THE THEATRE CONSERVATORY

The Theatre Conservatory

The Theatre Conservatory of the Chicago College of Performing Arts is distinctively positioned to educate and train its students within a professional conservatory setting, offering major and minor degree programs for those who desire careers in theatre or musical theatre, intend to pursue graduate studies in these fields, or seek a liberal arts education with a major in theatre. Curricula are designed 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 students with specific professional skills.

Roosevelt University’s Chicago campus is the home of the acclaimed Auditorium Theatre and the blockbuster hits Les Misérables, Phantom of the Opera, Miss Saigon, and Show Boat. Centered within the heart of downtown Chicago, one of America’s greatest theatre cities and home to approximately 200 professional theatre companies, the campus is within walking distance of world-class arts institutions such as the Goodman 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, interview, and submission of three letters of recommendation.

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 who have previously attended other universities of colleges may begin in the Theatre Conservatory as either “Transfer Freshmen” or “Transfer Sophomores.” (following successful completion of the admission requirements). No undergraduate student may transfer above the sophomore level. The determination of placement is made at the time of admission to the university by the associate dean/director and assistant director of the Theatre Conservatory, and the assistant dean for enrollment and student services at CCPA. The offer of admission will indicate the level at which the student has been placed. Transfer Freshmen are required to complete a minimum four-year residency, and Transfer Sophomores must complete a minimum three-year residency. Courses transferred from the previous school(s) will be reviewed for equivalency to Roosevelt’s requirements during the student’s first advising session at the time of matriculation.

Academic performance

The only acceptable grades for Acting or Musical Theatre 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 grades of C- or higher in all general education (non-major area academic) courses. Grades below C- in these courses may not be applied toward the BFA requirements.

Receiving an unsatisfactory grade in a Theatre Conservatory course will be grounds for disciplinary action; receiving an unsatisfactory grade for a second time in the same class may result in dismissal from the Theatre Conservatory. Students should review the grade policies in the Theatre Conservatory Handbook (https://www.roosevelt.edu/~media/Files/pdfs/college-ccpa/Theatre-Student-Handbook.ashx?la=en) for further information.

Auditions and outside performances

Auditioning is an integral and vital part of the theatre professional’s work. All Acting and Musical Theatre majors in good standing are required to audition for all 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 who wish to be removed from the casting pool in any given semester must obtain the permission of the associate dean/director of the Theatre Conservatory. If permission is granted, the student will still be expected to complete any crew assignments.

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

For further information on audition requirements and protocols, students should consult the Theatre Conservatory Handbook (https://www.roosevelt.edu/~media/Files/pdfs/college-ccpa/Theatre-Student-Handbook.ashx?la=en).

Students are encouraged to gain appropriate professional experiences during their academic residency. However, the permission of the associate dean/director of the Theatre Conservatory is necessary before students can audition for outside productions. Juniors and seniors with a minimum GPA of 3.0 may seek such experiences. 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. Further, permission to pursue or accept professional engagements does not exempt the student from fulfilling other academic requirements and policies within the conservatory, such as attendance at classes.

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 oneself.

In the Theatre Conservatory, for classes that meet once a week, a student’s final grade will be lowered by one-half letter for every absence after one. For classes that meet twice a week, a student’s final grade will
be lowered by one-half letter for every absence after two. In both cases, two instances of tardiness are the equivalent of one absence.

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

Performance Attendance

Performance Attendance is one of the most important requirements in our program. Collaboration and community are vital to our work as artists. Students must register for Performance Attendance (THAR 099) each semester of study. Although this is a non-credit course, completion of eight semesters of satisfactory Performance Attendance is required for graduation.

To fulfill the requirements for THAR 099, students must attend all Theatre Conservatory performances each semester (both O’Malley Theatre and Miller Studio Theatre productions). Missing any production will result in a failing grade. Students who fail THAR 099 risk loss of scholarship, program probation, ineligibility for graduation, or dismissal from the program.

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 with the Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Lifeline Theatre, The Court Theatre, as well as many other companies in the Chicago area and throughout the nation.

Qualified students may participate in internships in the areas of acting, directing, stage and arts management, design, theatre technology, business and marketing, public relations, development, and front-of-house.

Health policy

Successful completion of coursework and degree programs in the Theatre Conservatory requires that a student be in good psychological and physical health, and have the stamina required to participate safely.

The conservatory recommends that students undergo regular medical checkups and report any pre-existing vocal, physical, or psychological conditions that might affect their work to the appropriate Theatre faculty member.

Because of the specialized nature of the work involved in theatre training, a general physical examination might not be sufficient to detect conditions such as vocal or orthopedic pathologies. When deemed necessary by a faculty member, students will be required to consult a specialist of the student’s choice, in order to insure that participation in coursework or rehearsals will not compromise the student’s health. In cases where such a recommendation is made, a faculty member has the option of requiring documentation from a medical professional verifying that continued participation in training work in the conservatory is not contraindicated, before the student will be allowed to re-enter the class or rehearsal.

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 courses or the degree, a student may be required to take a leave of absence until sufficient health is regained. This determination is made by the associate dean/director of the Theatre Conservatory, in consultation with appropriate faculty and staff.

In cases where the seriousness of the condition makes a leave of absence inappropriate, a student may be dismissed from the program. This determination will be made by the associate dean/director of the Theatre Conservatory, in consultation with appropriate faculty and staff.