

Theater

Oberlin College is an ideal choice for students who are looking for a highly selective liberal arts school with a strong Theater program. Oberlin students have the flexibility of taking conservatory caliber theater classes while simultaneously pursuing a broad undergraduate education. Because of Oberlin's dual emphasis on both academic and artistic excellence, Oberlin attracts truly unique, multi-talented individuals. ***Our students are our Theater program's greatest asset!***

Theater Major and Curriculum

An average of 18 students per graduating class major in Theater at Oberlin. (Over 25% of these double major in another discipline.) The general requirements for the major incorporate all aspects of the Theater Arts: Theater History/Dramatic Literature, Acting/Directing, Design, and Technical Production. Majors design individualized courses of study, concentrating on their own special interests.

Acting is by far the most popular concentration. ***We offer a very rigorous sequence of technique courses, designed to prepare students for admission to graduate or conservatory programs.*** Courses include the fundamentals of American method acting, scene study, Shakespeare, acting for the Camera, Voice, Speech & Dialects, and Movement. Classes are small: most are limited to 12. (To ensure a consistently high level of artistic skill, students must audition into acting classes.) The **Directing** concentration attracts extremely self-motivated students. In addition to directing, these majors take courses in Acting, Stage Management, and Design, as well as cognate courses in other departments. ***There are so many opportunities to direct at Oberlin, that it is not unusual for students to direct a show each of their four years here!*** The Theater faculty truly supports student-directed work, not only attending performances but actively mentoring students throughout their artistic process. Students concentrating in **Design/Production** take courses in all areas of **Design** (Sets, Lights, Costumes and Sound); courses in Technical Production and Stage Management supplement the curriculum. ***Student designers are in high demand for student-directed shows, and may have the opportunity to do a Mainstage production in their senior year.*** The

academic core for all Theater majors is an intensive year-long Theater History course. Also offered: Asian Theater, African American Theater, and Non-Literary Theater. Dramatic Literature courses, covering different genres and periods, are offered by various other departments. The Creative Writing Department offers courses (and a major concentration) in **Playwriting**. Students can apply to do Honors in Theater, which usually involves both a creative project and a written thesis.

Performance Opportunities

There are over 30 shows a year at Oberlin! Auditions are open to everyone – so, it's easy to get involved!

The Theater and Dance Program (T&D) produces a Mainstage season in Hall Auditorium (500 seat proscenium theater), which includes three (3) faculty directed plays. Selections range from classics to contemporary work. T&D also produces a full season in our 85 seat Little Theater, consisting of over half a dozen student-directed productions. These shows are all student produced under the guidance of Theater faculty and staff advisors.

Additionally, there are several extra-curricular Student Theater organizations: **The Oberlin Student Theater Association** produces at least half a dozen shows each year; **The Oberlin Musical Theater Association** produces three or more musicals a year; **The Oberlin Gilbert and Sullivan Players** produces two G&S shows each year. These shows are mounted in various venues around campus, including Wilder Main Space and the Little Theater. **Improv** and **Sketch Comedy** are especially popular on campus. Troupes like Primitive Streak, The Sunshine Scouts, and Piscapo's Arm perform regularly at Oberlin's informal coffee house, The Cat in the Cream.

Life After Oberlin

Oberlin graduates have established an important legacy in the American Theater. Famous Obies include **Thornton Wilder, Bill Irwin, Julie Taymor, Nikos Psacharopoulos, Eric Bogosian, John Kander, Natasha Katz, Jim Burrows,** and **Avery Brooks**. More recent graduates have gone on to prestigious graduate schools such as The Yale School of

Drama, NYU/Tisch, Julliard, and ACT. Many are pursuing professional careers in NYC, Chicago, and LA. A large percentage of Oberlin Theater alumni pursue academic careers.

THEATER FACULTY

ROGER COPELAND

Professor of Theater and Dance, Northwestern University (B.S. Theater '71, The Yale School of Drama (M.F.A. '74, D.F.A. '78) Books include What Is Dance? and Merce Cunningham: The Modernizing of Modern Dance; films include "The Unrecovered" (about the psychological aftermath of 9/11). He teaches "Western Theater History," "The Concept of the Avant-Garde," "Happenings, Non-Literary Theater, and Performance Art," "Classical Asian Theatre," "Western Dance History and Theory".

CHRIS FLAHARTY

Associate Professor of Theater/Costume Designer. (B.A., Westminster College, 1974; M.A., Bowling Green State University, 1976; M.F.A., Ohio State University, 1983). Mr. Flaharty teaches Introduction to Design.

MICHAEL GRUBE

Managing Director, Associate Professor, Scene Designer. (B.A., St. Vincent College, 1971; M.F.A., Design, Carnegie-Mellon University, 1976). His professional credits include Lyric Opera, Cleveland; Opera Company of Boston; GeVa Theater; College Light Opera Co; Ohio Light Opera Co; Stage One Children's Theater, Louisville, KY. Mr. Grube teaches Set Design.

PAUL MOSER

Director of T&D and Associate Professor of Theater. (B.A., Brown University; M.F.A. in Directing, Yale School of Drama; Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers) Regional credits include Portland Stage, Theater Virginia, Cincinnati Playhouse, New Harmony, Cleveland Playhouse and Indiana Rep. He teaches Acting, Shakespeare and Directing, as well as directing Mainstage productions.

CAROLINE JACKSON SMITH

Associate Professor of Theater and African American Studies. (B.A., Yale University, 1974). She teaches Black Arts Workshop and Afro-American dramatic literature. Directs professionally locally and nationally.

MATTHEW WRIGHT

Associate Professor of Theater. (B.A. Theatre-University of Tennessee, M.F.A. Acting-University of California, San Diego; Actors' Equity Assoc.). Professional credits include The McCarter, The Clarence Brown Company, Studio Arena Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Trinity Rep, The New Theatre, Actor's Playhouse and Florida Stage. He teaches Voice for The Actor, Speech and Dialects, and Introduction to Scene Study, and directs Mainstage productions.

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