose to major in one theatre emphasis area while minoring in another thus enhancing their educational opportunities and professional marketability.

One-on-one contact with our teaching faculty is emphasized and students are guaranteed a degree of personal attention rarely available in programs that accept higher numbers of students. In addition to its full-time faculty, the department frequently brings guest artists to campus from professional and educational theatre. The atmosphere within the Department of Theatre Arts is supportive, positive, collaborative and artistically stimulating. Students are involved in theatre productions each year as backstage crew, technicians, designers, stage managers, performers, and front of house staff. Participation in theatre productions is open to all UW-L students regardless of their major.

The performance stage is the natural extension of the classroom experience. Students receive a tremendous amount of hands-on experience through classroom projects and realized productions. The UW-La Crosse Department of Theatre Arts produces six performances each academic year allowing students to demonstrate, refine and expand the skills they've learned in the classroom. Additional production work is available through classroom projects, senior recitals and designs, undergraduate research grant-funded productions, and other student laboratory productions.

Undergraduate Programs

Major:

- Theatre Arts
with emphases in:
Design/Technical
General Studies
Stage Management
Arts Administration
Music Theatre
Performance

Minor:

- Theatre Arts
with emphases in:
Design/Technical
General Studies
Stage Management
Arts Administration
Music Theatre
Performance

Department Features

Facilities

The Center for the Arts houses the Marie Park Toland Theatre, a 410-seat proscenium theatre with

mechanical thrust supported by fully equipped scene, properties and costume studios, new computerized lighting system, makeup and dressing rooms, and a publicity studio. The Department of Theatre Arts produces four major productions in the Toland Theatre as well as a dance performance and a SummerStage musical.

In addition, the newly remodeled (Fall 2007) Robert Lee Frederick Theatre, a 105-seat theatre with a flexible thrust stage, provides a more intimate setting for smaller scale season productions as well as student developed productions. With a minimum of faculty control, students can experiment, explore and mature artistically with student-developed productions in the Frederick Theatre. The Department of Theatre Arts produces one mainstage season production and a children's theatre performance in the Frederick Theatre as well as various senior acting recitals and student laboratory productions.

Financial Assistance

Scholarships in Theatre Arts, ranging from \$100-\$1000, are awarded for scholastic achievement, theatre

participation and financial need. While most scholarships are awarded to current students, some scholarship dollars are available to incoming freshmen committed to theatre study.

In addition to scholarships, part-time employment in theatre is available through both work-study and student help programs with students earning from \$500-\$1,000 per semester. Depending on skills and interests, student may work in such areas as scenery or costume construction, properties, lighting, or sound design, house management or publicity.

Additional funding for student run productions or research projects is available through undergraduate research grants. Theatre students have received undergraduate research funding to study pub theatre in London, direct or produce a theatre performance, develop multicultural productions, and study theatre in Russia and Scotland. Opportunities for undergraduate research funding for theatre projects are endless with funding for travel expenses, student stipends, and supplies.

Theatre Intensive Opportunities

The Department of Theatre Arts endeavors to provide students with the tools necessary to function as complete artists and self-realized individuals, combining theatrical training and a strong liberal arts curriculum with an emphasis on the collaborative and creative process. Students will receive course credit for hands-on experience in all areas of theatrical production including working in the costume/scene shop, assisting with box office ticket sales, house managing, performing, designing sound and lighting, and contributing to production publicity.

Because we think that is essential for our students to engage with professional theatres prior to graduation, UW-L Theatre Arts faculty and staff actively assist interested students in setting up internships, paid apprenticeships, and employment opportunities at professional theaters. We believe that it is essential for students to actively connect with other theatre professionals prior to graduation. In recent years, students have interned or been employed during their college career at the Guthrie Theatre, Commonweal Theatre, Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC), Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Arena Stage, the Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre, and Colorado Shakespeare Festival.

The final academic assessment of a student's artistic vision and technical abilities is the capstone senior project. These projects are within the student's area of emphasis and require a tremendous amount of research and collaboration with faculty and fellow students to produce the final project. Performance students present an acting recital with a selection of monologues and scene work. Design/technical students often complete a scenic/lighting or costume design for a mainstage production.

Global Perspective

The Department of Theatre Arts is dedicated to providing a diverse and global perspective by teaching coursework in a cultural context from various cultures/geographic

regions around the world, maintaining nontraditional casting whenever possible, and linking with other organizations to provide culturally-rich programming. In order to maintain a competitive edge in a globally diverse field such as the arts, students need opportunities to participate in an international experience. To meet the needs of students, UW-La Crosse has a strong international study abroad program. The Department of Theatre Arts has also created a week-long London Study Tour program which immerses students in the artistic and cultural scene of London with the focus on attending theatre productions, symphony and choral performances, art galleries, and culturally significant locations.

Commitment to Excellence

Excellence in the classroom, as well as in productions, is the foundation of the theatre arts program with student's successfully managing classroom and production work, nightly rehearsals, employment, family and friends, and other extracurricular activities. Our student-to-faculty ratio is smaller than many comparable programs, allowing for more individualized attention. We know who our students are and how they're performing academically and artistically. UW-L Theatre Arts has a comprehensive system in place to provide each student with regular feedback on their progress and development as a student and as an artist.

Theatre students and productions at UW-L have been nationally recognized for their excellence and professionalism by the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF). Since fall 1999, UW-La Crosse productions have been awarded over 60 nominations to the Irene Ryan Acting Competition and over 35 Certificates of Merit in the areas of directing, design, and stage management.

Sample Courses

- Acting I, II, III and IV
- Foundations of Theatrical Production
- Theatre Studies I, II, and III
- Singer/Actor
- World Theatre
- Stagecraft
- Costume Craft
- Stage Makeup
- Stage Management for the Arts
- Lighting Design
- Sound Design and Engineering
- Directing
- Performance Studio
- Scene Painting
- Theatre Management
- Economics and the Arts
- Theatre Technology
- Senior Project

Career Opportunities

UW-L Theatre provides students with the theatrical knowledge, skills, collaborative teamwork, creative problem-solving, and professional connections needed for success after graduation. Careers in theatre include, but are not limited, to:

- Actor
- Artistic Director
- Box Office Manager
- Business Manager
- Choreographer
- Costume Designer
- Costume Shop Supervisor or Technician
- Drama Coach
- Dramaturge
- Director
- Fight Director
- House Manager
- Lighting Designer
- Make-up Artist
- Master Carpenter
- Master Electrician
- Musical Director
- Playwright
- Producer
- Production Manager

- Pyrotechnician
- Recording Engineer
- Rigger
- Scenic Designer
- Scenic Painter
- Sound Designer
- Special Effects Designer
- Stage Crew
- Stage Manager
- Technical Director
- Technician
- Theatre Consultant
- Theatre Critic
- Theatre Teacher/Educator
- Vocal Coach

Occupational Outlook

Our blend of unlimited opportunities and close personal attention produces excellent results. Over 90 percent of our graduates find jobs or pursue graduate level degrees in theatre. Theatre study includes a comprehensive study in theater, practical experience in professional production, and a solid background in the liberal arts. Talent, commitment, energy, and discipline are key personal qualities required for successful theater careers. Most professional occupations today require a college-educated individual who can write and speak well, solve problems, learn new information quickly, utilize technology, and work well with others on a team to solve creative challenges. A major in theatre arts prepares students well for an amazing variety of collaborative, creative, people-oriented careers. The theatre arts degree brings a unique background for success in any area where words, ideas and public contact are important including careers in:

- Admissions Director
- Advertising/Marketing Specialist
- Amusement Park Entertainer
- Art Director or Arts Administrator
- Booking Manager
- Broadcast Journalist
- Business Manager
- Communication Technology Specialist

- Community Affairs Officer
- Computer Design Specialist
- Conflict Mediator
- Copy Writer
- Customer Service Manager
- Development Officer/Fund Raiser
- Draftsman
- Entertainment Producer
- Equipment Operator Facilities Manager
- Exhibit/Display Designer
- Human Relations Specialist
- Interior or Fashion Designer
- Lobbyist
- Media Planner
- Model
- Movie Theater Manager
- Personal or Program Assistant
- Public Relations Specialist
- Radio/TV Announcer
- Recruitment Officer
- Sales Representative
- Special Events Coordinator
- Student Affairs Specialist
- Talent Manager/Scout
- Theater Manager
- Theatre News Correspondent
- Ticket Sales Coordinator
- Tour Guide
- Tourism Program Director
- Training & Development Specialist
- Voice-Over Performer
- Writer/Editor

Capable theatre graduates are encouraged and aided by the department in seeking MFA degrees required for college level teaching or advanced theatre careers. The department takes pride in noting the many graduates who have received full-ride scholarships to some of the most prestigious graduate schools in the country including UCLA, Temple University, University of Florida, Purdue University, California State University-Irving and the North Carolina School of the Arts.

UW-L theatre graduates also work at some of the nations most distinguished theatres including the Guthrie Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, First Stage Children's Theatre, Penumbra Theatre Company, Actors Studio Theatre in

New York, Kentucky Opera, and the Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre. Our alumni can be found stage managing at First Stage Children's Theatre and The Armory Dinner Theatre, designing lights at The New School (New York), performing in various television series and live theatre productions, directing for the Stoughton School District, teaching at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, and serving as backstage floor manager for Carnival Cruise Line productions, just to name a few.

Professional Associations

- Alliance for Wisconsin Theatre Education (AWTE)
- American College Theatre Festival Region III
- Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)
- Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival (ACTF)
- Mid-America Theatre Conference
- United States Institute of Theatre Technology (USITT)
- University Resident Theatre Association (URTA)
- Wisconsin High School Forensic Association/Theatre Festival (WHSFA)

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