Theatre & Dance

Theatre & Dance students critically reflect on a broad range of literature, performing arts forms, and techniques in order to foster an active engagement with the foundations of our culture and to promote the formation of a character that reflects the faith and justice mission of Gonzaga University. The intended outcome of this study and reflection is to prepare our students for careers in the performing arts and a host of other fields, to promote social justice, and to provide service to our audience and the broader community. Young artists hoping to apply disciplined training and thoughtful work in pursuit of these goals are encouraged to complete a major or minor in Theatre Arts or Dance, or a minor in Interdisciplinary Arts at Gonzaga.

THE PROGRAM

The Theatre & Dance Department at Gonzaga University is committed to training and developing artists who confront the important issues in our lives through their engagement with the art forms of live theatre and dance. Gonzaga provides excellent training for students in theatre performance, technical theatre, dance, and interdisciplinary arts.

Theatre & Dance students develop an attitude of professionalism and leadership through their classroom training and interaction with performing arts professionals. The Department regularly hosts professional workshops in acting, ensemble practice, dance, and technical theatre. Internships are encouraged with theatre, dance, and film companies. Guest artists have included professional actors, movement specialists, dance professionals, fight choreographers, directors of training institutes in London and New York City, casting directors, and Hollywood screenwriters. To promote the combination of service and theatre, students perform for school groups from underserved areas and can become involved in our community programs such as ZagDance, a free after school dance class for elementary school students and Dance for Parkinson's which is made possible through our partnership with the Northwest Parkinson's Foundation.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The Theatre Arts major offers concentrations in design or performance. The program offers courses in all aspects of theatre production: acting, directing, voice & movement, playwriting, script analysis, theatre history, technical theatre, stagecraft, costume construction, and scenic lighting & costume design. It also gives students the ability to specialize with either a performance or technical theatre endorsement.

The Theatre Arts minor also offers a far-reaching curriculum, but requires fewer courses and has only one required course at the 300-level or higher.

The Dance major has concentrations in Pedagogy and Performance and enables students to study a variety of dance and movement styles, as well as dance history, choreography, and dance instruction.

The Dance minor pairs with many different types of majors to create training towards a career in multiple fields.

The Interdisciplinary Arts minor expands a student's problem solving, critical reflection, and innovative thinking skills through combining the strengths of theatre, dance, visual arts, and music.
**PERFORMANCES**

Each year, we present two main-stage faculty or guest artist directed theatrical productions, two dance concerts, and a full student-directed Second Stage theatre series.

The Theatre & Dance Department stages a wide range of productions including: premieres, devised work, contemporary scripts, classical plays, theatre for young audiences, and musicals. Recent productions include:

- Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play
- Tick...Tick...BOOM!
- Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead
- Mother Courage and Her Children
- Gruesome Playground Injuries
- Much Ado About Nothing
- The Last Five Years
- Jesus Christ Superstar
- Hamletmachine

The Department seeks to produce works that connect with and serve audiences from both the Gonzaga and Spokane communities.

GU theatre participates annually with the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival and performs an annual fundraiser for Our Place Community Ministries, a local non-profit agency that serves the West Central neighborhood of Spokane with much needed food, clothing, and other services.

Dance performances include the Annual Spring Dance Concert, Student Choreography Concert, American College Dance Association Conferences, musicals, Gonzaga Repertory Dance Company, and various student-led performances.

In addition, Gonzaga University Theatre Sports (GUTS), a student improv comedy club, practices twice a week and performs once a month. Dance clubs include Dance Council, Dance Honors, and Boundless Dance Club, which offers numerous dance classes throughout the year. Summer dance opportunities include Gonzaga University's week long Summer Dance Intensive.

**FACILITIES**

In April of 2019 Gonzaga embarked on a new chapter with a modern $40-million performing arts center for theatre, dance, and music. The center includes a 759-seat theatre, design studio, a 168-seat dance rehearsal/recital hall with mirrors and a spring floor, and a design studio for classroom instruction. This state-of-the-art building serves as a center for musical excellence and interdisciplinary performance among students, faculty, and communities across the Inland Northwest.

Gonzaga will also maintain Magnuson Theatre. Magnuson’s modified thrust stage allows for close interaction between performer and audience. Students also acquire experience in the design and creation of scenery, lights, sound, and costumes in Magnuson’s shops. Since students fill all crew positions for shows and design many of the productions, majors and non-majors alike have plentiful opportunities to apply their skills.

**OUTCOMES**

- Laura (2016) is a public relations intern for Jacob’s Pillow (International Dance Festival).
- Veronica (2016) is production staff at Perseverance Theatre.
- Ben (2015) is living and working in New York City, acting in film exercises for New York University.
- Hannah (2014) and Acacia (2011) work at Disneyland and Walt Disney World performing many character roles.
- Erin (2014) is a directing intern with the Playwrights’ Forum Festival at the Spokane Civic Theatre.
- Anthony (2014) chose to attend the New York Film Academy in Los Angeles to complete an M.F.A. in Film Directing.

**Faculty Contact**

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