

# THE THEATRE CONSERVATORY

## The Theatre Conservatory

The Theatre Conservatory of the Chicago College of Performing Arts is uniquely positioned to educate and train its students within a professional conservatory setting, offering three Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree programs for those who want performance-based careers in professional theatre or musical theatre or who intend to pursue graduate studies in these fields. In addition, through our Interdisciplinary Conservatory we also offer a Bachelor of Arts (BA) program in Theatre Studies for those who seek a liberal arts education built around a theatre-driven core of classes that are shared with the BFA programs. Lastly, we're proud to offer a Master of Arts (MA) program in Theatre Directing through our "Fast Track" program, where adult learners can attend intensive training over the course of three consecutive summers. Please see the Interdisciplinary Conservatory's page for more information on this program.

Curricula are constructed to achieve a solid balance between academic courses and studio/performance work. Introductory level courses offer training in fundamental skills, while advanced courses help equip our students with specific skills needed for success in today's industry.

Roosevelt University's Chicago campus is the home of the historic Auditorium Theatre. Centered within the heart of downtown Chicago, one of America's greatest theatre cities and home to more than 200 professional theatre companies, the campus is within walking distance of world-class arts institutions such as the Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Art Institute of Chicago, and the Lyric Opera.

The Theatre Conservatory presents a full season of mainstage and studio productions each year, and all are open to the public. A calendar of events is available upon request. To receive monthly updates about Theatre Conservatory performances, please sign up through the CCPA webpage (<https://www.roosevelt.edu/ccpa/signup/>).

### Admission

Admission to Roosevelt University does not necessarily include admission to the Theatre Conservatory. **Eligibility for admission to a BFA program is determined by audition.**

Eligibility for entry into courses offered by the Theatre Conservatory is limited to admitted and matriculated students only, except for courses identified in the schedule as open to non-theatre majors.

Students may transfer into the Theatre Conservatory—upon the successful completion of an entrance audition—and placement within the BFA curricula will be determined based on evaluation by the department chair, program director, and academic advisor. No undergraduate student may transfer above the sophomore level. The determination of placement is made at the time of admission to the university. Courses transferred from the previous school(s) will be reviewed for official transfer equivalency to Roosevelt's requirements during the student's first advising session at the time of matriculation.

### Academic performance

The only acceptable grades for BFA Acting, Musical Theatre or Musical Theatre Dance majors in courses offered by the Theatre Conservatory are A, A-, B+, B, and B-. Grades of C+ or C will be reviewed by the Theatre Conservatory administration and faculty, to determine if the student is required to repeat the course. Grades of C- or lower in any Theatre Conservatory course are considered unsatisfactory and may not be applied toward the BFA requirements.

Students must earn passing grades in all general education (non-major area academic) courses.

### CCPA Theatre Auditions and Professional Opportunities

Auditioning and networking are essential parts of what it means to be a theatre professional. Beginning in the sophomore year, all BFA Acting, Musical Theatre and Musical Theatre Dance majors in good standing are required to audition for CCPA productions and to complete crew assignments each semester. All students enrolled in programs in The Theatre Conservatory should arrange their schedules to allow ample time for afternoon and evening rehearsals.

Students are eligible to be in the CCPA Casting Pool for six (6) of their eight semesters with us (sophomore through senior year). They are also allowed to apply to be exempt from the casting pool for two of those semesters (though it is recommended that these options not be used for two successive semesters). These exemptions can be used when students audition for and obtain work in professional productions.

Students who wish to be removed from the CCPA casting pool in a given semester must obtain the permission of the chair of the Theatre Conservatory. If permission is granted, the student will still be expected to complete any crew assignments for their Production Crew grade, as in order to be a truly holistic theatre artist it is important to have a working familiarity with all areas of theatre production.

Any conflicts with casting assignments that would cause a student to be absent from a rehearsal or performance (e.g. family obligations, work schedules, etc.) must be approved in writing by the chair of the Theatre Conservatory and the show's director at the beginning of the semester.

Students are encouraged to gain professional performance experience during their academic residency beginning in their junior year. However, permission of the chair of the Theatre Conservatory is necessary before students can accept contracts for outside productions. Juniors and seniors with a minimum GPA of 3.0 may seek these experiences by auditioning for professional shows (both Equity and non-Equity) in the Chicago area and applying for internships. Sophomores may be considered for outside opportunities with the permission of the faculty.

Freshmen and students on probation in the Theatre Conservatory are not eligible to participate in theatrical activity outside the conservatory during the academic year. Permission to pursue or accept professional engagements does not exempt the student from fulfilling other academic requirements and obligations within the conservatory, such as attendance in classes.

By the semester of graduation a student must have secured at least one casting in an on-campus, fully staged production for which they will earn credit as THAR 351. Students may earn THAR 351 credit for every semester in which they are cast in any on-campus production. Students performing in off-campus, professional or semi-professional productions may earn THAR 353 credit for each successful off-campus production.

### Attendance

Punctual attendance at all classes and rehearsals is an important element of the discipline needed for a career in the performing arts, and is an important sign of respect for instructors, directors, colleagues, and the art form itself.

In the Theatre Conservatory, students are allowed the equivalent of one week's class meetings in absence (i.e., if a class meets twice a week, students are allowed two absences through the course of the semester). Further absences must be excused by the chair and are examined on a case-by-case basis.

Beyond these generic guidelines, any instructor may implement additional attendance policies, which will be published in the class syllabi.

### **Professional internships**

The Theatre Conservatory encourages advanced students to work with professional theatre companies through specially arranged internships, which can form an important part of their training. Roosevelt University students have interned and apprenticed with Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Oak Park Festival Theatre, The Goodman Theatre and many other companies in the Chicago area and throughout the nation.

We actively partner with many professional organizations to connect our students with performance and production internships and apprenticeships. Qualified students have participated in internships in the areas of acting, directing, stage management, arts administration, and design. We also offer course credit for internships and apprenticeships, and these courses are customizable to the student's experience.

### **Health policy**

Training in the Theatre Conservatory makes many demands on students' physical and psychological health, and CCPA prioritizes supporting our students in various ways so that they can participate safely in our programs and build the strength and stamina needed for enduring careers.

When it is suspected that students are struggling with vocal pathologies, orthopedic injuries, or mental health challenges, instructors, Program Directors, the Chair, or Dean may recommend that the student seek testing and support from additional resources. Students are free to accept or reject these recommendations. If, however, their condition becomes debilitating or there is a documented concern by an instructor of sustained or significant harm, then the instructor, Chair, and/or Dean may require consultation from the appropriate campus offices to ensure that the student, classmates, or instructors are not at unreasonable risk of a further compromise to the student's health or the well-being of those with whom they are working.

The Theatre Conservatory faculty and the College administration will work with students to make reasonable accommodations to assignments and schedules in order to allow for necessary vocal, physical, or psychological rehabilitation. If, however, severe pathological conditions prevent satisfactory participation and/or completion of learning outcomes needed for an isolated course(s), or the total courses necessary for the degree, a student may be guided through their options for taking a leave of absence until sufficient health is regained, selecting a major in which all coursework can be completed (including with appropriate accommodation), or making further amendment to a degree map and time to graduation. This determination is made by the Chair of

the Theatre Conservatory and in consultation with appropriate faculty and university offices.