

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 has put on a wide variety of productions such as the recent Seussical, Fiddler on the Roof, and All's Well That Ends Well.
- 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, obtain graduate conservatory training focused on artistic processes, or who simply want to focus their undergraduate course work intensively in theatre. 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 Acting, Design and Technology, and Musical Theatre Emphases. 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.

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, playwriting, theatre theory, and theatre management, 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 experience as possible.

Sample job titles

Arts, Media, Entertainment

Actor/Actress
Acting Coach
Advertising Specialist
Amusement Park
Announcer
Broadcast Journalist
Casting Director
Choreographer
Coach/Manager
Comedian
Costume Design
Director
Display Designer
Drama Coach
Entertainer
Exhibit Designer
Foreign Correspondent
Lighting Designer
Lighting Operator
Make-up Artist
Marketing Specialist
Media
Playwright
Planner/Salesperson
Prop Manager
Rigger/Puppeteer
Scene Painter
Set Designer
Set Draftsman

Sound Design
Stage Manager
Stunt Coordinator
Writer/Editor

Industry and Commerce

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

Theatre Manager
Ticket Sales Coordinator
Special Events Coordinator
Training Development
Specialist

Government, Service and Education

Arts Organization Consultant
Dance Instructor
Campaign Manager Critic
Military Choral Director
Preservation
Press Secretary Teacher
University Professor

Sample internship employers of SU students

Alley Theatre (Houston, TX)
Arden Theatre Company (Philadelphia, PA)
Arena Stage (Washington, DC)
Barrington Stage Company (Massachusetts)
CAPA Program (London, UK)
Child's Play Touring Theatre (Chicago, IL)
Dallas Theatre Center (Dallas, TX)

Ensemble Studio Theatre (New York, NY)
Georgetown Roundup Studio (Georgetown, TX)
GLCA Program (New York, NY)
Glimmerglass Opera (Cooperstown, NY)
Houston Guild Theatre (Houston, TX)
Julliard Professional Intern Program

Sample internship employers of SU students, continued

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (New York, NY)
Madison Square Garden (New York, NY)
Magazine Publishers of America
New York Shakespeare Festival (New York, NY)
Pace University (New York, NY)
Playhouse on the Square (Memphis, TN)

Strasberg Institute (New York, NY)
State Theatre (Austin, TX)
The American University (Washington, DC)
The Ensemble Theatre (Houston, TX)
The Kennedy Center (Washington, DC)
The Philadelphia Center (Philadelphia, PA)

Sample full-time employers of SU students

Actor (California Theatre Center)
Actor (New Stage Theatre)
Assistant Master Electrician (PA Shakespeare Festival)
Book Manager (Hastings)
Carpenter (Utah Festival Opera)
Casting Assistant (HH Talent & Entertainment)
Costume Designer (Stagedoor Manor)
Customer Relations (Apple Computers)
Entertainer (Walt Disney World, Orlando)
General Contractor (BigStar Construction)
Head Resident (GLCA New York Arts Program)
Hospitality Industry (Omni Hotels)
JR Press Assistant (Beneaw/Bryan-Brown)

Lighting Designer (Sea World)
Performance Arts Instructor (Dougherty Arts Center)
Personal Assistant (Moreland Properties)
Properties Assistant (Dallas Theatre Center)
Receptionist (Republican Party of Texas)
Sales Associate (Dell, Inc.)
Scenic Designer (Stagedoor Manor)
Secretary (Jeon-Dei Jung OD, MS)
Stage Manager (Barrington Stage Co.) Theatre Teacher
Tour Guide (CitySights)
Transportation (Walt Disney World, Orlando)
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
National Dance Association: www.aahperd.org/NDA/
Playwrights Guild: www.playwrightsguild.ca
Screen Actors Guild: www.sag.org
Texas Non-Profit Theatres, Inc.: www.texas theatres.org
United Stage of America: unitedstage.com

Additional Web resources

Actingbiz: www.actingbiz.com
Broadway.Com: www.broadway.com
Conference of Drama Schools: www.drama.ac.uk
Theatre Development Fund: www.tdf.org
Arts and Entertainment Classifieds for Washington D.C.: www.dcregistry.com/arts.html
Showbiz Jobs.com: www.showbizjobs.com
Texas Commission on the Arts: www.arts.state.tx.us
Theatre Jobs: www.theatrejobs.com

Career Services' print resources

100 Careers in Film and Television
A Career Handbook for TV, Radio, Film, Video, & Interactive Media
ACTION! Establishing Your Career in Film & Television Production
The Backstage Actor's Handbook
The Backstage Guide to Casting Directors
The Backstage Guide to Stage Management
The Backstage Handbook for Performing Artists
Breaking & Entering: Land Your First Job in Film Production
Breaking into Commercials
Breaking into Film
Breaking into Television
Careers for Film Buffs
Careers for the Stage-Struck and Dramatic Types

Career Opportunities in Theatre and Performing Arts
Film School Confidential
Great Jobs for Theatre Majors (2nd Edition)
How to get a job in the film industry
Is there Life After Film School?
Opportunities in Broadcasting Careers
Opportunities in Film Careers
Opportunities in Performing Arts Careers
Opportunities in Television and Video Careers
Take it from the Top
U.S. Directory of Entertainment Employers
Working in Show Business
Your Film Acting Career