

THEATER

<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/theatre/>

Name and description of the field

The study of Theater can lead to a variety of careers, some of which are: acting, directing, designing sets, lights, costumes, sound, technical production work including carpentry, painting, sewing, and electronics; dramaturgy (literary adviser to productions), theater history, teaching, play writing, and dramatic criticism/reviewing. Theater is also good preparation for fields requiring excellent communication skills. The study of Theater is based on a combination of theory and practice; one studies the principles of the art and then applies them in production and performance.

What special skills or abilities are needed to succeed in this major?

- A wide-ranging interest in the human condition
- Enthusiasm for ideas and literature
- Discipline
- The ability to collaborate successfully with other theater artists and artisans

If both B.A. and B.S. degrees are offered, what are the differences in career/graduate school opportunities?

Only a B.A. degree is offered; it is designed to prepare students for graduate study and/or possible entry into professional theater through internships and apprenticeships. GMU Theater students often work on productions for the GMU Players and also with our resident professional company, Theater of the First Amendment, to gain experience while in school.

What are recent graduates doing?

Acting in area professional theaters, stage managing, designing, working in media, attending graduate school; GMU has alumni working in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, and Los Angeles as well as the D.C. area. Working in other types of jobs in a theater company or artistic environment.

What other resources should students consult for more information?

For general information about the field, the monthly magazine *American Theater* is a good resource. For information on non-profit theaters, contact Theater Communications Group (<http://www.tcg.org/>). Contact the GMU Players, the producing unit of the GMU Theater Department (<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/theatre/>)

What kinds of practical experience are recommended to explore Theater further?

Any kind of production or performance activity including:

- participating in crew work, acting, singing, dancing, designing
- attending as many professional theater productions as possible
- keeping a personal journal of your responses to productions
- reading plays
- looking at fine art
- going to concerts
- reading the theater section of the newspaper

Is it possible to minor in Theater?

Yes. The Theater Minor consists of an 18 credit program developed by the student and a theater faculty member. Contact the Chair, Theater Department, for more details.

Sample job titles for theater majors:

Production Assistant	Production Technician	Professional Actor
Arts Publicist	Backstage Dresser	Costume Designer
Drama Coach	Hall Manager	Freelance Stage Technician
Puppeteer	Usher	Booking Agent
Theatrical Press Agent	Director of Fundraising	Box Office Treasurer
Literary Manager		Education Director
Stage Manager		

Career Library Resources & Job Hunting Information Online (links to associations and other useful sites) – Go to http://careers.gmu.edu/careerlibrary/wheretostart/danc_thr.pdf to see resources located in the Career Services Library in room 348, SUB I

Whom should students contact for further information?

Clayton Austin
Institute of the Arts
A407 Performing Arts Building
703-993-1879

Academic Advising Center
304 SUB I
703-993-2470

University Career Services
348 SUB I
703-993-2370