Theatre and dance students critically reflect on a broad range of literature, theatrical forms, and techniques in order to foster an active engagement with the foundations of our culture and to promote character formation that reflects the faith and justice mission of Gonzaga University. The intended outcome of this study and reflection is to provide service to an audience and the broader community, to develop the search for social justice, and to prepare for a profession in the performing arts. 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 a minor in Dance at Gonzaga.

**THE PROGRAM**
The Theatre and Dance Department at Gonzaga University is committed to training and developing artists who confront the important issues of our lives through their engagement with the art forms of theatre and dance. Gonzaga provides excellent training for students in theatre performance, technical theatre, and dance. The major in Theatre Arts (45-47 credits) offers courses in all aspects of theatre production: acting, directing, dance, theatre history, technical theatre, stagecraft, scene, costume, and lighting 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 minor 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.

Theatre and Dance students develop an attitude of professionalism and leadership through their classroom training and through interaction with local theatre professionals. Internships are encouraged with local theatre and film companies. Guest artists have included professional actors, 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, main-stage productions have included performances for high school and elementary schools of underserved areas, and students in the program have taught theatre and dance for local schools. The program hosts professional workshops in acting, dance, and technical theatre.

**PERFORMANCES**
The season includes three main-stage theatrical productions, including our Spring Dance Concert, plus our Second Stage season of student-directed work and Senior Projects. The Theatre and Dance program stages a wide range of productions from modern scripts (Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play, Tick...Tick...BOOM!, The Three Musketeers) to classical plays (Romeo and Juliet, The Winter's Tale, Life is a Dream), from children's plays (The Crane Wife) to musicals (A Chorus Line, Urinetown, Chicago). Recently, we staged a documentary theatre piece based on interviews with Iraq and Afghanistan, written by Gonzaga faculty and performed by our students.

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

- One of our own professors, for example, translated the 17th century Spanish play, The Force of Habit, into English for a recent GU theatre production. The performances included a series of post-show talks with invited speakers from across the University.
- GU theatre students presented a production of A Street Car Named Desire in celebration of great American playwright Tennessee Williams’s 100th birthday.
- Original productions created in collaboration with other departments (Religious Studies, Music, Art) such as Weaving Our Sisters’ Voices and Waiting for Godot.
- GU theatre 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.
- Beautiful Weapons and the Diversity of Life was a collaboration with Dance and Biology that toured to regional universities using dance to teach biodiversity.
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.

**FACILITIES**

The Department is looking forward to the completion of the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center scheduled for winter 2019. The center will house a 750 seat theatre, design studio, dance rehearsal/recital hall and a variety of other spaces.

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**

Our graduates go on to a variety of fields:

- 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.
- Brittany (2013) chose to pursue a master’s degree to teach English as a Second Language.
- Geoff (2011) took the opportunity to earn an M.A. in acting from the International Acting School East-15 in London. Geoff also studied during his junior year at the London Dramatic Academy.
- Ellen (2009) received her M.F.A. with a concentration in Stage Management from Columbia University in 2013. Ellen is now the stage manager for Shen Wei Dance Arts.
- Jeff (2008) booked his first role in the independent feature film Norman. He now lives in LA and is a member of SAG. He has guest-starred on Friday Night Lights and Modern Family.

**FACULTY CONTACTS & SPECIALITIES**

**Theatre**

Kathleen Jeffs | Dept. Chair  
D.Phil., University of Oxford  
directing, acting, playwriting and theatre history  
Assistant Professor  
jeffs@gonzaga.edu

Charles M. Pepiton  
M.F.A., University of Idaho  
acting and directing  
Assistant Professor  
pepiton@gonzaga.edu

Courtney Smith  
M.F.A., University of Idaho  
technical production and design  
Assistant Professor  
smithc1@gonzaga.edu

Leslie Stamoolis  
M.F.A., University of California, Irvine  
costume design and construction  
Assistant Professor  
stamoolis@gonzaga.edu

**Dance and Interdisciplinary Arts**

Suzanne Ostersmith  
M.F.A., Goddard College  
Dance & Interdisciplinary Arts Program Director  
choreography, jazz, musical theatre, movement and dance instruction  
Assistant Professor  
ostersmith@gonzaga.edu