

THEATRE (THTR) - BACHELOR OF ARTS

The Theatre Program at Western Colorado University offers students comprehensive theatre education in the classroom, and a wide variety of performance and production opportunities on the stage and behind the curtains. With its small size and low student-to-faculty ratio, students benefit from the personal connections and hands-on experience necessary for a life and career in the arts.

Theatre majors are automatically members of the Western Theatre Company, a student-run, faculty-advised co-curricular that gives students the unique undergraduate experience of running their own theatre company. Positions and opportunities include acting, directing, playwriting, designing, stage managing, and marketing.

The Theatre Program combines rigorous pre-professional training with time spent fostering a student's creativity, empathy, and global citizenship. In addition to preparing students for careers in theatre, film and television, our curriculum yields creatives, critical thinkers, and leaders.

Program Learning Goals

- Students will be able to produce a piece of theatre, whether through acting, directing, playwriting, designing, or stage managing.
- Students will be able to critically analyze a piece of theatre and realize how theatre contributes to a greater understanding of our cultural traditions.
- Students will be well prepared for graduate studies, to utilize their skills on stage or behind the curtains, or for a theatre-related field of employment.
- Theatre Comprehensive Major: Performance Emphasis (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/theatre/theatre-comprehensive-emphasis/>)
- Theatre Comprehensive Major: Technical Theatre Emphasis (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/theatre/technical-theatre-comprehensive-emphasis/>)
- Theatre Major: Standard Program (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/theatre/theatre-standard-major/>)
- Theatre Minor (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/theatre/theatre-minor/>)

THTR 101. Introduction to Theatre (GT-AH1). (3 Credits)

This course will include a general survey of Western theatre from Classical Greece to contemporary America. Students will learn the diverse practice of the art of theatre by studying theatre history, dramatic literature, and the practical components of acting, directing, design and production. GT-AH1

THTR 200. Dramatic Literature and Script Analysis. (3 Credits)

A survey of contemporary dramatic literature from playwrights of diverse backgrounds and experiences. Students study plot, character, and dialogue to analyze what makes a play work. Students also learn how to read a play on a deeper level for content, themes, and historical and sociopolitical influences.

THTR 201. Stagecraft I. (3 Credits)

An introduction to the theories, practices and procedures required to create, operate, and maintain scenery and properties for the entertainment industry. Topics may include history of scenery, performance spaces, entertainment rigging, scenic studios and tools, construction drawings, scenic materials, scenery construction, and basic scenic painting. The course may also cover roles, responsibilities, and organizational structure of entertainment production departments.

THTR 202. Western Theatre Company. (3 Credits)

A hands-on course designed to give students the experience of running their own theatre company. Students will engage in all aspects of production: planning a season, marketing, design meetings, staffing, casting, rehearsing, performance, and strike.

THTR 205. Introduction to Acting. (3 Credits)

An introduction to the principles, processes, and techniques of acting. The study is designed to balance theory and performance, and to develop a significant sense of self-discipline on the part of the actor. Topics include warm-up and awareness skills, basic body and voice integration techniques, the theories of Stanislavski and Meisner and Practical Aesthetics, script analysis, and performance process.

THTR 301. Stagecraft II. (3 Credits)

An in-depth study of stagecraft which may include drafting skills required to draft ground plans, construction drawings and elevations used to plan and build scenery. Students will also receive an introduction to lighting, sound design, and related technologies for stage and screen. Topics may include the proper rigging of light and sound equipment, use of control consoles and software, optics, basic electrical theory, the nature of light, and acoustics. Prerequisite: THTR 201; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 305. Acting II: Shakespeare. (3 Credits)

An advanced-level acting class where students will focus on reading, interpreting and acting the works of William Shakespeare. The principles of acting Shakespeare's verse will be taught: scansion, breath control, operative word, and antithesis. Students will perform monologues and scenes. Prerequisite: THTR 205; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 306. Scriptwriting. (3 Credits)

An introduction to the fundamental tools and skills required to craft a script for performance on stage or in film/video. Students are expected to produce play scripts and screenplays of varying lengths; they are also expected to read and respond to one another's writing. Some history of playwriting and study of prevailing models of scriptwriting are also included. Prerequisites: THTR 101 or FILM 119; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 307. Studies in Theatre. (3 Credits)

Students are introduced to a variety of special topics in Theatre including, Low-flying Trapeze, Mask work, Theatre and Politics, Theatre History, Improv, and Theatre for Young Audiences. Repeatable for a maximum of six credits among different topic areas. Prerequisite will change with topic.

THTR 308. The Business of Theatre. (3 Credits)

An overview designed to give theatre majors information, resources, and support as they prepare to enter into the professional and/or academic world of theatre post-graduation. In this course, students will be guided in the creation of a resume specific to the branch of theatre they are interested in pursuing, as well as being introduced to photographers for headshots, should their interest require them. Students will be introduced to professionals working in various aspects of the theatre world, for the purpose of having questions answered, as well as making vital connections to job opportunities in the future. Prerequisite: THTR 101 and junior or senior standing; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 325. Acting III: Scene Study. (3 Credits)

An advanced-level acting course where students will work on scenes from plays of different styles, genres, and time periods. Prerequisite: THTR 205; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 331. Scenography in Film and Theatre. (3 Credits)

A study of designing visually for the stage and screen, with an emphasis on a unified look and a single intense effect. A strong emphasis on script analysis as a basis for design. Additional information on visual research for theatre and film including location scouting and contextual research into the background of the story. Hands-on development of skills in generating graphic communication of design ideas is included. Prerequisite: THTR 201; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 340. Stage Management. (3 Credits)

An introduction to theatrical stage management. Students develop skills needed to work as a professional stage manager, including software programs, organization, and collaboration for working with directors, designers, actors and technicians through the process of a theatre production from rehearsals and performance to closing. Prerequisite: THTR 101; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 355. Acting for the Camera. (3 Credits)

An introductory course to acting on camera. Students will learn basic acting concepts, practice delivering commercial copy, self-taping, and television show & film scripts. The course culminates in the practical application of skills learned by students acting in a short film directed by film students. Prerequisite: THTR 101, THTR 205, or FILM 119; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 406. Scriptwriting II. (3 Credits)

An advanced-level course where students will spend the entire semester writing either a full-length play, feature-length screenplay or pilot episode of a television program. Students will read and respond to one another's writing. Some history and theory of scriptwriting are also included. Prerequisite: THTR 306; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 423. Directing. (3 Credits)

A comprehensive introduction to the theory and practice of directing for the stage. Includes an exploration of play selection, character and script analysis, conceptualization of production, actor coaching approaches, staging techniques; as well as the actual direction and presentation of scenes and plays. Prerequisites: THTR 205; or Instructor Permission.

THTR 450. Senior Thesis Show. (3 Credits)

The culminating course in the Theatre Program where students designate a Western Theatre Company production as their Thesis Show. Students choose a play, document their preparation, participate in the production of the play, and prepare an oral defense of their work. Prerequisite: senior standing and consent of faculty advisor.