

THEATER AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES

Director of undergraduate studies: Hal Brooks (hal.brooks@yale.edu), Rm. 102C, 220 York St., 432-1310; theaterstudies.yale.edu; dance studies; musical theater

The mission of the program in Theater and Performance Studies (TAPS) is to cultivate adventurous artists and scholars with a serious commitment to craft and extensive understanding of the contexts in which cultural productions emerge. Introductory, term, and capstone courses reiterate the core learning objectives of the program: collaboration, craft, the integration of practice and theory, interdisciplinarity, and new work development.

Students are encouraged to gain experience in an array of disciplines including theater, dance, performance studies, musical theater, intermedia arts, and design. As research in theater, dance, and performance studies is interdisciplinary in scope and global in perspective, students are expected to take courses in cognate disciplines such as history, philosophy, anthropology, political science, film, art, and literature. The major provides a solid education in the humanities, as well as preparation for graduate studies or for careers in theater, dance, and the performing arts.

Faculty members are affiliated with a range of departments; their diverse expertise lends breadth and depth to course offerings and enables students to devise a course of study that reflects their developing interests. Faculty affiliated with the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale (DGSD) regularly teach for TAPS, and TAPS students have ample opportunities to interact with graduate students in the various departments of DGSD. Courses across the TAPS curriculum provide opportunities for students to attend performances by professional companies and artists, as well as to learn from discussions, workshops, and lectures offered by prominent guest artists and scholars.

Special features of the program are its production seminars, independent studies, and production-based senior projects. Production seminars, taken with permission of the instructor, offer immersive, semester-long performance research and development, culminating in public productions. Independent studies, taken under the supervision of a faculty adviser, give students the freedom to pursue individual and group-generated projects and to investigate areas of scholarship not offered elsewhere in the curriculum. Independent study courses are typically open only to juniors and seniors in the major. Production-based senior projects are described in the section on Senior Requirements below.

In addition to the theater and performance studies curricula, three additional programs are integrated into the mission of the major.

The **Dance Studies curriculum** features studio and seminar courses that cover the practice, history, and theory of diverse dance forms and movement phenomena. Students are guided in physical techniques and movement research across a wide range of temporal, geographic, and cultural sites, linking dance to the other arts, the humanities, sciences, and social sciences, and they explore the fluid and

fraught relationship between movement and language. Contact: Emily Coates (emily.coates@yale.edu), Director of Dance.

The **Shen Curriculum for Musical Theater** examines the American Musical Theater as an indigenous art form, one informed and influenced by changing cultural and socio-economic conditions as well as musical tastes and styles. Shen courses combine a grounding in skill-based study with history, analysis, and theory. The faculty consists of scholars and working professionals, including composers, directors, lyricists, librettists, directors, and performers. Additionally, the Shen Curriculum supports a co-curricular program that includes the Fridays at Five series of master classes and voice lessons in musical theater technique. Contact: Daniel Egan (dan.egan@yale.edu), Coordinator of the Shen Curriculum.

Computing and the Arts is an interdepartmental major designed for students who wish to work at and across intersections between computing and theater, dance and/or performance studies. Through a mix of practical and theoretical exploration, students consider how the live body on stage is reconfigured, reimaged, and reified through technological intervention. Contact: Elise Morrison (elise.morrison@yale.edu), affiliated faculty in Computing and the Arts.

TAPS also supports three substantial co-curricular initiatives: the Performance Studies working group, the Yale Playwrights Festival, and the Yale Dance Lab.

PREREQUISITES

The prerequisites for the major are THST 110 Collaboration and THST 111 Modes of Performance.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

The major consists of ten term courses beyond the introductory prerequisites. Of the ten required term courses, students must take two courses in each of four domains: Artistic Practice, Interarts, Histories, and Performance Theory. Most courses are listed in more than one domain, though they may count for only one domain requirement for a given student. Students may take term courses concurrently with prerequisite courses.

Artistic Practice Domain This domain encompasses techniques and compositional strategies in theater, dance, musical theater, design, and intermedia performance. Practice-based courses emphasize the knowledge of doing, moving, creating, devising, composing, designing, and craft. Courses move through existing aesthetic practices and histories as a means of cultivating individual and collective expression and new creation. Skills: heightened attention to energy, time, and space; the artist's self-knowledge and body; fluency synthesizing movement and language in compositions; and innovative approaches to researching history and culture through performance.

Interarts Domain This domain invites students to experience art-making between disciplines and within interdisciplinary forms. Courses in this area may draw connections and inspiration between established artistic disciplines, such as theater and dance, or reach beyond the program, putting the performing arts in conversation with ideas and approaches in diverse fields including film, visual art, new media, psychology, and science. Ideally, students use the Interarts requirement to explore disciplinary practices outside of their main track and comfort zone, expanding the boundaries of methods, resources, and questioning that feed into their creative practice. Skills:

collaboration; interdisciplinary research and creation; and the integration of methods and systems of knowledge drawn from diverse fields.

Histories Domain This domain includes courses in which the scope of study is defined by period, genre, and/or geographic region, in which students research past practices, texts, performances, and cultures. Courses in Histories may also ask students to employ performance-based research methods to analyze, discover, reconstruct, or intervene in diverse global, local, and personal historical narratives. Skills: engaging with material from disparate time periods, geographies, and cultural forms; methods of archival research and oral histories; and reenacting historical performance and adaptation in new forms.

Performance Theory Domain Courses in this domain introduce students to foundational theories of performativity and theatricality as applied to a range of cultural contexts and global histories. Theory courses bring together intersecting literatures of feminist and queer theory, linguistic theory, critical race studies, dance studies, and anthropology that together form the theories and methods of Performance Studies and Dance Studies as fields of study and practice. These courses may also invite students to respond to and use theoretical concepts in the creation of live art. Skills: facility with performance studies analysis; application of theory to dramatic texts and embodied practices; and investigating dynamic relationship between archives and repertoires.

Credit/D/Fail Courses taken Credit/D/Fail may not be counted toward the requirements of the major in Theater and Performance Studies.

SENIOR REQUIREMENTS

Majors satisfy the senior project requirement in one of two ways. They may, with the approval of the DUS, take a one-term seminar as a senior seminar. In such cases, the expectations for the final essay (minimum of thirty-five pages) will be substantially higher than for students not taking the class as a senior seminar. Or, under the supervision of a faculty adviser, a student may undertake a one-term senior project in either the fall or spring semester (THST 491). Depending upon an individual student's preparation, course work, and research objectives, a senior project may take many forms. A senior may direct, design, or devise a theatrical production, write a play, musical, or thesis-length essay, create a documentary film or digital media production, perform a role, choreograph a dance piece, or design an original performance-based or performance studies research project. Seniors engaging in production-based senior projects must also complete a shorter senior essay (15-25 pages in length), as a requirement of THST 491.

To ensure that their course work aligns with their goals, students should begin discussing senior project ideas and plans with the DUS at the start of their junior year. Senior Project meetings for all juniors are held early in the spring semester, with research and production proposals due the Friday before spring break.

ADVISING

TAPS majors in their junior and senior years are required to meet with the DUS at the beginning of each of their final four terms. Students in their first and second years of study who may be interested in the TAPS major are encouraged to meet with the DUS once a semester in order to discuss goals, learn about opportunities, and ask questions.

COURSES REQUIRING INSTRUCTOR PERMISSION

With the exception of THST 110 and THST 111, all courses in Theater and Performance Studies are limited enrollment courses that require a short statement of interest, writing sample, or audition in order to obtain instructor permission to register. When there are more applicants for a course than can be admitted, priority is given to juniors and seniors who have declared a major in Theater and Performance Studies or first-year students and sophomores who have completed one or both prerequisite courses (THST 110 and THST 111). Undergraduate students in all years of study and in all majors are encouraged to apply to courses in Theater and Performance Studies.

COURSES IN THE DAVID GEFFEN SCHOOL OF DRAMA AT YALE

Majors in Theater and Performance Studies are eligible to take DGSD courses in design, theory, dramaturgy, and theater management, with permission of the instructor, the DUS, the DGSD Registrar, and "blue form" approval submitted by their academic dean to the Registrar's Office. Undergraduates may not, however, enroll in acting or directing courses offered by the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale. Students enrolling in DGSD courses should note that a maximum of four term courses from the professional schools (of which DGSD is one) may be offered toward the bachelor's degree. Students also should note that the academic calendars of DGSD and of Yale College differ. The DGSD calendar should be consulted for scheduling. A student interested in taking a course at the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale should begin by seeking the permission of the instructor and contacting their academic dean.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites THST 110, 111

Number of courses 10 term courses beyond prerequisites (including senior requirement)

Distribution of courses 2 courses in each of four domains: Artistic Practice, Interarts, Histories, Performance Theory

Senior requirement Senior seminar or senior project (THST 491)

Theater and Performance Studies offers courses in performance history and theory as well as performance practice: acting, directing, playwriting, design, dramaturgy, dance, musical theater, and digital media performance. It involves the study of performance techniques, new work development, creative and critical approaches to analysis, and the study of performance as a medium of artistic, cultural, social, and political expression.

First-year students interested in the major should make an appointment with the program's director of undergraduate studies (DUS), Shilarna Stokes (%20shilarna.stokes@yale.edu). They should take THST 110 and THST 111, a two-semester sequence that introduces students to collaborative performance making and research practices as well as to the disciplinary breadth housed within the major. Both courses integrate practical, experiential immersion with conceptual and theoretical frameworks. This course sequence is open to all students and is a requirement of the major.

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF THEATER AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES

Professors James Bundy (*School of Drama, Theater and Performance Studies*), David Chambers (*Adjunct*) (*Theater and Performance Studies*), *Toni Dorfman (*Adjunct*) (*Theater and Performance Studies*), Joan MacIntosh (*Practice*) (*Theater and Performance Studies, School of Drama*), *Lawrence Manley (*English*), *Deb Margolin (*Practice*) (*Theater and Performance Studies*), Donald Margulies (*Adjunct*) (*English, Theater and Performance Studies*), *Charles Musser (*Film & Media Studies, American Studies, Theater and Performance Studies*), Tavia Nyong'o (*Theater and Performance Studies, American Studies*), *Marc Robinson (*School of Drama, Theater and Performance Studies, English*), Gregory Wallace (*Practice*) (*School of Drama, Theater and Performance Studies*)

Associate Professor Emily Coates (*Adjunct*) (*Theater and Performance Studies, School of Drama*)

Assistant Professor Elise Morrison (*Theater and Performance Studies*)

Lecturers Hal Brooks, Lacina Coulibaly, Alan Edwards, Daniel Egan, Grant Herreid, Iréne Hultman, Annette Jolles, Michael Korie, Bronwen MacArthur, Marsha Norman, Nathan Roberts, Renee Robinson, Michael Rossmly, Brian Seibert, Shilarna Stokes, Daniel Ulbricht

*Member of the Executive Committee for the program.

View Courses