
Theater Department Handbook

**Wesleyan University
Middletown, CT**

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THEATER DEPARTMENT FACULTY**

Kathleen Conlin
Chair, Theater Department
Frank B. Weeks Visiting Professor of Theater

Ronald S. Jenkins
Professor of Theater

Marcela Oteiza
Associate Professor of Theater

Katherine Brewer Ball
Assistant Professor of Theater

Calvin Anderson
Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater

Rebecca Foster
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Theater
Technical Director and Production Manager of Theater and Manager of '92 Theater

Quiara Alegria Hudes
The Shapiro Distinguished Professor of Writing and Theater (on leave)

Summer Lee Jack
Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater (fall only)

Tira Palmquist
Tutor for Playwriting in Theater

Corey Sorenson
Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater

Eddie Torres
Assistant Professor of the Practice in Theater (on leave)

Pirronne Yousefzadeh
Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater (fall only)

THEATER DEPARTMENT EMERITUS FACULTY

John F. Carr, Professor of Theater, Emeritus
William H. Francisco, Professor of Theater, Emeritus
Gay Smith, Professor of Theater, Emerita Leslie Weinberg, Retired Artist-in-Residence

THEATER DEPARTMENT STAFF

Dawn Alger, Administrative Assistant
Christian Milik, Costume Shop Manager and
Adjunct Instructor

CENTER FOR THE ARTS STAFF

Suzanne Sadler, CFA Technical Director
Charlie Carroll, CFA Asst. Technical Director
Tony Hernandez, Technical Associate

**For additional visiting per course faculty, please see department webpage:
<http://www.wesleyan.edu/theater/faculty/index.html>

THE THEATER DEPARTMENT

The Theater Department considers the critical and creative study of each theatrical area to be an essential component of a liberal arts education. Offerings include courses in acting; service learning in civic engagement and community outreach; criticism, history, and literature; costume, lighting, scenic, and media-based design; directing; performance studies theories; performance art; playwriting; puppetry; solo performance; and technical theater. The Theater Department equally supports scholarly and artistic investigation, as well as the exploration of both traditional and experimental forms. Its diverse faculty conducts research and creative endeavors in every continent.

The department embraces a broad definition of theater and believes in embodied learning: process, performance, and critical perspectives are equally stressed. Our majors focus on two or more aspects of theater, and learn to articulate their artistic vision both on stage and in writing. The department welcomes analysis, criticism, artistic innovation, and theater inquiry of all sorts. Theater courses and productions reflect the interdisciplinary and multiple interests of the faculty and majors.

Theater Department productions take place in the Center for the Arts Theater, the Patricelli '92 Theater, and other spaces on campus. The Center for the Arts is a state-of-the-art facility with 400 seats. The Patricelli '92 Theater is a historic brownstone building with a traditional proscenium. Both theaters are highly flexible and can be used as black boxes. Site-specific performances take place across campus: at the Davison Art Center, the Center for African American Studies, and the Russell House, to name a few. All theaters and alternative spaces are available to faculty and Honors productions.

The Theater, Art and Art History, Dance, Film, and Music Departments are part of the Center for the Arts (CFA), a complex of studios, classrooms, galleries, performance spaces, departments, and programs that provide a rich interdisciplinary environment for study and performance. Many theater courses are cross-listed with academic departments in all divisions, as well as Wesleyan's colleges. Theater faculty and majors are committed to collaboration within and across departments. The Theater Department strongly encourages students to attend performances and lectures sponsored by all performing and visual arts departments.

The Theater Department and the CFA sponsor Outside the Box, a presenting series that brings national and international groundbreaking artists to Wesleyan. Award-winning guests past include SITI Company, Pig Iron Theatre Company, Dan Hurlin, The Wooster Group, Marco Baliani, Odin Teatret, Bruce Meyers, Peter Schumann, Rhodessa Jones, and Ang Gey Pin. The lecture series with American playwrights recently brought Young Jean Lee, Sarah Ruhl, David Henry Hwang, Moises Kaufman, Tony Kushner, Charles L. Mee and Paula Vogel to the Wesleyan campus.

Ultimately, Wesleyan's Theater Department aims at preparing the next generation of artists and scholars. Our alumni are notably active in the professional métier: they appear on international and national stages, on and off Broadway, and many are the recipients of prestigious awards. Several joined renowned American companies, while others are the founding members of cutting-edge collaborative ensembles, acclaimed solo performers and community activists. Theater alumni hold graduate degrees in acting, arts management, design, directing, performance studies, and theater research from the nation's most reputable programs.

THE THEATER MAJOR

The Theater major is an integrated program of study, one that provides a solid knowledge of the different areas of expertise that are involved in stage production and criticism. Gateway courses present an introduction to theater techniques, principles, literatures, and discourses. Advanced courses prepare students to articulate their visions of theater both on stage and in writing. Honors theses, essays, and creative endeavors present majors with the opportunity to engage in in-depth scholarly and/or artistic research.

Students with strong interest in both theater and other fields of study may wish to pursue a double major. The option offers attractive possibilities for maximizing the benefits of Wesleyan's rich curriculum. Such an option is not uncommon, but requires careful and early planning.

Application to become a Theater major is usually made in the second semester of the sophomore year, when students are assigned an academic advisor from among the department faculty. Potential majors are encouraged to engage in Theater Department productions and enroll in introductory theater courses in their first year at Wesleyan.

Transfer students should discuss their individual cases with their Wesleyan academic advisor and submit transfer requests to the department as soon as they are prepared to declare the major. Transfer requests should include syllabi with course and assignment descriptions, as well as an official statement of the number of contact hours.

GATEWAY COURSES AND REQUIREMENTS

Gateway courses (Please note that these courses must be completed in the Theater Department by the second semester of sophomore year):

- THEA105: Production Lab. One .50 credit in the technical aspects of Scenic, Costume, and Lighting design
- THEA203: Special Topics in Theater History
- THEA245: Acting I

Requirements:

- One course in Scenic, Costume, or Lighting design
- THEA302: Contemporary Theater: Theories and Aesthetics. Please note that certain courses in other departments may fulfill one of two theater history prerequisites (the gateway THEA203 or THEA302) only if approved by the Theater faculty. Please consult the section "Courses cross-listed with other Wesleyan departments, colleges, and programs"
- Two courses in dramatic literature, visual literacy, theory, criticism, and/or service learning. One of them may be an FYI course. Specialty courses in other departments may fulfill one of two requirements only if approved by the Theater faculty. Please consult the section "Courses cross-listed with other Wesleyan departments, colleges, and programs"
- One credit of THEA329/331: Technical Practice (earned in .25- and .50-credit increments)
- One credit of THEA427/431/433/435/437, Performance Practice.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED COURSES IN THE THEATER DEPARTMENT

- A second course in Design
- Directing I
- Major's Lab and Colloquium (particularly for those interested in pursuing Honors in Theater)
- A course in Service Learning (Civic Engagement or Community Outreach)

RECOMMENDED COURSES OUTSIDE OF THE THEATER DEPARTMENT

Because theater is inherently an interdisciplinary field, the faculty recommends several courses outside of the department. This is particularly true in the case of majors interested in pursuing honors theses. For example, it may be fruitful to take courses in visual literacy or art history in the Art and Art History Department; or enroll in a creative writing course offered by the English Department or the Writing Certificate. Please consult with your academic advisor as to which courses may complement your individual study goals.

RECOMMENDED COURSE SEQUENCE

Please note that the course sequence suggested below is but a recommendation. Please feel free to contact the Theater Department chair and faculty if you are considering the major or need academic advice—we will examine each individual case to make specific recommendations.

First Year Students should enroll in two or more major gateways and/or FYI Theater courses. Students interested in the major and/or enrolling in advanced Theater courses should take:

-THEA105: Production Lab. This .50 credit course focuses on the technical aspects of stage and costume craft: scenery and prop building, lighting execution, and costume building. It offers a hands-on experience where students participate in the backstage work of the Theater Department's productions. Students will choose from three sections: set construction, costume construction, and light hanging/focusing. While it is required of Theater Majors, it is also recommended for students wishing to explore an aspect of theatrical production and is a prerequisite for theater design courses.

-One or two Theater FYS courses. The Theater Department offers several FUS or frosh-only courses in almost every area of expertise: from visual literacy (THEA185: Text and the Visual Imagination) to playwriting (THEA199: Introduction to Playwriting), from criticism (THEA175: August Wilson; THEA150: Plays & Performances) to courses in civic engagement and outreach (THEA115: Applied Theater: Working in Prisons; THEA140: Middletown Arts: Social Justice and Community Development). FYS and frosh-only courses are often the best introduction to the various areas of the performing arts and to the Theater Department.

For those planning to major in Theater, double major, or simply consider taking advanced courses in the Theater department, the faculty strongly recommends:

-Enrollment in a second gateway course besides THEA105: Production Lab; THEA203: Special Topics in Theater History; THEA245: Acting I (a prerequisite for THEA281: Directing I and advanced acting courses), or both.

In their **Sophomore Year**, prospective majors and students interested in taking advanced theater courses should complete all three major gateway courses (THEA105, THEA203 and THEA245).

In addition, if you plan on declaring the Theater major the department strongly recommends the completion of THEA302: Contemporary Theater; and/or a course in Theater design (THEA 305; THEA 359; THEA360; THEA 383) by the second semester of the sophomore year. Those interested in playwriting or directing should complete introductory courses in these areas by the time they declare the major.

In short: it is best to complete requirements earlier on, so that you can dedicate your final year at Wesleyan to independent projects, tutorials, or to pursue honors.

Sophomores planning to major in Theater are encouraged to complete:

- *THEA302: Contemporary Theater
- *One course in Theater Design
- *Begin the completion of a full credit in Technical Practice
- *One additional course in: playwriting; service-learning in civic engagement and/or community outreach; theater criticism; acting. Please consult the section "Courses cross-listed with other Wesleyan departments, colleges, and programs."

Additional recommended courses:

- *Students interested in pursuing Honors in acting or directing may wish to complete one advanced course in these areas
- *Those planning Honors in design may wish to complete a second course in the area and enroll in one of the design area recommended courses

Junior Year:

- *Completion or near completion of Theater major requirements, including Technical Practice and Performance Practice
- *Major's Lab. This course is particularly recommended for students interested in pursuing senior theses

For students interested in pursuing Honors in Theater, the following courses should be completed by the end of the junior year:

Acting:

- *a second or third course in acting;
- *One credit of Performance Practice acting in a Theater Department faculty production.

Civic Engagement and Community Outreach:

- *At least one 200 level Civic Engagement course in the department;
- *One course in service learning outside of the Theater Department.

Design:

- *A second course in Theater design;
- *One credit in Performance Practice in design in a Theater Department faculty production or completion of a design project.

Directing:

- *One course in Theater design;
- *One full credit of Performance Practice as assistant director or stage manager in a Theater Department faculty production.

Theater Research:

- *Completion of Theater History requirements, as well as dramatic literature, criticism, theory required courses.
- *One or more courses in or outside of the Theater Department that complements specific research interests.

Playwriting:

- *THEA 399 and a second course in playwriting;
- *Near completion of Theater History requirements, as well as dramatic literature, criticism, theory required courses.

Senior Year:

- *Completion of all major requirements in the fall semester, at the latest;
- *Electives from list of advanced courses;
- *Additional credit in Performance Practice;
- *Honors thesis or production/essay.

THEATER COURSES CROSS-LISTED WITH OTHER WESLEYAN DEPARTMENTS, COLLEGES, AND PROGRAMS

The following are examples of courses that are cross-listed and fulfill Theater requirements. Prior to enrollment, please consult with your Theater Department academic advisor to discuss the specific requirement a course may fulfill. Your advisor will then direct you to submit a written request to the Theater faculty with expertise in the area examined in the course. Following their recommendation, the Theater Department faculty will grant final approval to your request. If you wish to request that a course not listed here count towards the major, please contact your Theater Department academic advisor prior to enrollment.

THEA 172	Staging America: Modern American Drama
THEA 231	Sex Violence & (Poetic) Justice: Spanish and New World Classical Theater (Spanish Language and Lit)
THEA 224	Medieval Drama (English/Medieval Studies Program)
THEA 234	Scripts and Shows (English)
THEA 253	Families on Stage: Individual, Society, and the Nation in Spanish Theater 1600-present (Spanish Language & Lit)
THEA 254	The World of Garcia Lorca (Iberian Studies & College of Letters)
THEA 258	Russia's Storyteller Playwrights (Russian)
THEA 282	Transnational Modern Drama: Beckett to Postmodern
THEA 310	All the World's a Stage: Theater and Society in the Age of Shakespeare and Calderón
THEA 322	The View from Abroad on the Early Modern Stage
THEA 347	Latina/o Literary Cultures and Counter-Cultures (English/FGSS)
THEA 348	Music and Theater of Indonesia (Music)
THEA 362	The Body as Text in Latino/a Theatre and Performance (English)
THEA 380	The Deepwater Horizon Tragedy (College of Environment Studies)

FALL 2018 OPEN HOUSE - THIS INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL FOR HONORS IN THEATER

Eligibility

Students are eligible to pursue Honors in Theater if they attained an average of A- (3.7) or better in the major. Please note that eligibility does not guarantee approval. Eligibility will be computed using the grades for courses within the Major only (and which appear in the Major Certification Form). The table used in computing an A- average is found here:

http://www.wesleyan.edu/registrar/general_information/GPA_calculation.html

The column "4.0 GPA equivalent" will be used for the calculation. Students whose aggregate GPA does not meet the 3.7 minimum may petition for admission to the Honors program.

Requirements

Acting

- At least two advanced Acting courses with an A- average
- Performing in a Theater Department faculty production
- Completion of THEA203: Special Topics in Theater History and THEA302: Contemporary Theater; and near completion of literature, theory, criticism, or service learning requirements for the major.
- For self-directed projects, THEA281: Directing I or THEA286: Solo Performance

Design (Scenic, Costume, Lighting, Media)

- Two courses in design with an A- average
- One course in Visual Literacy
- Assistant designing/tutorial with a faculty member
- Completion of THEA203: Special Topics in Theater History and THEA302: Contemporary Theater; and near completion of literature, theory, criticism, or service learning requirements for the major

Directing

- An A- average in THEA281: Directing I and THEA381: Directing II
- At least one course in design with an A- or better grade
- Stage-managing or assistant directing in a Theater department faculty production
- Completion of THEA203: Special Topics in Theater History and THEA302: Contemporary Theater; and near completion of literature, theory, criticism, or service learning requirements for the major.

Theater Research (Criticism, History, Literature)

- Completion of THEA203: Special Topics in Theater History and THEA302: Contemporary Theater, as well as literature, theory, criticism, or service learning requirements for the major with an A- average
- Two courses in Acting, Design, or Directing with an A- average
- Serving as a dramaturg for a Theater department faculty production.

Playwriting

- At least two courses in playwriting with an A- average
- An additional course in creative writing taken in-or outside of the Theater department.
- Completion of Theater History and literature, theory, criticism, or service learning requirements for the major.
- Serving as a dramaturg for a Theater department faculty production.

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL FOR HONORS IN THEATER

Please follow these subheadings and submit nine copies to the Theater Department. The deadline for proposal submission will be announced each academic year.

1. Area of proposed study

Indicate if you are proposing to submit an essay accompanied by a creative component in acting, design, directing, playwriting, or a thesis in theater research

2. Title and topic of your proposed project for honors

Title and briefly describe your thesis project in 250-300 words.

3. Rationale

Describe the goal of your proposal: what do you hope to accomplish and why do you want to pursue this investigation? In one paragraph, clearly state your thesis, methods of investigation, and the theories you will apply to your subject. If your project involves a production or creative component, explain what benefits (1) the participants and collaborators; (2) your audience; and (3) your reader may expect from your work. How is your approach to the topic original? In short, what is your contribution to the field and/or to the Wesleyan community? How will this research contribute to your educational experience at Wesleyan?

4. Candidate's justification and qualifications

Honors written and creative component are regarded as culminations of a student's progress in a particular area of his/her theater career at Wesleyan. Demonstrate, citing all relevant experience, your qualifications and background research to undertake the project you propose. List academic courses in and outside the Theater Department, readings, workshops, productions, and detail their influence on your choice of a proposed topic.

5. Resources and bibliography

Please provide a detailed working bibliography and list of additional resources such as interviews, art collections, workshops, performances, and so forth.

6. Course and requirements checklist

To determine your eligibility, please list all courses towards the major—Gateway and requirements; additional courses when applicable—as well as the grade received for each one of them.

EVALUATION OF HONORS PROPOSALS

Proposals should be submitted to the entire faculty by the first Wednesday after Spring Break. (see previous page for proposal format/outline). Please consult with various faculty members as you draft your proposal. The Theater Department may request the submission of a revised proposal addressing the faculty's questions, suggestions, and/or concerns.

Each proposal will be evaluated based on the candidate's preparation; quality of preliminary research; clarity of the objectives of the process; and, when applicable, the rationale for staging a given production. Please refer to the "Submitting a Proposal for Honors in Theater" in this handbook's appendix.

Following review by faculty in a department meeting, feedback and/or further questions will be given to the student for consideration in revising the proposal. Revised proposals that have addressed any outstanding questions from the faculty are expected to be submitted by the last Friday of April.

Honors thesis projects will be approved or rejected and advisors assigned before the end of the Spring semester. Readers will be finalized by the deadline stipulated by the Honors College. If the proposal includes a creative component, please consult with the Theater Department's Head of Production in regards to the date for the first production meeting.

A SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR SENIOR HONORS PROJECTS: WRITTEN COMPONENTS

For productions that are presented in the fall semester, a timeline for writing will be created by the advisor and advisee on a case by case basis.

Honors candidates are expected to work on the project over summer break, so that they can submit an essay outline with annotated bibliography by the second week of September. If students are preparing script adaptation for a directing thesis, the working script should be submitted at this time as well.

Assuming regular communication with their thesis advisor, students should continue work through the fall semester so that by the Monday after Thanksgiving break they have submitted a first draft of a thesis essay for projects with a creative component, or the first draft of two chapters for a fully written thesis (minus the introduction and conclusion). For script adaptations, any revisions from the previous version should be submitted at this point to the advisor for review as well.

Advisors will provide additional feedback for continued progress on the work to be done during the winter break in January. A second draft of the essay is due for submission by the first Friday of spring semester; for script adaptations, a final script that will be used in the rehearsal process should be submitted as well. For fully written thesis projects, a second draft that includes all chapters (minus introduction and conclusion) should be submitted for review by the first Friday of spring semester.

Final drafts for essays and for fully written theses (including introduction and conclusion) should be submitted to advisors by the last Friday of February. This will enable the faculty advisors to provide final guidance before spring break, giving students the opportunity to use that time to put the finishing polish on their work before the submission deadline in April (students should check the submission deadline established every year by the Wesleyan Honors Program.)

THEATER DEPARTMENT HONORS AND HIGH HONORS GUIDELINES

Honors

The Theater Department will award honors on the basis of the student's committee evaluations and recommendation. The committee's recommendation will take into consideration both process and the quality of written and creative components (when applicable). The Honors Tutor is responsible for assigning grades for the senior thesis tutorial courses THEA 409 and THEA 410. Senior thesis tutorial grades are separate and do not need to reflect the committee's recommendation to award or deny Departmental Honors.

High Honors

High Honors in Theater is by invitation only and requires an oral exam conducted by the Honors Committee.

The Honors Committee will invite qualified students according to the following criteria: compliance with the General Education expectations; consideration of the readers' evaluations; originality of research and thesis topic; the student's academic performance; and the extent to which the student's educational experience reflects the philosophy, goals, and diversity of the department's mission.

Oral Exam for High Honors

In the oral exam, candidates should successfully address questions related to the Honors research in the context of the major's curriculum.

Honors committee

The Theater Department will assign an appropriate tutor and readers. The Honors tutor must be a Theater Department faculty member. When the student is a double major or the field of research is explicitly outside of the Theater Department's areas of expertise, the Theater Department may invite one outside faculty to serve as a reader.

About the written component

Written theses should have a minimum of 60 pages and a maximum of 80 pages, excluding appendices and list of works cited.

Essays accompanying a creative component should have a minimum of 30 pages and a maximum of 45 pages, excluding appendices and list of works cited.

Double majors should request written permission to submit a Theater thesis or essay to another department. In their proposals, double majors are expected to provide a clear justification as to why their topic demands interdisciplinary research.

Writing Manual Styles: Chicago Manual Style or Modern Language Association (MLA)

Guidelines for evaluating creative components:

Acting

In evaluating the performance component of your thesis, the readers will apply the following criteria:

1. Text work: understanding of and ability to work with the structural and rhythmic demands of the given text, ability to analyze the playwright's language, depth of research and contextual analysis of the play.
2. Command of the instrument: stamina to sustain agile physical and vocal engagement throughout the performance; creativity and variety in physical and vocal characterization; ability to create repeatable and expressive physical and vocal scores for the chosen character; awareness of self in space; building the spatial relationship to stage partners, design elements, and the audience; volume, diction, and vocal clarity; awareness and command of rhythmic and dynamic variations of the playwright's language.
3. Character work: creating an internal logic of the character consistent with the world of the play; demonstrating specificity, commitment, and risk-taking in acting choices; ability to convey moment-to-moment and overall arc of a character; shaping a character through manipulation and gestural relationships with set, costumes, lights, props, sound, make-up, etc; sensitivity to genre and style offered by the playwright, director, and designers.
4. Creativity and ensemble work: excellent work ethics; active contribution to the collaborative rehearsal process; punctuality, seriousness, commitment, attitude, providing a model of creativity and team work to other members of the ensemble.

Design

In evaluating your production/ installation or showing, readers will take into account the originality of the project, execution; preparedness; craft; pertinence and aesthetic understanding as well as process (meeting of dead lines, collaboration, and so forth).

Scenic Design

1. Design preparation: research, rendering, drafting, model-making.
2. Concept and Design: appropriateness of thematic choices; articulation of content; control of design elements and principles.
3. Project: execution, craft and collaborative process in relation to director and craft people.

Costume Design

1. Design preparation: research, rendering, patterning and draping.
2. Concept and Design: appropriateness of thematic choices; articulation of content; appropriateness of individual character choices; control of design elements and principles.
3. Project: Execution: craft; and collaborative process in relation to director, actors and craftspeople.

Lighting Design

1. Design preparation: research, collaboration with director and other designers, drafting and accompanying paperwork;
2. Concept and Design: appropriateness of lighting choices in creating a design that works with all the other production elements to effectively communicate the intent of the director.
4. Project: the efficient and productive execution of the design during the technical rehearsal process.

Directing

In evaluating the performance component of your thesis, the readers will apply the following criteria:

1. Concept: understanding of and ability to work with the structural and rhythmic demands of the given text; reading the given text in its depth and thematic complexity; ability to analyze the playwright's language, imagery, and symbolism, depth of research and contextual analysis of the play; the originality of the vision, sensitivity to genre and style offered by the playwright; ability to articulate the relevance of the story to the contemporary audience.
2. Working with actors: creativity and variety in physical and vocal characterizations; ability to create repeatable and expressive physical and vocal scores for the characters; awareness and command of rhythmic and dynamic variations of the playwright's language; creating an internal logic of the characters consistent with the world of the play; encouraging specificity, commitment, and risk-taking in acting choices; ability to convey moment-to-moment and overall arc of a play.
3. Realization of the directorial vision through design elements: ability to communicate the directorial concept in collaboration with designers and craftsmen; clarity of storytelling through manipulation and gestural relationships with set, costumes, lights, props, sound, make-up, etc; consistency of design with the world of the play and acting style; awareness of space architecture in developing the production; building the spatial relationship between actors, design elements, and the audience; ability to sustain visual and aural unity of a production.
4. Rehearsal process: excellent work ethics; active leadership in the collaborative rehearsal process; punctuality, seriousness, commitment, and attitude, providing a model of creativity and team work to other members of the ensemble; ability to create a healthy rehearsal atmosphere.

Playwriting

The play submitted for Honors Thesis in playwriting is limited to 40 pages. In evaluating the playwriting component of your thesis, the readers will apply the following criteria:

1. Research. The submitted play should have evident connection to a substantial research project undertaken prior to writing. Such research should be based on both primary and secondary sources and may include, but is not limited to, the examination of creative writing models; specific playwriting styles and traditions; particular literary authors or narrative structures; historical periods, figures, or events; cultural and ethnographic phenomena; myths; fantasy; the sciences or scientific discoveries; spatial and aesthetic principles; theories or principles from the social sciences; and so forth.
2. Concept and command of the craft. The play should demonstrate depth and thematic complexity; risk-taking in playwriting choices; ability to create structure and arc of the story; innovative use of language; creativity and variety in developing characters; internal logic of the characters consistent with the world of the play; sensitivity to imagery and symbolism; awareness of visual, spatial, and aural world of the play; originality of the vision; demonstrated choices of genre and style; ability to create dialogue; relevance of the story to the contemporary audience. The readers will also pay close attention to the command of the language including playwright's vocabulary choices, grammar, syntax, and spelling.
3. Process. The play should provide evidence of the playwright's commitment to extensive and multiple revisions, ability to listen to and incorporate feedback, and flexibility.

Guidelines for evaluating a thesis in Theater Research or the essay component accompanying the creative component in Acting, Design, Directing, or Playwriting

The written document should demonstrate the Honors candidate's ability to think creatively, organize thoughts, and communicate effectively. The written document will be evaluated on content, organization, clarity, and the mechanics of style (grammar, syntax, word choices, spelling, etc.) and documentation (examples, notes, quality of sources, and bibliography). It is the expectation of the Theater Department that the writing will demonstrate a command of the conceptual issues addressed in the student's program of study. An Honors written document should present:

- Originality of research and topic
- In-depth research and knowledge of the topic
- Clear statement of thesis argument or position early in the paper
- Clear development of the topic, with logical structure and progress
- Appropriate and original evidence/examples from primary and/or secondary sources such as performances, case studies, text, and so forth
- Good transition between sections/sub-topics
- Well-focused and persuasive argument
- Perfect mechanics: nicely presented, spelling and punctuation according to accepted usage, no run-on sentences, no sentence fragments, and no wordiness

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY HONORS

*University Honors candidates will be selected by a unanimous vote of the faculty based upon the following criteria:

1. A thesis that is notably good even when compared with other theses that receive High Honors.
2. An academic record that shows excellence in general scholarship as well as in the theater major.
3. General knowledge of substantial scope and more than superficial depth.
4. An ability to form connections and to reason from inconclusive evidence.

Department selection of candidates for University Honors should be made with great care. High Honors are a necessary but not a sufficient qualification.

*From the Honors College, April 1993

ASSEMBLING AN HONORS IN THEATER PRODUCTION TEAM

Designers

All design collaborators must be approved and credit will be determined by the Theater faculty. Design students will earn credit through the appropriate faculty in the Theater Department.

- Lighting designers should have completed or be currently enrolled in THEA305: Lighting Design;
- Scenic Designers should have completed or be enrolled in THEA359: Design and the Performative Space;
- Costume Designers should have completed or be enrolled in THEA383: Costume Design.

Designers will be approved through the appropriate design faculty based on the presentation of a portfolio that includes images of projects, conceptual ideas, renderings and/or technical drawings, if pertinent.

Design budgets will be determined based on the experience of each designer; preference will be given to honors thesis projects in design. In the event that no appropriate designer can be recruited for a particular design area, the department may eliminate or severely restrict the budget in that particular area.

Technical Staff

All major technical positions, stage manager, and crew heads must have completed THEA105: Production Laboratory in the appropriate area and be approved by the Theater Department's Head of Production. The minimum qualification for technical positions is the completion of THEA 105: Production Lab.

Stage Managers must have completed THEA105 and have production experience as a crew head or Assistant Stage Manager in the theater in which the production is to take place.

All positions must be filled prior to the production's approval. Directors are responsible for assembling their staff, but the Department will help in finding designers and technicians when necessary and possible.

Other student collaborators

Other production collaborators such as composers, musicians, music directors, choreographers, playwrights, and so forth, should also be approved by the department. Credit will be determined and awarded by the Theater faculty. Please consult the section on Performance Practice in the appendix.

THEATER DEPARTMENT EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR HONORS PRODUCTIONS

The Theater Department allows students a wide range of authority and independence over their intellectual research and creative projects once they have been granted approval. This authority carries with it major responsibilities. These include:

1. Responsibility to adhere to the approved concepts and budget.
2. Responsibility to follow the guidelines and meet deadlines established by the department, as well as in the Advisor/Advisee relationship for the project.
3. Responsibility to respect and protect the involvement and learning experiences of other contributors to the production.

If the department determines that a candidate's research or creative component presents major difficulties in its development—including failure to meet stipulated deadlines, budgetary issues, problems with the creative team, and so forth—then the following procedures will be used:

1. The student(s) work out the problem with the advisor.
2. If that does not solve the problem(s), the Department will meet with the student(s) and tutor to assess whether to:
 - a. Require a modification of the written and/or creative components, or;
 - b. Terminate the written or creative components eligibility for Honors in Theater, and/or;
 - c. Cancel the creative component.

GUIDELINES FOR HONORS PRODUCTION MEETINGS

When appropriate, students approved to pursue honors that include a creative component will receive a production budget from the Theater Department. Candidates engaged in a creative component must schedule a production meeting with the Theater Department's Head of Production, design faculty and students, and technical staff. This meeting should take place as soon as the honors production is approved by the Theater faculty and no later than the second week of the fall semester.

At the meeting, the production concept should be presented to the Department faculty and staff. Specific scenic and costume designs are expected, as well as a written budget breakdown showing the various areas of expenditure. Specific procedures will be discussed concerning the use of the Center for the Arts, Patricelli '92 Theater, or alternative spaces.

For CFA productions, each production team must meet with Theater faculty and CFA staff. For performances in the Patricelli '92 Theater, production meetings must also include that building's Manager. You must also inform your thesis tutor of the meeting and ask him/her to attend. It is the responsibility of each candidate (through your Stage Manager) to arrange the meeting and to inform the above participants in writing (e-mail). All of the above participants must be present at the meeting, unless alternate arrangements are made through the Head of Production and/or your tutor. Prior to this meeting, each candidate must have met with his/her tutor to thoroughly discuss the overall design/production concept. When applicable, also each designer must have a preliminary planning/concept session with the appropriate design faculty prior to the meeting. Candidates and design students should work out any questions with the Head of Production, design faculty, and/or tutor before the meeting.

You and your production team will be expected to present a production proposal that fits in your budget guidelines. Failure to do so will result in a cancelled meeting.

We look forward to these meetings. We hope the result will be artistically successful and technically safe/efficient productions.

HONORS PRODUCTION INFORMATION SHEET

Name of production _____

Account Number _____

Guidelines for Reserving Rehearsal Space

You can reserve rehearsal space in either the East Room or the Jones Room by going to your portfolio and clicking on the Room Request (EMS) link in the Tools & Links section. Once your request is approved, you will be notified via email.

Reservations for the Usdan Theater Rehearsal Space are handled by Events and Scheduling and may be requested using the Room Request (EMS) link in your portfolio.

Guidelines for Requesting Reimbursements

If you have used out-of-pocket monies **save your receipts!** You cannot be reimbursed without a receipt.

Receipts are due to the Theater Office the first business day after the last performance of your production. On the front of each out-of-pocket receipt, circle the amount of the reimbursement due and indicate the following:

1. The name of the person to be reimbursed
2. The person's Wes Box number
3. The name of the production
4. What was purchased (props, lighting supplies, set supplies, costumes, etc.)

Do not go over your budget. If you have any questions please come to the Theater Office for help.

HONORS PRODUCTION BUDGET WORKSHEET

Name of Honors candidate: _____

Title of Play: _____

Budget Amount: _____

Projected Costs:

Rights and Royalties: _____

Scripts and Scores (rental): _____

Set Design/Scenery: _____

Props: _____

Costumes: _____

Lighting Supplies/Rental: _____

Sound Supplies/Rental: _____

Printing Costs:

Scripts _____

Posters _____

Programs _____

Theater Laundry Expense: _____

Box Office Ticketing Costs: _____

IMS-Events (filming): _____

TOTAL: _____

These categories should be subdivided as appropriate. All student directors should submit expense summaries at the conclusion of the production, with explanations if necessary.

Director

Faculty Advisor

Department Head of Production

Department Chair

GUIDELINES FOR CAPSTONE PROJECTS IN THEATER

General description of capstones in Theater.

1. A Thesis, as defined by the department, is a form of a capstone to the major. If you are engaged in a Thesis, you are as a matter of course engaged in a capstone project.
2. Theses are eligible for Honors consideration.
3. A one-semester senior capstone project (referred to here as a senior project) may take a variety of forms:
 - a. An essay of some form on a topic related to Theater taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)
 - b. A performance project in acting taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)
 - c. A performance project in directing taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)
 - d. A performance project in design taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)

Guidelines for senior projects with a performance component

1. Performances will take place in a festival setting the first week of December (Fall) and the weekend before Spring Break (Spring). Please see the Timeline (below).
2. Unless site specific, performances will take place in the '92 Theater.
3. Performance senior capstone projects will be featured in two showings over the course of the festival.
4. The stage configuration will be the same for all senior performance projects in the same festival. For example, the Fall Festival could be in-the-round, but the Spring Festival could have a different configuration. Students will collaborate and choose semesters accordingly.
5. Design senior projects will take as their subject one aspect of design for the entire festival.
 - a. E.g., a senior capstone project in lighting will devise lighting for the productions in the festival. This could easily be a collaborative project for more than one student.
 - b. E.g., a senior capstone in costume design will take on the responsibility of the productions in the festival. Costume designers are urged to make use of existing costumes in the shop and design up to three original costumes.
 - c. E.g., a senior design project in set design will work with all the productions on the stage configuration to be used in either Fall or Spring. This could easily be a collaborative project for more than one student.

Timeline for senior projects:

April 15 (Junior Year): submission of senior project proposal (see required elements below)

May 1: students notified of acceptance

Fall semester drop/add: students add appropriate tutorials to their course plans

Oct 1: progress check with tutors and production

First weekend in December: Thur, Fri, Sat performances; Sunday matinee possible

Last day of classes Fall: production meeting Spring capstones

Week before Spring Semester classes begin: rehearsals begin for Spring capstone projects with performance

Spring semester drop/add: students add appropriate tutorials to their course plans

mid- February: progress check with tutors and production

first weekend in March: Thur, Fri, Sat performances; Sunday matinee possible

Senior capstone projects proposal requirements

1. Evidence of collaboration between student actors, directors, designers, production teams.
2. Proposal Form (below)
3. Narrative description of the project (maximum 2 pp. single spaced).

SENIOR PROJECT FOR CAPSTONE PRODUCTION WORKSHEET

Title:

Brief project description:

Students involved and their capacities:

Projected Costs:

Ranking (for performance projects)

Fall Semester (first weekend December) _____

Spring Semester (weekend before Spring Break) _____

APPENDIX

GUIDELINES FOR EARNING CREDIT IN TECHNICAL AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Late enrollments: under an agreement between the Department, Academic Deans, and the Registrar's Office, late enrollments in Technical and Performance Practice may be permitted for productions produced in the second half of a semester, but no later than the last day to withdraw from courses as listed in the appropriate Academic Calendar.

Expectations: The Theater Department expects students who accept assignments in productions, whether they are assignments for cast, staff, or crew, to be seriously committed to the production from the first day of rehearsals. "Add/Drop" procedures are unsuitable to the equitable, responsible, and successful operations of this complex production system. It is not acceptable for a student to drop an assignment in one production in order to accept an assignment in another.

If one must discontinue their production assignment for reasons beyond the student's control, he or she should convey the decision in person to the appropriate production director at the earliest possible time.

THEA329/331: TECHNICAL PRACTICE

Technical Practice is offered as a .25 (THEA329) or a .50 (THEA331) credit course. THEA 105: Production Laboratory is the prerequisite for THEA329 or THEA331.

Prior to joining a production team, please contact the Production Manager for Theater (Professor R. Foster), the appropriate design faculty, and tutor to determine eligibility, credit/hours, and secure permission for enrollment in the course.

.50 credit: Major production work for faculty directed performances in either the Center for the Arts or the Patricelli '92 theaters.

These positions include, but are not limited to: assistant stage manager, scene painters, properties assistants, electricians, carpenters, costume pattern makers, drapers, stitchers, and so forth. Stage managers for faculty productions may earn a full credit in Technical Practice. Crew heads for Honors productions in the CFA or Patricelli '92 Theaters may earn .50 credit in Technical Practice, pending approval from Head of Production, tutor, and/or the appropriate design faculty.

.25 credit: Crew heads or other specific production work contracted by the faculty for low tech or alternate space Honors productions or student directed performances sponsored by the Theater Department.

Multiple assistant stage managers (two or more) for faculty or thesis productions; light and sound board operators for all productions.

THEA427/431/433/435/437: PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Performance Practice is offered as a .25, .50, and 1 credit course, depending on student's role and the number of hours dedicated to a production (please consult EXPECTATIONS FOR THEA427/431/433/435/437: Performance Practice). Please consult with the faculty director, the appropriate design faculty or tutor to determine eligibility, credit, and secure permission for enrollment in the course.

Students may earn Performance Practice credit as: actors, dramaturges, assistant directors, designers, and assistant designers in Theater faculty or Honors productions. Upon faculty approval, students may earn credit as choreographers or musicians. In some cases, stage managers in a faculty production may earn Performance Practice instead of Technical Practice credit.

CONTACT HOURS EXPECTATIONS FOR THEA427/431/433/435/437: PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Theater majors are required to complete a full credit of Performance Practice. These courses—numbered THEA 427/431/433/435/437—take the form of engagement in Theater Department sponsored productions.

Wesleyan's contact hours expectations for a Theater production are:

-Faculty directed productions:

Student actors, dramaturges, assistant directors, and so forth, are expected to engage in at least 120 hours of rehearsal time over the course of 8 to 10 weeks for a full credit.

Design and stage management students should engage in at least 120 hours of preparation/rehearsal time over the course of 8 to 10 weeks for a full credit.

-Honors productions:

Student collaborators (actors, dramaturges, assistant directors, and so forth) are expected to engage in at least 80 hours of rehearsal time over the course of 8 to 10 weeks for a half credit of Performance Practice.

Design and stage management students should engage in at least 80 hours of preparation/rehearsal time over the course of 8 to 10 weeks for a half credit of Performance Practice.

FROM THE WRITING WORKSHOP: “TIPS FOR THESIS WRITERS FROM FORMER THESIS WRITERS”

STARTING OUT

- Write a thesis only if you have a topic that you want to think about for nine months.
- Choose your advisor carefully. Be clear about your agreement with him or her, including the direction of your project, how often you intend to meet, and what expectations each of you have.
- Set deadlines for drafts and keep track of them on a calendar.
- *Your thesis needs to have a thesis.* This may need to be revised and rewritten throughout the process, but you should always be conscious of this evolving argument. A great tip, from Charles Lipson’s *How to Write a BA Thesis*, is to find models of well-stated arguments in the books and articles you are reading.
- Be sure that you have a clear sense of your argument *before* completing too much writing. Locate what you’re working on in relation to the work of others.
- There is a point when you have to stop reading—research becomes procrastination, and at some point, you *have* to begin writing. There will always be more to read, but you need to stifle that urge.
- Create an outline in which each chapter and sub-section explains part of your thesis statement.
- Keep track of your materials and research from the outset—everything you record should include its source. Develop a system to distinguish between your notes and your own thoughts and commentary and those paraphrasing your sources.
- Start formatting your work and citations *early on* in the process: use Endnote, Zotero, or a similar program beginning with your very first footnote. Figures and images are especially time-consuming to format.

WRITING

- Define your terms and ID’s clearly and, if needed, more than once.
- Take introductions and opening sentences seriously—this is your first and best chance to pull the reader in.
- Subheadings are very useful signposts for your readers, and they can allow you to transition more clearly.
- Use quotations judiciously. Unless the quote is capturing something unique or distinct, you should paraphrase.
- Explain your quotations. Don’t saturate paragraphs with quotes, or use block quotes, without giving them context and purpose in your *own* words. Explanations are also an important way to let your own voice and perspective come through, and it’s not your work unless it contains *analysis* of the work of others.
- Use assertive, confident language! Again, this is your argument, and you must establish your perspective.
- Keep your reader in mind when you write—both your thesis readers and your general audience. Make your progression logical, make your transitions clear, and err on the side of over-explanation.
- Your section conclusions are a chance for you to emphasize major points and findings, not to summarize the entire chapter.

EDITING

- Be open to sharing your work! Whether you discuss it with friends, send a chapter to your grandma, or work closely with a Thesis Mentor, be open to others’ input and ideas.
- You can begin editing each section after it’s finished—you don’t need to wait until you have a full draft.
- Don’t make your thesis *too long*. Longer is *not* always better. Whatever you’ve written can usually be trimmed down by a third, and it will make your work clear and more direct.
- Be ruthless about removing unnecessary or irrelevant information.

- Read out loud: you will recognize odd phrasing and convoluted sentences more easily when you hear them.
- Aim to finish writing ten days before the deadline. You *will* need this time to edit.
- Put everything in one Word document (including the title page, table of contents, acknowledgments, abstract, bibliography, and appendices) about a week before the deadline.

EXTRA ADVICE

- If you don't own a style manual already, we recommend you get one to refer to for grammar, research tips, and guidelines for your citations and bibliography. We like *EasyWriter*, available online, at Broad Street Books, and on reserve at Olin Library.
- We also recommend the comprehensive resource *How to Write a BA Thesis: A Practical Guide from Your First Ideas to Your Finished Paper* by Charles Lipson.
- The Writing Programs' **Thesis Mentor Program** pairs thesis writers with trained peer tutors. They work together weekly from January to April. Mentors can help the writer plan or revise thesis chapters, offer editorial advice, and assist with time management. You will receive an e-mail about the program in the fall; contact the Ford Fellows in the Writing Programs writingworks@wesleyan.edu or 860.685.2440 for more information.
- Trained peer tutors from a variety of disciplines are available Sunday through Thursday in the **Writing Workshop**, and numerous thesis writers have made great use of their knowledge. Hours are posted here: www.wesleyan.edu/writing/workshop.
- A collection of Wesleyan theses (searchable by discipline) is available at: <http://wescholar.wesleyan.edu/etds/>
- More information about the honors thesis process is available at: www.wesleyan.edu/registrar/JB-contents.htm

For more information: Meg Weisberg, Interim Director of Academic Writing. mweisberg@wesleyan.edu

November 8, 2018

GUIDELINES FOR CAPSTONE PROJECTS IN THEATER

(Subject to change by department)

General description of capstones in Theater:

- A one-semester senior capstone project may take a variety of forms:
 - An essay on a topic related to Theater taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)
 - A performance project in acting taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)
 - A performance project in directing taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)
 - A performance project in design taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)
 - An original written script taken as a tutorial for 1.0 credit (THEA 403 Fall, or 404 Spring)

Guidelines for senior projects with a performance component:

- Performances will take place in a festival setting. Please see the Timeline (below).
- Unless site specific, performances will take place in the Theater Studio, and will receive two days of performances. The festival format will necessitate advanced coordination of performance times as needed due to production elements and requirements.
- The space configuration will be the same for all senior performance projects in the same festival. Students and faculty will collaborate to choose a festival orientation that will satisfy all planned capstone projects.
- Senior capstone projects in design may take as their subject one aspect of design for the entire festival. Additional personnel needs for capstone production teams will be determined by faculty, including necessary collaborations amongst senior capstone students as appropriate.

SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECT PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

All senior capstone project proposals must include the following information:

1. Evidence of collaboration between student actors, directors, designers, production teams.
2. Proposal Form (below)
3. Narrative description of the project (maximum 2 pp. single spaced).

SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECT PRODUCTION WORKSHEET

Title:

Brief project description:

Students involved and their capacities:

Projected Costs:

Senior Project Timelines

Thesis proposal submission deadline	Wednesday after Spring Break
Capstone proposal submission deadline	2nd Wednesday after Spring Break
Initial department response to proposals	2nd Friday of April
Revisions due back to department	2 weeks after department response
Final decision by department	Decided and communicated by last day of classes, spring semester by the department chair
<p>➤ To be communicated before the end of the spring semester by department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decision on approval or rejection of proposal ○ Specifics on projects as per below list (approvals of teams, setting location/dates/times, approval of titles) ○ Setting project advisors ○ Preliminary budget amount 	
<p><u>The following must be finalized at the time of proposal revision deadline:</u> <i>(specific date to be announced each year):</i></p>	
For Directing Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stage manager, set designer, costume designer, lighting designer (as appropriate) ● Venue, dates and performance times ● Title of performance and verified rights availability
For Acting Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director (if necessary), designers (if necessary), stage manager ● Venue, dates and performance times ● Title of performance and verified rights availability
For Design Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Venue, dates and performance times ● Title of performance and verified rights availability
For Playwriting Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For adaptations - verification of permission from author/agent
<p>(This allows the department to discuss your requests and provide feedback before the end of the Spring semester)</p>	

Capstone Dates:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year, the Theater Department will host a weekend festival of capstone performances. This will be held during the last weekend of classes, typically the last weekend of April first weekend of May. All capstone projects receive up to two days of performances. 	
2018-2019 Capstone Festival	Thursday May 2 through Sunday May 5 Theater Studio
Thesis Dates:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are two options for thesis production dates each year - the last weekend of classes in December or the last three days before Spring Break. All thesis projects receive up to three days of performances. 	
2018-2019 Thesis Weekend Option 1	Thursday December 6 through Saturday December 8 92 Patricelli Theater or Theater Studio
2018-2019 Thesis Weekend Option 2	Wednesday March 6 through Friday March 8 92 Patricelli Theater or Theater Studio

Additional Senior Capstone and Thesis Project Expectations and Requirements:

- Production meetings are held on Tuesdays or Thursdays between 4:30pm and 6:30pm; you and your production team **must** be available
- All designers **must** be able to meet with project tutors on a regularly scheduled basis. This is currently set on Fridays; your designers will be informed which day to plan for the academic year before the end of the spring semester.

Students who fail to submit proposal revisions according to the timeline above, or who fail to address outstanding issues as requested in department responses in the revisions will not be eligible to pursue the senior project.