

School of Performing Arts

Theatre Department Student Handbook



2024-2025

This handbook can be found online at mobap.edu/performingarts



THE PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook exists to provide students with information that is vital to obtaining a degree in theatre or musical theatre at Missouri Baptist University. The primary aim of the theatre department at MBU is to equip our majors with the skills necessary to participate in any facet of theatre arts as well as give them the academic foundation they need to pursue a graduate degree. The theatre department also strives to create enriching experiences for campus life through our productions.

THEATRE FACULTY & STAFF

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ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic advising is an opportunity for you to connect with a faculty member one-on-one. You and your adviser will work together to create an individual academic master plan to complete your education requirements. This will assist you in planning each semester's schedule.

To complete all requirements for graduation in an efficient and timely manner, it is essential that you work with your adviser to schedule classes in their required order. Failure to schedule classes in the proper sequence (or dropping scheduled classes) may cause you to miss your targeted graduation date.

As a part of the advising process, you are responsible for:

- Making your own decisions based upon information and advice available.
- Understanding degree and program requirements as outlined in the MBU catalog.
- Seeking out degree sheets and information related to planning your academic program.
- Consulting your master academic plan before meeting with your adviser.
- Arranging advising appointments.
- Making an appointment for a Graduation Check with the Director of Records in the first semester of your junior year.

PERIODICITY

Periodicity, as applied to course schedules, is a term that means courses are taught on a rotating basis. At MBU, some courses in the rotation are taught every other year. Because classes at MBU are smaller, periodicity is a necessity.

On a personal level, periodicity means that, as a student, you need to be aware of the class rotation cycle so that you can schedule your classes in the required order. As you select your courses you should consult the Missouri Baptist University catalog, degree sheets and your adviser to make sure you have scheduled the proper classes for each semester. Ultimately it is your responsibility to schedule classes in the required order for graduation. If you carefully select courses according to the sequence, you can complete your graduation requirements in a timely manner.

FINE ARTS & THEATRE FACILITY

The use of any space outside regular class or rehearsal times must be reserved. You may contact Sarah Dickey at sarah.dickey@mobap.edu to set these reservations.

The **Dale Williams Fine Arts Center and Pillsbury Chapel** houses the Fine Arts Division: Music, Communications, Worship Arts and Theatre. It is also host to a number of special events throughout the school year, such as concerts by guest musicians and workshops with outside organizations.

Mabee Great Hall. The Mabee Great Hall functions as the lobby of the Fine Arts Center. It is often used for special events, such as dinners, receptions, job fairs, concerts and open houses.

Pillsbury Chapel. This 960-seat auditorium is the location of most of the large Fine Arts events, as well as weekly chapel services. This is the primary rehearsal and performance space for all theatre productions. Pillsbury Chapel is often used by outside groups for performances and other large events.

Prop Storage. Props and other supplies belonging to the Theatre department are stored backstage, in the closet just off stage right. Theatre majors are expected to contribute to the upkeep and maintenance of this area through their shop hours requirement.

Tech Closet. This storage area, located backstage left, houses much of the university tech equipment, such as cables, microphones, gels, and lamps. Access to this closet is allowed only through permission from the Special Events office.

Rehearsal Room (CFA 205). This is the main room where MBU musical ensembles, such as Chorus and Concert Band, rehearse. This room is also used as a classroom when needed. Auditions and music rehearsals for theatre productions will often take place in this room.

Performance Hall (CFA 211). The smaller of the two main performance venues (155 seats), the Performance Hall is one of the main theatre classrooms. It is also used for some small-scale theatre and opera performances, recitals, senior capstones performances, and showcases.

Fine Arts Office Suite (CFA 101). This office suite houses the Communications faculty, several part-time instructors and the Fine Arts Administrative Assistant. Mailboxes for all Fine Arts faculty are located in this office.

Classrooms 102 & 104. Many theatre classes are taught in these classrooms.

Fine Arts Computer Lab (CFA 108). When not being used for a class, this space is open to all students regardless of major. Supervised evening and weekend hours are also available and are posted outside the door. No food, drinks, or gum are allowed in the Music Lab at any time.

Faculty offices. The offices of all full-time Fine Arts faculty members are located on the lower level of the building. Class schedules and office hours are posted outside each door.

Costume Storage (CFA 106). The majority of the costume stock is kept in this room, in addition to wigs, shoes, and makeup supplies. Theatre majors are expected to contribute to the upkeep and maintenance of this area through their shop hours requirement.

SET LOAD-IN & SHOP POINTS

All Theatre, Speech/Theatre and Musical Theatre majors are required to attend and participate in set load-in and strike for every MBU Theatre production, whether or not they are members of the cast or crew. In addition to this requirement, majors are required to earn 10 shop points each semester. Shop points are the equivalent of one to two hours of work in maintaining the theatre department or finishing the set outside of load in and strike. The purpose of shop points is to help students gain knowledge and experience in the operation and maintenance of theatre resources.

The Shop Manager is in charge of assigning tasks and keeping a record of tasks completed. Students are responsible for recording their work on the shop points log. The log will either be hanging on the bulletin board outside the Theatre Box Office or the Shop Manager will have it in their possession. You must record your work in order to receive points. The Shop Manager has no authority to give or take away your points. Points will be assessed by the Director of Theatre and Dance several times during the semester and emails will be sent to students in danger of not completing required work. Poor or incomplete work will result in either no or partial points being awarded for the task.

Possible tasks include (but are not limited to): organizing and cleaning, inventory, wig maintenance and care, assisting in tech and stage managing with special events, costume maintenance, marketing and sales, and ushering for non-theatre events. Requests made be made, but final decisions and assignments will be made by the Shop Manager.

THEATRE INTERNSHIPS (THEA 471, 472, 473)

Course Description

This course exposes students to the disciplines and skills of the theatre through firsthand experience. Students must have completed a majority of their coursework in Theatre to enroll in this class.

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor and consent of appropriate field supervisor.

Course Objectives

To develop skills through hands-on experience and observation.

To demonstrate responsible and dependable work habits necessary for success in theatre production.

Internship Course Procedures:

A copy of the Theatre Internship Contract must be submitted to the Director of Theatre before the student is officially registered for this class. The contract must be submitted before beginning the internship or the student will not be registered for the class and will not receive credit.

Students work at an approved site for an appropriate number of hours (135 hours minimum) as dictated by the assignment. The credit hours and tasks should be agreed upon at the beginning of the assignment. This would normally occur over a fifteen-week period (a regular semester or combined summer sessions). However, upon consent of the instructor some flexibility is available in scheduling internship hours.

At the end of the internship period, the site supervisor will submit a Theatre Internship Assessment form, evaluating the performance of the Intern before credit and a final grade can be reported by the Internship Coordinator.

In addition to the completed contract page, students will be required to complete two short papers:

-Preliminary Report: The intern and his/her supervisor will cooperatively determine three goals and an appropriate number of measurable objectives of the internship.

-Final Report: A two to three page, typed, single spaced paper is to be submitted at the completion of the internship. This document is an opportunity for the student to describe and evaluate the internship experience, supervision, and his/her success in achieving the goals and objectives determined at the beginning of the term.

SENIOR THEATRE CAPSTONE PROJECT Procedure

All Theatre majors at MBU are required to present a Theatre Capstone during their senior year. This course is designed as a comprehensive measure of the knowledge and skill students have acquired in their particular major. There are two primary dimensions to the capstone course:

- 1) an opportunity for students to reflect on and undergo assessment of their body of work in their major; and
- 2) an opportunity to synthesize the knowledge of communication arts theory and practice in a final project performance.

All capstones will be comprised of two main elements: a website and a public presentation.

The portfolio and presentation will assess whether students have successfully completed the work required for their chosen degree. Since the department is diverse in emphases and specializations, students will be given an opportunity to design a final project consistent with their interests and experience.

Procedure

- **Choose a supervisor.** Your supervisor may be any of the full-time or part-time Theatre faculty. They should be a specialist in the body of work you are hoping to explore. If you are unsure as to the specialties of each faculty member, please ask the Director of Theatre. If you would like help in selecting a capstone before choosing a supervisor, you may also ask the Director of Theatre. Once you have selected your supervisor, they will help you narrow the focus of your project and guide you through the academic and artistic requirements.
- **Submit a proposal.** Students should submit a proposal covering the scope of the capstone to their supervisor. The proposal will be reviewed by the Theatre faculty to determine whether or not to allow the project to proceed. The proposal should be submitted by the date chosen by the Director of Theatre and Dance and communicated to seniors by the first theatre and dance department meeting.
- **Organize your auditions.** Auditions will take place no later than October 31st for the capstone festival in December. Students will be able to advocate for certain casting, but the ultimate casting decisions will be made by the Director of Theatre and your capstone supervisor.
- **Schedule a Capstone Hearing.** The supervisor will help the student coordinate a time for the hearing. The hearing must take place at least two weeks before the scheduled capstone and must include all who are participating in the presentation. The Theatre faculty will review the program and accompanying portfolio and evaluate the content and level of preparation the degree program being represented.

SENIOR THEATRE CAPSTONE PROJECT

Academic Requirements

The capstone project is meant to challenge the student to think critically and push the boundaries of their skill level to produce advanced theatrical work. The student is directly responsible for one performative element (acting, directing, stage managing, etc.) and one technical element (design, dramaturgy, etc.) in their presentation. The student may enlist the help of others to participate as actors, designers, etc. but the student must be directly responsible for these two elements.

Once a capstone date is chosen, please do not approach other students about their participation in your capstone until auditions for any shows rehearsing during that period have taken place. Capstones are a great training ground for all students, but the main stage productions are a priority.

Capstones which include singing or dancing will be approved on a case-by-case basis. The student must have shown a history of active participation in dance classes and voice lessons at Missouri Baptist University as well as a resumé including musical productions at MBU. These capstones will be rare, as assessment of a theatre degree differs from a musical theatre degree.

Similarly, the capstone performance is not a time to try something new - it is a reinforcement of what has been learned and practiced while attending MBU. Consideration will only be given to those who have shown an interest in those specific design/performance elements that they are proposing.

Professional Website Requirements

A website including the following information will be presented as the student's portfolio at the time of their hearing.

Name and contact information

Bio

Media samples of the student's work (show clips, pictures)

Resumés for each area of theatre the student wishes to pursue (performance, directing, design, etc.)

The portfolio link should be sent to the student's supervisor, who will distribute to the theatre faculty and staff for feedback. The student will be expected to make any adjustments requested by the capstone date.

SENIOR BFA IN MUSICAL THEATRE CAPSTONE REQUIREMENTS

All BFA in Musical Theatre majors at MBU are required to present a Musical Theatre Capstone during their senior year. This course is designed as a comprehensive measure of the knowledge and skill students have acquired in their particular major. There are three primary elements in the capstone course:

1. Participation in the BFA Showcase on campus held each spring. Students who will be graduating at semester must participate in the BFA showcase the spring before.
2. Participating in a BFA Cabaret held off-campus. Locations may vary from year to year, but examples of locations may include: The Blue Strawberry, The Dark Room or another venue in the arts district of St. Louis.
3. A publicly available website.

Procedure

- **Song Selections.** Students will perform 30 minutes worth of musical theatre material. This material will be selected by the director of the showcase with input from the student. This material should be combinations of solo, duet and group work. The material should cover musical theatre from the Golden Age to present day. The BFA Showcase director will consider all the materials from each student as well as selecting material on the students' behalf in order to create the showcase.
- **Rehearsal Process.** Students will be expected to work on their pieces on their own as well as schedule times with the music director to run and refine their work prior to the official beginning of the rehearsal process. Each rehearsal process for the showcase lasts 1-2 weeks and all students must be off-book at the beginning of the process.
- **Performances.** Students will perform their work on the MBU stage first. Afterwards they will work with the director of theatre to shape their performances into a cabaret-appropriate context before they perform off-campus.
- **Website.** Students will have completed their websites prior to the first rehearsal for the showcase. Websites may be reviewed and returned to the student for revision. Website construction will be covered in course work.
- **Reception.** Students should have resumés and headshots available at the receptions for each performance. They should coordinate with each other regarding food, decorations, etc. for each venue.

THEATRE DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP CONTRACT

Missouri Baptist University

I have been awarded a Theatre Department scholarship at Missouri Baptist University. To maintain this scholarship and renew it for the coming semesters, I must live up to the following expectations:

- 1) I am a full-time student (12 credits per semester minimum) majoring in Theatre, Musical Theatre or Speech/Theatre at Missouri Baptist University and making acceptable progress toward my degree (taking the courses required and expected of a major).
- 2) I am enrolled, attending, and participating in rehearsals, performances, and/or production meetings of theatre productions on the MBU Theatre season, as determined by the Director of Theatre. I understand that I must participate in at least three yearly theatre productions in roles that are determined by the directorial staff of each production. I am also fulfilling all requirements for other classes, ensembles, and productions in which I am enrolled.
- 3) I am maintaining an overall GPA of 2.5 at MBU (one semester of probation is allowed to improve the GPA if it falls below 2.5).
- 4) I am making MBU performances a priority over outside performance opportunities. I know that I must request special permission from the Director of Theatre before I may participate in outside performances during the academic year.
- 5) I am behaving in a professional and supportive manner to all MBU faculty, staff, and students.
- 6) I am obtaining all shop points as outlined in the handbook. I understand that I must contact the Theatre Assistant to obtain shop points.

Some students are not eligible for a theatre or music department scholarship because of outside scholarship opportunities. These students must adhere to this handbook to retain their theatre major status with the follow exceptions:

1. Students must participate in at least two shows of the season.
2. Student must choose to either:
 - a) Participate in two additional shows, bringing their total to four
 - b) Participate in shop points

The student must make their choice known to the Director of Theatre no later than September 1 of each school year.

Scholarships related to individual ensembles are subject to the requirements of that ensemble and its director. Those are separate from these Departmental scholarship requirements.

I understand that as long as I am living up to these expectations of behavior and progress, my Departmental scholarship will continue from year to year. Failure to uphold these requirements may result in loss or reduction of the Departmental scholarship.

I accept the MBU Theatre Department scholarship and agree to abide by these terms and expectations in order to remain eligible for the scholarship each year.

Name (Printed) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

