

## Music Theatre

### Department of Theatre & Dance

Music Theatre  
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### Overview

The BFA in music theatre is a performance degree that encompasses courses from three disciplines: music, theatre, and dance. The objective of its comprehensive studies is to create the well-rounded professional able to succeed in an increasingly competitive and exciting field. Performance opportunities range from musicals and dance companies to dramas and operas mounted in state-of-the-art facilities. Prospective majors should meet with the director of music theatre and an undergraduate advisor as soon as possible.

Auditions in dance and music are required. For students with prior training, course requirements may be adjusted, based on placement auditions. If lower-level courses are waived, additional courses may be assigned. This policy applies to all majors.

### About our Degrees

#### Acceptance Criteria

Minimum GPA of 2.0 overall.  
Minimum GPA of 2.5 in required music theatre courses.  
Minimum grade of C+ in all required courses.  
Audition and acceptance into the university.  
Interview with program director at the end of the first year.  
Letter of intent.

#### Degree Requirements

Please see [Degrees and Policies](#).

### About our Courses

#### Suggested Introductory Courses:

- [TH 101](#) Introduction to Theatre 1
- [TH 106](#) Introduction to Technical Theatre
- [THD 263](#) Jazz 1
- [THD 210](#) Tap 1
- [THD 213](#) Ballet 1

#### The typical class size for:

Freshman/introductory courses is: 16-50  
Sophomore/intermediate courses is: 15-30  
Upper level/advanced courses is: 15-25

#### In the Music Theatre program, what do teaching assistants (TAs) do?

Teaching assistants serve as demonstrators, give corrections, and generally assist in the studio classes.

For course descriptions, please see [Courses](#).

### About our Faculty

## Music Theatre

Nathan R. Matthews is the founding Producing Artistic Director and Music Director of the Riverside Opera Ensemble in New York City. He has served on the music staff of the Santa Fe Opera, music directed and conducted operas and musicals in NYC as well as at regional theatres and universities, and performed throughout North America as a solo and collaborative pianist. He also sits on the Advisory Board of Amas Musical Theatre. He was Mark Hamill's keyboard coach for the original Broadway production of "Amadeus". Mr. Matthews was Music Associate on Broadway for "Children and Art", the Stephen Sondheim 75th Birthday gala. Subsequently, the University of London - Goldsmiths College invited him to speak on the subject of performing Sondheim in concert. His former students have received the Theatre World Award, Tony Award nomination, and have performed on Broadway, at Lincoln Center, and nationally and internationally.

### About our Facilities

The \$50 million Center for the Arts benefits UB students directly through outstanding public performance and exhibition facilities. The center houses the Departments of Art, Media Study, and Theatre and Dance, showcasing both academic and public presentations of the arts in its many intriguing and interdisciplinary forms. The Department of Music is housed in adjacent Slee and Baird Halls, allowing music students to also discover a genuine intermingling of the arts.

Theatre and dance students have a variety of theatres and studios in which to work and learn. The range and complexity of theatre spaces allow students great versatility in their professional preparation. Supporting this effort are excellent shop facilities for costumes, scenery, properties, paint, and makeup.

The 400-seat Drama Theatre is intimate, with inviting decor and technical advantages that make it ideally suited to theatre and dance department productions and chamber operas. The orchestra pit can accommodate approximately forty musicians.

Mainstage is an 1,800-seat theatre that houses the majority of the professional touring companies at the Center for the Arts. Other features include a custom-built orchestra shell, allowing stage concerts to take place without the need for microphones and speakers. Computer-controlled panels on the walls of the auditorium are designed to adjust the acoustics at the touch of a button.

Also available to UB arts students are twin black box theatres that allow almost any kind of theatrical presentation, especially multimedia and experimental works. In addition, a 200-seat media study screening room can be used for departmental programming, as well as for the public presentation of films, speakers, panel discussions, poetry readings, and press conferences.

Dance studios are spacious with Marley covered maple wood floors engineered for maximum resiliency, twelve-foot mirrors, upper-level observation spaces, and specially designed sound systems.

The students of theatre and dance enjoy a working relationship with Alleyway Theatre, Artpark, Buffalo United Artists, Irish Classical Theatre Co., MusicalFare, Shakespeare in Delaware Park, Studio Arena Theatre, Theatre of Youth, and Western New York affiliated Dance Masters of America dance establishments. Studio Arena is a LORT theatre located in the heart of the theatre district in downtown Buffalo.

### Acceptance Information

Acceptance into the BFA program requires an audition and acceptance into the university.

### Extracurricular Activities

The principle performance spaces for all of the following are the theatres and studios in the Center for the Arts. See [Center for the Arts](#) (click on "Venues").

#### **Dancers Workshop**

Dancers Workshop is a student organization that offers non-credit performing and related opportunities for the university community at various levels of ability and interest. Workshop advisers are members of the dance faculty.

#### **From the Wings**

From the Wings is a student organization that offers non-credit performance opportunities for, but not limited to, music theatre majors. Faculty advisors are members of the music theatre faculty.

#### **The Guild**

## Music Theatre

The Guild is managed entirely by students. It hosts opening night receptions, is the liaison among department faculty, staff, and students, and produces evenings of new works by students.

See the [UB Student Association](#).

### Practical Experience and Special Academic Opportunities

#### Notable Program Features

The Department of Theatre and Dance offers BA and BFA degree programs in which students may study a broad range of production, design, technology, performance, historical, and literary aspects of theatre, dance, and music theatre. A central curriculum of courses is shared by all theatre, dance, and music theatre majors from which students go on to pursue separate majors in theatre, dance, music theatre, or theatre and dance areas. Auditions are required for entrance into the BA in dance and all BFA programs.

Department classes balance scholarship and practical training. In theatre, there is a full sequence of courses in theatre technology and design, acting, playwriting, directing, and history and literature. In dance, there is a full sequence of courses in jazz, ballet, contemporary dance, tap, choreography, teaching methods, and history and research.

Performance and production are essential parts of the curriculum, providing hands-on learning experiences. There are four performance spaces in the Center for the Arts: small and large proscenium houses, and two multipurpose black box spaces. The Katharine Cornell Theatre provides added dimensions to performance opportunities. The department's Zodiaque Dance Company performs at the university and presents in the community; membership is by audition held early each September. Auditions for the Zodiaque Studio Dance Ensemble, and Young Choreographers Showcase, featuring the work of student choreographers by invitation of the dance faculty, are held in the spring semester each year.

The Music Theatre and Theatre programs both offer one major proscenium production and one black box production each year. Recent works include: *Rent*, *Cabaret*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Sideman*, and *Our Town*. These performance opportunities are augmented by classroom projects that culminate in a performance at the end of each semester, as well as "Poor Theatre," directed by the faculty.

Dancers Workshop, a student-run organization, also generates a production annually. Workshop advisors are members of the faculty. The GUILD, a student theatre and dance organization, acts as a liaison between students and faculty, and generates performances through "Proba," a student run production company for workshop productions.

Students in dance work with nationally and internationally known guest faculty, directors, and choreographers in yearly residencies with the UB Center for the Arts. Annual residencies have included: American Ballet Studio Co., Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Co., Doug Varone and Dancers, Gus Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago, Jose Limon, and Taylor 2 Co.

#### Undergraduate Research and Practical Experience

Internships are possible by arrangement with the Director of Music Theatre.

#### Honors, Awards, and Scholarships

- College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Departmental Award
- College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Senior Award
- Departmental Honors
- Julia Pardee Prize [Awarded for excellence in writing in theatre, dance or music theatre]
- Performing and Creative Arts Scholarships

Performing and Creative Arts Scholarships are available through the University Honors College. Auditions are required for applicants. To qualify for consideration, students must have a minimum high school average of 90 percent and a combined SAT score of at least 1230, or an ACT score of 28. Transfer honors applicants must hold a minimum GPA of 3.8. The Perry Watkins scholarship is available to African American freshman students majoring in design/technology. Talent-based scholarships are also available to all students. Auditions, portfolios, and a personal interview are required for all scholarship students.

### Career Information and Further Study

#### Career Choices

Performance:

- Broadway and Off-Broadway musicals

## Music Theatre

- Cruise ship entertainment
- Industrial promotions
- Music videos
- National and international tours
- Regional theatres
- Theme park entertainment

Other:

- Arts management
- Choreographer
- Stage management
- Television or film performer
- Theatrical director
- University professor

**Alumni (or recent graduates) in Music Theatre have found employment in the following fields:**

- Broadway Productions - Spider Man, Cats, How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying, Miss Saigon, Beauty & the Beast, The Iceman Cometh, Saturday Night Fever, Dream, Annie Get Your Gun, The Producers, Gypsy
- National and International Tours - Mamma Mia, West Side Story, Hairspray, Cabaret, Fame, A Chorus Line, Rock of Ages, Legally Blonde, Starlight Express, Jesus Christ Superstar, Tommy, Kiss of the Spider Woman, Sesame Street Live, Missoula Children's Theatre, The King and I, Crazy For You, Footloose, 1776, Swing, Some Like It Hot, Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, Peter Pan, Beauty and The Beast, Fiddler On the Roof, The Music Man, Cats, Miss Saigon, Copacabana, Rileydance, Evita
- Theme Park Entertainment - Walt Disney World, Tokyo Disney, Busch Gardens, Six Flags
- Cruise Ship Entertainment - Many major cruise lines
- Theatrical Direction - Many professional, regional, and Off-Broadway shows
- Choreography - Many professional, regional, and Off-Broadway shows
- Other Entertainment - Las Vegas, music videos, television, movies, industrials, and others
- Faculty - Positions in the SUNY system, NYU, Niagara University, and others

### Degrees Offered

**Undergraduate:** BFA

### Links to Further Information About this Program

- [Undergraduate Catalog](#)
- [Department of Theatre & Dance](#)
- [Undergraduate Admissions](#)
- [Graduate Admissions](#)
- [Center for the Arts](#)
- [College of Arts and Sciences](#)

#### **Music Theatre - B.F.A.**

##### **Acceptance Criteria**

Audition and acceptance into the university.  
Minimum GPA of 2.0 overall.  
Minimum GPA of 2.5 in required music theatre courses.  
Minimum grade of C+ in all required courses.

##### **Prerequisite Courses**

[TH 101](#) Introduction to Theatre  
[TH 106](#) Introduction to Technical Theatre  
[TH 135](#) or [TH 136](#) Practicum  
[TH 109](#) Basic Acting 2  
[THD 263](#) Jazz Dance 1  
[THD 210](#) Tap Dance 1

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[THD 213](#) Ballet 1  
[MTR 220](#) Musical Theatre Dance I  
[MTR 460](#) Applied Voice for Music Theatre  
[MUS 105](#) Elementary Harmony and Counterpoint I\*

### Required Courses

[MTR 210](#) Music Theatre Repertory  
[MTR 302](#) Musical Theatre History  
[MTR 305](#) Musical Theatre Workshop  
[MTR 320](#) Music Theatre Dance II  
[MTR 401](#) Musical Theatre Dance III  
[MTR 410](#) Music Theatre Repertory II  
[MTR 420](#) Musical Theatre Scene Study  
[MUS 106](#) Elementary Harmony and Counterpoint II  
[TH 208](#) Method Acting 1  
[TH 209](#) Method Acting 2  
[TH 227](#) Voice Training 1  
[TH 235](#) or [TH 236](#) Production Practicum, or [TH 335](#) or [TH 336](#) Production Practicum (3 credit hours total)  
[TH 302](#) Theatre History and Literature 2  
[TH 308](#) Poetic Text  
[TH 309](#) Mime/Movement for Actors  
[THD 381](#) Social Dance Forms 1  
One level 2 course in Ballet, Jazz, or Tap  
Four performance requirements:  
Two semesters of [MTR 405](#) GEMMS Musical Theatre Company and two others from the following: [MTR 405](#) GEMMS, [TH 341-TH 344](#) Theatre Studio, [THD 337/THD 338](#) Dance Studio-Zodiaque, [THD 340](#) Dance Studio, [MUS 151](#) University Choir, [MUS 321](#) University Chorus, [MUS 350](#) Opera Workshop

### Summary

Total required credit hours for the major...92

See [Baccalaureate Degree Requirements](#) for general education and remaining university requirements.

### Recommended Sequence of Program Requirements

*Placement in dance, music theatre, and performance courses is based upon auditions. Performance is an option each semester.*

#### FIRST YEAR

Fall [MTR 460](#), [TH 101](#); [THD 263](#); [THD 213](#), [TH 106](#), [TH 135](#)  
Spring [MTR 460](#), [TH 109](#); [THD 264\\*\\*](#); [THD 214\\*\\*](#), [TH 236](#) or [TH 336](#)

#### SECOND YEAR

Fall [MTR 210](#), [MTR 405](#), [MTR 460](#), [MTR 220](#), [TH 208](#), [TH 227](#), [TH 236](#) or [TH 336](#)  
[MUS 105](#),  
Spring [MTR 320](#), [MTR 405](#), [MTR 460](#), [TH 209](#), [TH 302](#), [MUS 106](#), [TH 236](#) or [TH 336](#)

#### THIRD YEAR

Fall [MTR 302](#), [MTR 460](#), [TH 302](#), [TH 308](#), [THD 210](#), [TH 236](#) or [TH 336](#), performance\*  
Spring [MTR 302](#), [MTR 305](#), [MTR 401](#), [MTR 460](#), [TH 309](#), [THD 211](#), [THD 381](#), performance\*

#### FOURTH YEAR

Fall [MTR 410](#), [MTR 460](#), electives, performance\*  
Spring [MTR 420](#), [MTR 460](#), electives, performance\*

\*May choose from: [TH 341-TH 344](#) Theatre Studio, [THD 337/THD 338](#) Dance Studio Zodiaque, [THD 340](#) Dance Studio, [MTR 405](#) GEMMS Musical Theatre, [MUS 151](#) University Choir, [MUS 321](#) University Chorus, [MUS 350](#) Opera Workshop.

### Electives and Course Groupings

Elective courses

[THD 264](#) Jazz Dance 2  
[THD 211](#) Tap Dance 2  
[THD 214](#) Ballet 2  
[THD 264](#) Jazz Dance 2  
[THD 341](#) Ballet 3  
[THD 371](#) Jazz 3

## Music Theatre

### MTR 210: Musical Theatre Repertory 1

Credits: 3  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Introduces the student to music theatre song literature from 1959/1960 to the present with concurrent exploration and development of the skills needed to create a music theatre song performance.

### MTR 220: Musical Theatre Dance I

Credits: 3  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Basic music theatre dance from the late nineteenth century to the present. Classwork coordinates dance styles with shows from each period.

### MTR 250: Special Topics in Music Theatre

Credits: 1-4  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Specialized aspects of the musical theatre. Usually includes literary and/or historical content in addition to practical technique work. Content varies from semester to semester.

### MTR 302: Musical Theatre History

Credits: 3  
Type: LEC

Explores the development of music theatre forms. Includes the contributions of composers, lyricists, and librettists, as well as cast members, directors, choreographers, and designers; and employs audio and video materials.

### MTR 305: Music Theatre Workshop

Credits: 3  
Pre-requisites: [MTR 210](#)  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Develops audition and performance techniques. Includes vocal coaching, r?sum? writing, musical theatre scene study, and mock auditions. Uses videotape for critical analysis of student progress.

### MTR 320: Musical Theatre Dance II

Credits: 3  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

History of American show dance emphasizing style and practical application of knowledge. Continuation of [MTR 220](#) concentrating on technical expertise as well as historical knowledge.

### MTR 350: Special Topics in Music Theatre

Credits: 1-4  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Specialized aspects of the musical theatre. Usually includes literary and/or historical content in addition to practical technique work. Content varies from semester to semester.

### MTR 405: Gemms Musical Theatre Company

Credits: 1-4  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Professional performance experience in musical theatre production; working through the process from rehearsals to a staged production.

### MTR 410: Musical Theatre Repertoire 2

Credits: 3  
Pre-requisites: [MTR 210](#)  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Introduces the student to music theatre song literature from 1866 to 1959 and continues to build on music theatre song performance skills begun in [MTR 210](#).

### MTR 420: Musical Theatre Scene Study

Credits: 3  
Pre-requisites: [MTR 210](#)  
Type: SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Develops scene analysis, script preparation, and rehearsal techniques specifically geared toward music theatre performance. Explores texts from the classical and contemporary repertory.

## Music Theatre

Emphasizes the integration of singing and acting techniques in performance.

### **MTR 450: Special Topics in Music Theatre**

**Credits:** 1-4

**Type:** SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Focuses on a specialized aspect of the musical theatre. Usually includes literary and/or historical content in addition to practical technique work. Content varies from semester to semester.

### **MTR 460: Applied Voice for Music Theatre**

**Credits:** 1

**Type:** SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Proper technique of vocal production. Gives particular attention to the utilization of healthy technique in performing musical theatre material.

### **MTR 496: Internship Music Theatre**

**Credits:** 2-4

**Type:** TUT

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

An internship position with a professional company or educational institution. Focuses on actual "field" experience to enhance the student's preparation for a professional career in musical theatre.

### **MTR 499: Independent Study**

**Credits:** 1-4

**Type:** TUT

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

Substantial independent research or applied project under the supervision of a faculty member