

# What can I do with a degree in... **THEATRE ARTS?**

## Why study **THEATRE ARTS?**

“All the world is a stage” and at WCU we’ll prepare you to step onto the professional stage. From world-class faculty to cutting-edge facilities to a rigorous curriculum, we’ll provide you with a strong foundation in the performance and technical aspects of musical theatre or acting and equip you with the tools you need for a professional career or graduate study.

A career in the theatre can be your ticket to a career in a variety of exciting and creative professional opportunities. These jobs can have you starring on-stage or working in a number of creative and exciting positions that are crucial for stage productions to be successful. Many people take their talents to big cities while others thrive in community productions, but your education will help you pursue your passion wherever it takes you.

## What are the **DEGREE OPTIONS?**

**Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in Theatre; Acting**

**Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in Theatre; Musical Theatre**

**Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in Theatre; Entertainment Design and Technology**

## What are the **CONCENTRATIONS?**

Theatre Arts students have the option of choosing between three concentrations: **Acting, Musical Theatre, or Entertainment Design and Technology.**

The **Acting** concentration for Stage and Screen incorporates course and production work in both stage and filmic acting techniques.



The **Musical Theatre** concentration is for the performance student with the addition of voice, dance, and musical components.

The **Entertainment Design and Technology** is built for students interested in a variety of aspects in the production and backstage of the entertainment industry.

## What is the **ADMISSION PROCESS?**

The admission process is competitive and requires an audition/ interview, resume, essay, portfolio, and letters of recommendation. Please see [guidelines for admissions](#) for the each concentration, specifically. Students should also review the [FAQ list](#) prior to auditioning.

## What **JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Depending on the degree, concentration, experiences and other qualifi-

cations, our graduates are prepared to become a variety of professionals including arts directors, film scorers, props managers, assistant directors, performers, cinematographers, film editors, producers and directors, camera operators, lighting directors, special effects technicians and directors, photographers, talent scouts, casting assistants, booking managers, entertainment and screenwriters.

**NOTE:** *Advanced degrees may be required for some of the listed professions. Please see a career counselor or advisor for more information.*

## Who employs **THEATRE ARTS** graduates?

Our graduates gain employment with a variety of employers including music industry firms, orchestras, movie and television production companies, opera and theater companies, military ensembles, recording agencies, and education institutions.

# MAJOR MAP

**How to use this map:** Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

## 1st YEAR

## 2nd YEAR

### EXCEL IN ACADEMICS

Many first-year students already accepted into their program will focus on introductory Theatre courses, plus liberal studies requirements. Musical Theatre students will also take introductory dance and voice courses. [Check out the 8-semester plan for Acting](#), the [8-semester plan for Musical Theatre](#), or the [8-semester plan for Entertainment Design & Technology](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Students in their second year will likely continue with liberal studies electives, intermediate FTP courses topics, as well as introductory courses with their minor. [Check out the 8-semester plan for Acting](#), the [8-semester plan for Musical Theatre](#), or the [8-semester plan for Entertainment Design & Technology](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

### GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Check out [WCU's DegreePlus program](#) and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend. Categories include: Professionalism, Teamwork, Leadership, or Cultural Responsiveness.

See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to JobCat via your MyWCU.

Get involved with student clubs such as the Black Theatre Ensemble or the University Players of Theatre and Film.

If you are thinking about attending a graduate school, start engaging in hands-on experiences required in graduate school admissions.

Engage deeper with [DegreePlus](#); choose an additional competency to complete

### BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Connect with the [Center for Service Learning](#) and ask about the [Lily Award](#), a program aimed to encourage students to be connected with their community.

Volunteer with area non-profits or organizations which interest you.

Consider the [study abroad programs related to Theatre Arts](#). Talk with a study abroad advisor about targeted experience for your areas of interest.

### PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Further explore your career options or career interests using the [Center for Career and Professional Development's](#) online resources, [Focus 2](#), and [Onet Online](#).

Connect with a career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.

Check out [CCPD's list of career-building activities](#) and participate in an activity this year, such as attending Career Fair Plus.

Start a spreadsheet of graduate schools, if applicable, you wish to apply to in a few years with their admission requirements so that you are aware of the expectations.

# Looking for a minor? Consider these options:

Communication  
Creative Writing  
Dance

English  
Film Studies  
Spanish

## 3rd YEAR

Third level courses focus on upper-level FTP courses, special topics relating to your career path, or your chosen minor. **Check out the 8-semester plan for Acting**, the **8-semester plan for Musical Theatre**, or the **8-semester plan for Entertainment Design & Technology** and make an appointment with your advisor.

Consider an internship that will give you practical and hands-on experience to put on a resume.

Audition for on-campus, local, and regional theatres to build your portfolio.

Consider networking with professionals in your field at national or regional professional conferences such as the **North Carolina Theatre Conference**.

Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer. Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume.

Connect with alumni in your field through **LinkedIn**

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter. Apply for internships. Utilize the **Writing and Learning Commons** for GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions. Use **Big Interview** to learn more about professional interviews.

Schedule a visit to tour graduate schools of your choice, if applicable.

## 4th YEAR

Courses in your final year will complete the major coursework requirement, as well as your chosen minor electives. Be sure to **check out the 8-semester plan for Acting**, the **8-semester plan for Musical Theatre**, or the **8-semester plan for Entertainment Design & Technology** and make an appointment with your advisor. And don't forget to complete your degree audit and **apply for graduation!**

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor.

Join professional organizations such as the **Casting Society of America**, **Southeastern Theatre Conference**, **American Association of Community Theatre**, and more.

Network with employers and non-profits at the annual Career Fair Plus event, held each October and February.

Apply to graduate schools, if applicable.

Look for and apply for jobs between 4 and 6 months before graduation.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by using the **CCPD**.

Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 59,000 employers)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

# MORE INFORMATION

## INTERNSHIP Information

At Western Carolina University there are numerous internship opportunities for students. In some cases internships are established through a faculty member in the student's major. Oftentimes students find part-time jobs in an area related to their field of study. When this happens, students should discuss with their academic advisor the possibility of receiving college credit. Generally, three hours of general elective credit can be earned for a minimum of 200 hours of experience. Students in the School of Stage and Screen should speak with their faculty members on local, regional, or national internship opportunities.

## SKILLS LEARNED in the classroom

The core competencies will center on developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes such as:

- Independent Worker
- Think and Understand in Patterns
- Curiosity and Creativity
- Time Management
- Oral & Written Communication
- Responsibility
- Innovative Talents
- Problem-Solving
- Planning Ahead
- Teamwork

## KNOWLEDGE Base

This program will prepare students to:

- Perform works of various style periods in a musically compelling way.
- Synthesize knowledge, skills, and values acquired throughout the curriculum.
- Share knowledge and expertise in a civic context for the benefit of others.
- Develop an initial educational plan into a career plan in the senior year.
- Advocate effectively for the arts through written and oral communication.

## Professional RESOURCES

- Actors' Equity Association: [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org)
- American Association of Community Theatre: [aact.org](http://aact.org)
- Broadway League: [broadwayleague.com/home](http://broadwayleague.com/home)
- Casting Society of America: [castingsociety.com](http://castingsociety.com)
- Theatre Communications Group: [circle.tcg.org/home](http://circle.tcg.org/home)

## QUESTIONS?

For questions, please call the Film and Television program at 828-227-7491, email [sas@email.wcu.edu](mailto:sas@email.wcu.edu) or visit [stageand-screen.wcu.edu](http://stageand-screen.wcu.edu).

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor, contact the Center for Career and Professional Development, 828-227-7133 or [careerservices@wcu.edu](mailto:careerservices@wcu.edu).