

Major Possibilities: Theatre



Career Services

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Summary

- The Theatre Department at Southwestern University provides a rigorous program of study in theatrical design, performance and playwriting, balanced with a solid and comprehensive foundation in theatre history, theory and literature grounded in Southwestern University's liberal arts tradition.
- Students who graduate from Southwestern University with a degree in theatre are well prepared for graduate schools and advanced theatre training programs and for work in the professional theatre.
- The Theatre Department puts on a variety of productions, recently including Little Shop of Horrors, Gypsy, Cloud 9, The Beggar's Opera, and Into the Woods.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, actors endure long periods of unemployment, intense competition for roles, and frequent rejections in auditions. Many actors supplement their income with other jobs, although a select few have extraordinarily high earnings. Formal training through a university or acting conservatory is typical; however, many actors, producers, and directors find work on the basis of their experience and talent alone.

Bachelor of Fine Arts

The Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) is intended for students who want to pursue careers in the professional theatre and/or obtain graduate conservatory training focused on artistic processes. The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre allows students to focus intensively on artistic, academic and production aspects of the theatre discipline. A set of core courses is required for all B.F.A. and B.A. students. Students pursuing the B.F.A. may choose from the Lighting, Costume or Scenic Design. In addition, students who wish to pursue the B.F.A. are admitted to candidacy for that degree only after successfully completing a review process at the end of the fall semester of their sophomore year. Prior to this review process, students are requested to complete some core classes, as well as participate in auditions for each department production and work on one production per semester. For other requirements, contact the Theatre Department or see the course catalog.

Bachelor of Arts

The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) is designed to provide students with a solid grounding in all areas of theatre studies including history, dramatic literature, performance, design, management, and technical theatre. Students who choose the Bachelor of Arts option often combine their work in theatre with work in other disciplines, are interested in graduate education focusing on research and scholarship, or are certifying to teach. Students interested in a B.A. in theatre will take classes in theatre laboratory, theatre history, stagecraft, and acting, as well as in other advanced subjects. Students, whether they are earning a B.A. or a B.F.A., who wish to be successful in theatre should participate in acting workshops and seminars and join guilds in the area of theatre they are interested in. They should also have as much practical experience as possible.

Sample job titles

Arts, Media, Entertainment

Actor/Actress
 Acting Coach
 Advertising Specialist
 Announcer
 Art Director
 Broadcaster
 Casting Director
 Choreographer
 Comedian
 Costume Design
 Director
 Display Designer
 Entertainer
 Event Planner

Exhibit Designer
 Foreign Correspondent
 Journalist
 Lighting Designer
 Lighting Operator
 Make-up Artist
 Marketing Specialist
 Media
 Playwright
 Planner/Salesperson
 Prop Manager
 Rigger/Puppeteer
 Scene Painter
 Set Designer
 Set Draftsman

Sound Designer/Engineer
 Stage Manager
 Stunt Coordinator
 Writer/Editor

Theatre Manager
 Ticket Sales Coordinator
 Special Events Coordinator
 Training Developer

Industry and Commerce

Customer Service Rep.
 Manager
 Marketing Executive
 Art Director
 Community Affairs Specialist
 Booking Manager
 Business Manager
 PR Specialist
 Sales Representative

Government, Service and Education

Arts Organization Consultant
 Dance Instructor
 Campaign Manager Critic
 Military Music Leader
 Preservation
 Press Secretary
 Teacher
 University Professor

Sample internship employers of SU students

Alliance for International, Educational, & Cultural Exchange
 (Washington, DC)
 Arden Theatre Company (Philadelphia, PA)
 Barrington Stage Company (Massachusetts)
 Chicken Shed Theatre (London, UK)
 Child's Play Touring Theatre (Chicago, IL)
 Dallas Theatre Center (Dallas, TX)

Georgetown Roundup Studio (Georgetown, TX)
 Glimmerglass Opera (Cooperstown, NY)
 Houston Guild Theatre (Houston, TX)
 Julliard Professional Intern Program (New York, NY)
 Kitchen Theatre Company (Ithaca, NY)
 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (New York, NY)
 Magazine Publishers of America

Sample internship employers of SU students, continued

New York Shakespeare Festival (New York, NY)
Playhouse on the Square (Memphis, TN)
'stache Media (New York, NY)
Strasberg Institute (New York, NY)

TALS Summer Camp (Austin, TX)
The Ensemble Theatre (Houston, TX)
The Kennedy Center (Washington, DC)
Zilker Hillside Theatre (Austin, TX)

Sample full-time employers of SU students

Actor (California Theatre Center, New Stage Theatre, et.al.)
Artistic Director (Out of Context Productions, LLC)
Assistant Master Electrician (PA Shakespeare Festival)
Audio-Visual Technician (Celebrity Cruise Lines)
Book Manager (Hastings)
Carpenter (Utah Festival Opera)
Casting Assistant (HH Talent & Entertainment)
Costume Shop Manager (Theatre l'Homme Dieu)
Entertainer (Walt Disney World, Orlando)
Executive Director (Out of Context Productions, LLC)
General Management Assistant (McCarter Theater)
Head Resident (GLCA New York Arts Program)
Health Volunteer (Peace Corps)
JR Press Assistant (Beneaw/Bryan-Brown)
Kitchen Designer/Sales Specialist (Lowe's Home Improvement)

Lighting Designer (Sea World, Tri-State Actors Theatre)
Lighting Technician (Chamber Theatre Productions)
Manager and Events Coordinator (Yoga Sol)
Marketing Director (Lafayette Community Health Care Clinic)
Performance Arts Instructor (Dougherty Arts Center)
Properties Assistant (Dallas Theatre Center)
Production Assistant (NY Theatre Workshop)
Scenic Designer (Stagedoor Manor)
Stage Manager (Barrington Stage Co.)
Student Affairs Advisor (Center for Academic Programs Abroad)
Teacher (Teach for America, Hutto ISD,
Teaching Artist (Guadeloupe Cultural Arts Center)
Theatre Teacher (La Vernia ISD)
Wardrobe (Mac-Hayden Theatre)

Professional associations

Actors' Equity Association: www.actorsequity.org
American Association of Community Theatre: www.aact.org
American Dance Therapy Association: www.adta.org
Director's Guild of America: www.dga.org
Episcopal Actors Guild: www.actorsguild.org
Pioneer Drama Service: www.pioneerdrama.com
Playwrights Guild: www.playwrightsguild.ca
Screen Actors Guild: www.sag.org
Society of Health and Physical Educators <http://www.shapeamerica.org/> (includes dance)
Texas Non-Profit Theatres, Inc.: www.texas theatres.org
United Stage of America: www.unitedstage.com

Additional Web resources

Actingbiz: www.actingbiz.com
Broadway.Com: www.broadway.com
Broadway Job Listing: www1.playbill.com/jobs/find
Bureau of Labor Statistics: Producers and Directors: www.bls.gov/ooH/entertainment-and-sports/producers-and-directors.htm
Conference of Drama Schools: www.drama.ac.uk
Get Into Theatre: www.getintothetheatre.org
Offstage Jobs: <http://offstagejobs.com/>
Showbiz Jobs.com: www.showbizjobs.com
Southeastern Theatre Conference Jobs Board: <http://www.setc.org/theatre-jobs>
Texas Commission on the Arts: www.arts.texas.gov
Theatre Development Fund: www.tdf.org
UT Theatre Career Guide: www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/cvpa/THEATREDANCE/library/pdfs/documents-and-forms/CareerGuideforTheatreMajors.pdf

Career Services' print resources

A Career Handbook for TV, Radio, Film, Video, & Interactive Media
A Practical Guide to Working in Theatre
ACTION! Establishing Your Career in Film & Television Production
Breaking and Entering: Land Your First Job in Film Production
Breaking into Commercials
Careers for Film Buffs and Other Hollywood Types
Careers for the Stage-Struck and Dramatic Types
Careers in Media and Film: The Essential Guide Career
Careers in Technical Theatre
Career Opportunities in Theatre and Performing Arts

Creative Careers: Paths for Aspiring Actors, Artists, Dancers, Musicians and Writers
The New Business of Acting
Great Jobs for Theatre Majors
Is there Life After Film School?
Opportunities in Broadcasting Careers
Opportunities in Film Careers
Opportunities in Television and Video Careers
The Backstage Actor's Handbook
The Backstage Guide to Stage Management