

MUSICAL THEATRE, B.F.A.

Begin Campus: University Park

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The major is intended to provide students with specialized training leading to a high level of competence in musical theatre. Graduates should be able to begin professional work or pursue further training at the graduate level. This major is intended for those students who wish to pursue a career as a musical theatre professional.

What is Musical Theatre?

The study of the human condition and how to authentically inhabit a dramatic circumstance. It is highly skilled, highly motivated, and curious students. It is an experienced and dedicated faculty focused on training individual artists and humans. It is an alumni base working successfully on Broadway and around the world. It is a high level of commitment. It is new musicals inspired by and written for our students. It is a production season that has many diverse opportunities to showcase and inhabit the classroom work students are doing. It is master classes with Broadway professionals and frequent trips to New York City to connect to the industry. It is an exhilarating degree program for those who seek careers in the professional musical theatre. It is artist training for the 21st century.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are serious about a difficult and challenging career to go along with your passion for the musical theatre.
- You ask “which way to my authentic self” in addition to “which way to the stage.”
- You are ready for more work, more classes, more rigorous training, and more artistic fulfillment than you ever thought possible.

Entrance to Major

Acceptance into the major is based on an evaluative audition.

Entrance Procedures

Incoming First Year Students

Incoming first year students must apply to Penn State. Undergraduate applications for admission to Penn State must be complete and submitted before uploading the required documentation for pre-screening. Applicants who, after a successful pre-screen, are invited to audition will have opportunities for an on-campus audition or an off-campus unified audition in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles.

Detailed information on pre-screen and audition information can be found at: <https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific>. Applicants who are accepted to the Musical Theatre B.F.A program will be directly admitted to the major for the fall semester.

Change of Major/Change of Campus Students

Change of Major/Change of Campus students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.00 to be eligible for the Musical Theatre, BFA degree. Musical Theatre applicants will follow the same application procedures as a first-year applicant beginning with a required pre-screen. Applicants who, after a successful pre-screen, are invited to audition will have opportunities

for an on-campus audition or an off-campus unified audition in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles.

Detailed information on pre-screen and audition information can be found at: <https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific>. Applicants who are accepted to the Musical Theatre B.F.A program will be directly admitted to the major for fall semester. Regardless of semester standing, this degree requires a minimum of four years to complete after acceptance.

Transfer Students

Transfer students must apply to Penn State. Undergraduate applications for admission to Penn State must be complete and submitted before uploading the required documentation for pre-screening. Applicants who, after a successful pre-screen, are invited to audition will have opportunities for an on-campus audition or an off-campus unified audition in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles.

Detailed information on pre-screen and audition information can be found at: <https://arts.psu.edu/how-to-apply/#specific>. Applicants who are accepted to the Musical Theatre B.F.A program will be directly admitted to the major for fall semester. Regardless of semester standing, this degree requires a minimum of four years to complete after acceptance.

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Musical Theatre, a minimum of 125 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Requirements for the Major	86

6 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes 6 credits of General Education GA courses.

Requirements for the Major

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Theatre Courses:		
THEA 1S	First-Year Seminar: Theatre Production Practices	1
THEA 100	The Art of the Theatre	3
THEA 115	B.F.A. Acting Foundations	2
THEA 132	Survey of Theatre Production Practice	3
THEA 150	Fundamentals of Design for the Theatre	3
THEA 225A	B.F.A. Acting Studio I	2
THEA 225B	B.F.A. Movement Studio I	2
THEA 225C	B.F.A. Voice/Speech Studio I	2
THEA 289	Theatre Production Practicum	1
THEA 401	Theatre History I: Ancient to 1700	3
THEA 425A	B.F.A. Acting Studio II	2
THEA 425C	B.F.A. Voice/Speech Studio II	2
THEA 427A	B.F.A. Acting Studio III	2

THEA 427C	B.F.A. Voice/Speech Studio III	2
Music Courses:		
THEA 113	Musical Theatre Theory I	3
THEA 116	Musical Theatre Theory II	2
THEA 212	Musical Theatre Theory III	3
THEA 214	Musical Theatre Theory IV	3
VOICE 110	Voice: Secondary	8
VOICE 412	Musical Theatre Voice V	2
VOICE 462	Musical Theatre Voice VI	2
Dance Courses:		
DANCE 231	Beginning Ballet I	1.5
DANCE 232	Beginning Ballet II	1.5
DANCE 241	Beginning Jazz I	1.5
DANCE 242	Jazz Dance II	1.5
DANCE 251	Beginning Tap I	1.5
DANCE 252	Beginning Tap II	1.5
DANCE 382	Music Theatre Dance–Style I	1.5
DANCE 384	Music Theatre Dance–Style II	1.5
Musical Theatre Courses:		
MUSIC 113	Music Theatre–Class Voice I	1
MUSIC 114	Music Theatre–Class Voice II	1
THEA 114	Music Theatre: Form and Analysis	3
THEA 223	Musical Theatre Performance I	2
THEA 224	Musical Theatre Performance II	2
THEA 408W	History of American Musical Theatre	3
THEA 423	Musical Theatre Performance III	2
THEA 424	Musical Theatre Performance IV	2
Additional Courses ¹		
Select 2 credits of the following:		2
MUSIC 89	University Choir	
MUSIC 90	Glee Club	
MUSIC 91	Oriana Singers	
MUSIC 92	Chamber Music for Voices	
MUSIC 93	Essence of Joy	
MUSIC 94	Women’s Chorale	
MUSIC 103	Concert Choir	
MUSIC 104	Chamber Singers	
MUSIC 467	Opera Workshop	
THEA 326	Music Theatre Performance Workshop (1 per semester, maximum of 3)	
THEA 428	Musical Theatre Performance Studio V	
Select one of the following:		1.5
DANCE 431	Advanced Ballet I	
DANCE 441	Jazz Dance III	
DANCE 451	Advanced Tap I	
Select one of the following:		1.5
DANCE 432	Advanced Ballet II	
DANCE 442	Advanced Jazz II	
DANCE 452	Advanced Tap II	

¹ Students may apply 6 credits of ROTC.

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student’s degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- **United States Cultures:** 3 credits
- **International Cultures:** 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Learning Outcomes

- Train students in singing/ dancing/ acting by working through a set curriculum in each component area – and an integrated set of studio courses.
- Use casting and performance success to augment classroom training in order to better prepare students in the application of their skills.
- Promote a “total human” way of approaching musical theatre work through academic activities that encourage creative and diverse thinking.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

University Park

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2023-24 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (*Note: the archive only contains suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin*).

Musical Theatre, B.F.A. at University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
DANCE 231 [*]	1.5 DANCE 232 [*]	1.5
ENGL 15, 15A, or 30H [†]	3 MUSIC 114 [*]	1
MUSIC 113 [*]	1 THEA 114 [*]	3
THEA 1S [*]	1 THEA 116 [*]	2
THEA 100 (GA, US;IL) ^{**†}	3 THEA 150 [*]	3
THEA 113 [*]	3 THEA 225A [*]	2
THEA 115 [*]	2 THEA 225B [*]	2
	THEA 225C [*]	2
	14.5	16.5

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
CAS 100A, 100B, or 100C [‡]	3 DANCE 242 [*]	1.5
DANCE 241 [*]	1.5 THEA 132 [*]	3
THEA 212 [*]	3 THEA 214 [*]	3
THEA 223 [*]	2 THEA 224 [*]	2
THEA 425A [*]	2 THEA 427A [*]	2
THEA 425C [*]	2 THEA 427C [*]	2
THEA 289 [*]	1 VOICE 110 [*]	2
VOICE 110 (GA) ^{**†}	2 General Education Course	3
	16.5	18.5

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
DANCE 251 [*]	1.5 DANCE 252 [*]	1.5
DANCE 382 [*]	1.5 DANCE 384 [*]	1.5
THEA 401 [*]	3 ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D [†]	3
VOICE 110 (GA) ^{**†}	2 THEA 408W [*]	3
Additional Course for Major - Advanced Dance (see list) ¹	1.5 VOICE 110 [*]	2
Additional Course for Major - Chorale Ensemble (see list) ¹	2 Additional Course for Major - Advanced Dance (see list) ¹	1.5
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3	
	17.5	15.5

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
THEA 423*	2 THEA 424*	2
VOICE 412*	2 VOICE 462*	2
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
13		13

Total Credits 125

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

¹ **ADDITIONAL COURSES** (5 credits)

-Select 2 credits from MUSIC 085 GA(1), MUSIC 089 GA(1), MUSIC 090 GA(1), MUSIC 091 GA(1), MUSIC 092 GA(1), MUSIC 093 GA;US;IL(1), MUSIC 094 GA(1), MUSIC 103 GA(1), MUSIC 104 GA(1), MUSIC 467(1), THEA 326(1 per semester, maximum of 3), THEA 428(2) (Sem: 3-6)

-Select 3 credits, one from each of the following groups:

a. DANCE 431(1.5), DANCE 441(1.5), DANCE 451(1.5) (Sem: 7-8)

b. DANCE 432(1.5), DANCE 442(1.5), DANCE 452(1.5) (Sem: 7-8)

(Students may apply 6 credits of ROTC)

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

Career Paths

This degree prepares you for a performance career in the professional musical theatre. Many of our students go on to perform on Broadway, tours, and on cruise ships. Recent alums are performing nationally and internationally in critically acclaimed shows. The program culminates in a showcase in New York City attended by agents, professionals, and program alums.

Careers

Graduates of the B.F.A. in musical theatre program are prepared for careers in all aspects of performance including stage, television, and film. The degree also prepares graduates for jobs in casting, directing, choreography, music direction, and teaching.

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

Due to the well-rounded education students receive in the B.F.A. in musical theatre program, graduates leave with a foundation needed to pursue graduate study in theatre, in specialized areas such as acting, directing, and choreography for musical theatre.

Professional Resources

- Actors Equity Association (AEA) (<https://www.actorsequity.org/>)
- Screen Actors Guild (SAG)/American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) (<https://www.sagaftra.org/home/>)
- Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) (<https://sdcweb.org/>)

Accreditation

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).

Founded in 1965, the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) is an organization of schools, conservatories, colleges, and universities with approximately 188 accredited institutional members. It establishes national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials for theatre and theatre-related disciplines, and provides assistance to institutions and individuals engaged in artistic, scholarly, educational, and other theatre-related endeavors.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF THEATRE (<https://nast.arts-accredit.org/>)

Contact**University Park**

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<https://arts.psu.edu/academics/school-of-theatre/>