



**MA THEATRE & PERFORMANCE
Program Handbook**

2015-16 Academic Year

The *Mission* of the Department of Theatre & Dance at the University at Buffalo

Theatre & Dance at the University at Buffalo engages emerging artists, scholars, and audiences dedicated to sustaining and innovating the performing arts across disciplines. Our diverse programs integrate rigorous training, critical understanding, and original creation supported by close faculty mentorship and developed in collaboration with internationally recognized guest artists. Learning within conservatory style courses and grounded in the liberal arts, students acquire the essential skills for effective communication, collaborative problem-solving, and critical perspective in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. The Department's production season of fully produced plays, musicals, dance concerts, and experimental performance work is integral to the training of new artists and provides an essential cultural resource for the larger campus community. In these ways Theatre & Dance not only prepares UB students for professional careers in the performing arts, but also fosters thoughtful individuals prepared to engage in the global discussions of the 21st century.

The *Vision* for Theatre & Performance Graduate Programs

What is Theatre & Performance?

UB's graduate programs in Theatre & Performance feature a unique integration of scholarship and practice within graduate study. We believe that if you know a thing theoretically but don't know it practically, then you don't really know its whole theory; conversely, if you know a thing practically but don't know it theoretically, then you don't really know its whole practice.

With this philosophy in mind, this program is designed to foster Theatre & Performance scholar-artists who are well-versed in research, scholarship, and performance practice. Theatre & Performance in this context includes, not only drama, musical theatre, and dance, but also new forms such as intermedia performance.

Working closely with faculty in a small cohort, graduate students develop their individual research by combining history, criticism, and theory with lab-based projects that explore the implications of scholarship in production. The intentionally small size of the program allows for direct mentorship in research, writing, and production within a curriculum designed to serve each individual student.

Unique to this program is the **Graduate Studio**, the artistic and experimental through-line of the program. In the Studio students continually integrate their critical studies with production in a laboratory setting. With some minimal support, the Studio enables students to test their ideas in focused projects. From this process, students graduate with a depth of knowledge in history, theory, and criticism, as well as a body of original creative work that they can use as a foundation for their production specialty.

Program Overview

The **MA degree program** in Theatre & Performance at the University at Buffalo is a research-oriented program integrating theatre studies and performance practice. The aims of this program are three-fold:

- Prepare students for continued graduate work in MFA and PhD programs;
- Train theatre & performance faculty capable of integrating research, theory, and performance practice at the highest levels; and
- Produce scholar-artists capable of advancing the field regionally, nationally, and internationally through an intellectually rigorous program that includes practice-based performance scholarship.

Note for Non-Degree Students

Many of the policies contained herein will apply to Non-Degree Students in Theatre & Performance. The sections on the MA requirements and Thesis Guidelines may serve as useful instructions for your future course of study, should a student apply to the MA.

Non-degree students are permitted to take up to 12 credits before applying to the MA program. It is expected that students will enroll in 3-6 credits per semester until deciding to apply to the program. All non-degree students will need to submit a full application by the posted deadlines in order to receive consideration for admittance to the program.

Enrollment as a non-degree student is not a guarantee of admittance to the MA.

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INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM & HANDBOOK

This handbook describes the structure and requirements for the MA in Theatre & Performance program and presents the policies and procedures that guide students' progress through the program. When applicable, links to other University units, external sites, and their policies and documents are provided. All Department-specific forms are available to THD faculty, staff, and students on the [Theatre & Performance website](#).

The Theatre & Performance programs conform to all [Graduate School Policies](#) regarding registration, grading, and degree requirements (e.g., those dictating leaves of absence, course resignation, and course attendance, among others). These are available in their complete listing online, although some material may be repeated here for emphasis. Please be sure that you are familiar with these policies. Students should consult the Office of the Registrar for [class schedules](#) and [academic calendars](#) (including dates for registration, drop/add periods, and class resignations) for related information.

Every effort has been made to ensure consistency with the policies of UB and the Graduate School. In the event of contradiction with established policies, this handbook may be revised accordingly. Students will be informed via the graduate student listserv of any changes or updates to the handbook.

The handbook is divided into the following sections:

- I. ETHICAL, PROFESSIONAL, & ACADEMIC STANDARDS
- II. FACULTY & ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES
- III. MA SCHEDULE AND REQUIREMENTS
- IV. MA THESIS GUIDELINES
- V. EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ETHICAL, PROFESSIONAL, & ACADEMIC STANDARDS

All graduate programs in Theatre & Performance abide by the highest standards of ethical practices, academic integrity, research responsibility, and professional conduct. Students are expected to adhere to the standards and policies identified below and may be dismissed by the Director of Graduate Studies for any violation thereof.

Ethics in Theatre & Performance

Training and study in theatre and dance occasionally involve material that can be personally disturbing, even offensive. This includes issues of gender, race, sexuality, religion, and various other moral concerns. Trust is an essential aspect of all learning environments, especially environments requiring experiential modes of instruction.

Graduate programs in Theatre & Performance follow the [Ethics Task Force Report](#) distributed by the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (1997). We are committed to ensuring an environment of mutual respect, diversity, and artistic and academic freedom in all domains of research, scholarship, and practice. Students should be familiar with these guidelines and follow

them in all of their collaborative work, both with faculty, and with other students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Students are also encouraged to report potential violations of these ethical policies to faculty members and to the Director of Graduate Study (DGS). If neither departmental faculty nor the DGS seem appropriate for the circumstances, students may wish to seek advice from those outside the department, particularly in the Office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Education.

In cases involving emotional distress or other areas of physical, mental, or emotional concern, students may wish to consult UB's [Student Wellness Team](#). This office offers [Health Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), and [Wellness Education Services](#).

Academic Integrity

Absolute integrity is expected of every member of the UB community in all academic matters. When a student submits any work for academic credit, he/she makes an implicit claim that the work is wholly his/her own, done without the assistance of any person or source not explicitly noted, and that the work has not previously been submitted for academic credit in any other area, unless previously approved by the relevant instructor or advisor.

The MA in Theatre & Performance follows the [UB Graduate School's academic integrity policy and procedures](#). These apply to all work conducted while a student in the program including coursework, exams, thesis writing, creative projects, external performances, and any affiliated performance or production work. All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's academic integrity policies. Violations of these policies may result in dismissal from the program.

Professional Conduct

As a student enrolled in the Theatre & Performance program, you will represent the program, department, and university in all of your professional engagements. It is expected that all students will adhere to standard professional conduct in both creative and academic work.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS

Expectations of excellence apply not only to the quality of students' work but also to the pace of their progress through the program. As per procedures outlined below, students may be dismissed from the program for substandard performance or failure to progress.

Academic Performance

Students must demonstrate adequate proficiency in course material in order to fulfill program requirements. A student's performance in a course is considered substandard and warrants consequences as follows:

- **C+ or C in a course:** The student must repeat the course or another that fulfills the requirement. The student must consult with the advisor/chair about her/his performance and remedial strategies. Others may attend at the discretion of the advisor/chair. A summary of the meeting including any corrective actions must be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for inclusion in the student file. Please note that receiving this grade may delay graduation.

- **D, F, or U in a course:** The student must repeat the course or another that fulfills the requirement. The Director of Graduate Study may request an academic review with the student, advisor/chair, and others at the discretion of the advisor/chair and DGS. At the review, specific remedial steps and a corresponding timeline will be established. These consensual terms will be written up by the DGS, sent to all attendees, and saved in the student file.
- **Below 3.0 overall GPA:** The student is placed on academic probation. The DGS will convene an academic review with the student, advisor/chair, and others at the discretion of the advisor/chair or DGS. At the review, specific corrective actions and a corresponding timeline needed to lift the probationary status will be established. These consensual terms will be written up by the Program Director, sent to all attendees, and saved in the student file.

The Director of Graduate Studies may take additional action if a student does not: respond to requests for an academic review; appear at a scheduled academic review; or uphold terms devised at the review. Such action includes but is not limited to one or more of the following: placement on academic probation; withdrawal of funding support; restriction from course registration; or program dismissal.

Academic Progress

It is expected that most students will complete their MA Degree requirements within 12-18 months after beginning the program, barring extraordinary circumstances. Students must demonstrate steady progress toward their degree. This is monitored by the student's individual advisor/chair in consultation with the DGS. Students who have not completed their degree after 24 months of continuous enrollment without extenuating circumstances may be asked to leave the program. All degree requirements must be completed within 36 months of beginning the MA program. Students who enroll as Non-Degree Students will have 24 months from the date of their matriculation in the MA. Barring extenuating circumstances, any student who has not completed the program within 36 months will be dismissed from the program. Requests for time extensions must be submitted in writing to the Director of Graduate Study (and copied to the Graduate Program Administrator) at least 1 month prior to the dismissal deadline. These extensions are available for up to 48 months (4 years) total and cannot be extended further as per the policies of the UB Graduate School.

Students who are judged by their advisor or DGS to be making inadequate progress toward their degree will be notified by the DGS that they are in jeopardy of program dismissal. This communication will specify remedial steps and a corresponding schedule to which a student must adhere in order to avoid dismissal. In addition to consultation with the advisor/chair, the DGS also may convene an academic review with the student and advisor to identify obstacles to progress and to devise a plan for improved pace and productivity.

PROGRAM DISMISSAL

The Director of Graduate Studies may dismiss from the program any student who does not uphold ethical, professional, or academic standards. This includes but is not limited to: ethical or

professional misconduct; failure to meet minimum academic standards; and failure to progress. In these cases, students will be notified when in jeopardy of program dismissal. The student will have an opportunity, if reasonable and feasible, to redress the concern or to present claims on her/his behalf.

In addition to circumstances under which the DGS may take explicit action to prompt program dismissal, students may also be effectively dismissed if s/he does not maintain continuous registration or if s/he does not meet [Graduate School time limits](#) (i.e., degree conferral within four years after beginning MA coursework). In such cases, a student will not receive advance notice of dismissal risk. Students have the right to petition for retroactive registration and time extensions; however, these will be granted at the discretion of the DGS and only under extenuating circumstances.

As per [Graduate School guidelines](#) pertaining to dismissal, students who are dismissed on academic grounds (i.e., violations of academic integrity, substandard performance, failure to progress, failure to maintain continuous registration, or exceeding Graduate School time limits for degree completion) will have a service indicator placed on their record that will prevent them from future registration. If a student wishes to reapply to the same program or another at the university, s/he must submit a formal request for reinstatement.

FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

FACULTY ROLES

Advisor

Upon acceptance to the program, each student is assigned an **initial advisor** to assist with enrollment in fall courses and to devise a plan for coursework. By the end of the fall term, each student should select a **major advisor** and begin forming a thesis committee. (The major advisor is sometimes referred to as a thesis committee chair in the Grad School, but this is the same position.)

Students should first approach a desired faculty member to serve as the major advisor. It is helpful if the student has a preliminary idea for the thesis project. Final assignment of the major advisor is usually done in consultation with graduate faculty and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure that each student is optimally mentored. Students should consult with their initial advisors (appointed upon acceptance to the program) and the DGS in this process.

Thesis Committee

After the major advisor is chosen, the student will form a thesis committee of 1-3 additional faculty (2-4 faculty total). One member of this committee may come from outside the department if deemed appropriate to the project and approved by the other departmental members of the committee and the DGS prior to invitation. All committee members, regardless of department, must be members of the Graduate Faculty at UB and hold a terminal degree (MFA, DFA, PhD, etc.)

Once the members of a thesis committee are approved, any changes to the committee must be approved in writing by the student's major advisor and the DGS. The committee is confirmed in the **Application to Candidacy Form (ATC)**.

ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

This is not a comprehensive list of faculty and staff involved, but it includes those with primary responsibilities within the program.

Director of Graduate Studies

Supervising all aspects of the Theatre & Performance programs, including admissions, curriculum, academic standards, policy compliance, and student support and professional development.

- Fall 2015: Jacob Gallagher-Ross
- Spring 2016: Anne Burnidge

Academic Manager

Assists program coordination and operation, particularly student files, registration, & communication. Schedule departmental courses.

- 2015-2016: Katie Mallinson

THD Graduate Committee

Comprised of faculty, this body reviews student applications to the respective programs and oversees the policies, procedures, and planning for the Theatre & Performance and Dance graduate programs.

- 2015-2016: Melanie Aceto; Anne Burnidge; Jeanne Fornarola; Lindsay Brandon Hunter; Jacob Gallagher-Ross; Robert Knopf; Tom Ralabate; Lynne Koscielniak (ex-officio)

Associate Dean for Graduate Education (CAS)

Oversees graduate education for all of the College of Arts and Sciences; advises on graduate policies, and ensures compliance with applicable programs.

- 2015-2016 D. Scott Mackay
- See also: Brent Kresovich, Staff Associate

MA SCHEDULE AND REQUIREMENTS

Overview

This section describes the MA in Theatre & Performance schedule and requirements. Details for the thesis requirements are provided in the following **MA Thesis Guidelines**.

The MA in Theatre & Performance requires:

- A minimum 30 credits (including 6-credit thesis)
- A minimum GPA of 3.0
- Master's Thesis

With the letter of acceptance to the program, students will be provided an initial advisor (see also, **Faculty & Administrative Roles**). This advisor will assist with selecting courses for the fall and planning a coherent sequence of courses for the year. Courses should be selected in coordination with the **MA Course Requirement Fulfillment Worksheet**. Either late in the fall term or early spring, students will select a major advisor who will serve as the chair of the student's thesis committee. This selection will be made in consultation with graduate faculty and must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) by **February 1**.

Most students will adhere to the following schedule:

Sem 1	Sem 2	Sem 3-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance Research• Theatre & Performance Seminar• Production (Adv. Directing or Devised Theatre)• Cognate• Select Major Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance Historiography• Grad Studio• Theatre & Performance Seminar• Production or Cognate• Form thesis committee• Thesis abstract	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• File proper forms• Complete Thesis• Oral Defense• Graduate

Documents

- Most of the required forms are available via the Theatre & Dance website:
<http://theatredance.buffalo.edu/study/graduate/maphd/>
- A university wide overview of courses is available at MyUB, accessible once a UB account is established <http://www.myub.buffalo.edu>.

Requirements

1. Seminars	15 credits
TH 610: Performance Research	3 credits
Dramatic Literature, Theory, Criticism	3-6 credits
Performance Historiography	3 credits
Advanced Study in Production	3-6 credits
2. TH 540 Graduate Studio	3 credits
3. Cognates	3-6 credits
4. Master's Thesis	6 credits
Total	30 credits

Departmental courses to fulfill requirements (additional courses may be added)

These courses will rotate depending on available faculty and student interests. There is no guarantee of a particular course in any given semester.

Dramatic Literature, Theory, and Criticism (3-6 credits)

TH 568 Sources of Modern Theatre
TH 570 Theatre and the Moving Image
TH 525 Media and Performance
TH 573 Modern Playwrights
TH 575 Major Figures (rotating topics)
TH 588 Major Principles of Acting Theory
TH 620 Performance Scholarship (rotating topics)
TH 668 Critical Theories of World Theatre & Performance
THD 506 Dance Theory and Aesthetics

Performance History and Historiography:

TH 581 Topics in History and Literature
TH 670 Performance Historiography
THD 530 Dance History

Advanced Production:

Directing, Playwriting, and Dramaturgy are regularly offered at the graduate level. Acting and Design courses are also available and are often offered in combination with upper-level undergraduate courses.

TH 512 Devised Theatre Workshop
TH 515 Advanced Dramaturgy (strongly recommended as preparation for Grad Studio)
TH 541 Studies in Design 1
TH 551 Studies in Scenic Design
TH 571 Studies in Costume Design

TH 593 Advanced Directing
THD 506 Mind-Body Integration
THD 532 Applied Kinesiology and Anatomy for Dancers
THD 541 Choreography I
THD 542 Choreography II

Special Topics (TH 513, 514, 611, 612, 613, 614) and Independent Study (TH 599, 699) can be used to fulfill above requirements when topic is appropriate. Use of a special topics or independent study for fulfillment of specific requirement must be approved in advance by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students need to submit **THD Independent Study Form** before the semester in which the class is taken.

Cognates

Cognates are courses taken outside the department. These are selected by the student in consultation with their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, as necessary. Popular cognates are often found in Anthropology, English, History, Media Study, Music, and Visual Studies. Links to available courses per semester are available through the UB Office of the Registrar: <http://registrar.buffalo.edu/schedules/index.php>

It is recommended that students identify desired areas for cognate courses with their initial advisor prior to enrollment in the fall semester.

GRADUATE STUDIO

Overview

The Graduate Studio is a unique feature of the Theatre & Performance graduate training at UB. Offered every spring term, the Grad Studio course affords students the opportunity to put their ideas, theories, and research into practice.

The Grad Studio course is held in the Katherine Cornell Theatre (KCT) in the Ellicott Complex on UB's main campus. This space may be available at other times for additional rehearsal and project development. Please note that Departmental productions, regularly scheduled classes, and prior events scheduled through the main office **have priority in the space**. Graduate students have guaranteed access to the KCT every Friday from 12-4pm during the spring term. Additional times may be requested by contacting Mike Formato (formato@buffalo.edu) and Melinda Lamoreaux (lamoreaux@buffalo.edu).

KCT Guidelines

MA students using the KCT are expected to strictly adhere to the policies and guidelines for the use of KCT. Failure to follow these or evidence of violation will result in lack of continued access to the space.

KCT Contacts

Lynne Koscielniak, Chair

716/645-0574 lk2@buffalo.edu

Mike Formato, THD Production Manager

716/645-0611 formato@buffalo.edu

Relationship to Departmental Season

Student use of the KCT—either graduate or undergrad—must not interfere with departmental productions in any way. Student involvement in any KCT project should not compromise or otherwise affect prior commitments to the departmental season. In the event of potential conflict, all KCT scheduling must defer to the departmental rehearsal and performance schedule. Any student committed to work on a departmental production must receive prior approval from the director of the scheduled departmental production and the area director before agreeing to participate in a KCT project.

The KCT regularly provides opportunities for undergraduate independent productions. Every effort will be made to prevent conflicts and to ensure equal access for both graduate and undergraduate students in the KCT space. In the event of potential conflict among student productions, the Chair and Production Manager will determine a fair use of the space. In the event that this cannot be easily determined, the Chair may appoint an ad hoc committee minimally to include: Chair, DGS, Production Manager, Director of Theatre Studies (undergrad), and any other individual deemed necessary to ensure fair and equal access for all to the KCT. All students will abide by the departmental decision as determined by the Chair, who will make the final determination.

KCT Guidelines and Policies

For the complete listing of the KCT policies and procedures, please refer to the [KCT Handbook](#). Any student using the KCT outside of regularly scheduled class sessions is required to read the KCT Handbook in its entirety. For reference, an abbreviated list of guidelines most relevant to graduate projects in the KCT is provided as **Appendix A** to this Handbook.

MA THESIS GUIDELINES

Overview

This section describes the MA Thesis and Thesis Project. The MA thesis serves as the culminating work from a student's course of graduate study in Theatre & Performance and demonstrates their independent research, writing, and/or creative activity. The written portion of the thesis should articulate comprehensive knowledge in the core areas of study—research methods; literature, theory, and criticism; performance practice; and history—based on original research and argument in the student's area of specialization.

After completion of course work, students register for 6 credits of MA Thesis Guidance (TH 600). This may be completed during the summer following coursework (6 credits), during the following fall semester (6 credits), or extended over the summer and fall terms (3 credits each).

An MA Thesis should demonstrate the following:

- Formulation of an original research question
- Reading and documentation of the existing literature
- Convincing argumentation, with appropriate examples
- Use of clear, well-constructed prose

An MA Thesis Project should demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge of the skills, techniques, and processes required for professional theatre or performance production
- Ability to design, execute, and manage a theatre or performance project
- Evidence of professional expertise, including the presentation of thesis materials
- Ability to articulate in writing the context and significance of the work in relation to contemporary theatre and performance practices

Criteria for Successful Thesis Completion

To complete the MA, students either complete a **scholarly thesis** or a **thesis project**. In both instances, the student will submit a final work to be read (or viewed, as necessary) and approved by a committee of graduate faculty including the major advisor and a thesis committee comprised of 1-2 other faculty members, one of whom may come from outside the department.

Scholarly Thesis

The thesis paper is recommended for students intending to pursue the PhD or other doctoral programs (either at UB or elsewhere). This is a paper of modest length (approximately 30-50

pages) that demonstrates comprehensive knowledge in the student's area of specialization and presents an original argument on that subject as related to theatre and performance studies.

Thesis Project

The MA Thesis Project is an original creative work in the student's area of specialization (e.g., directing, acting, design, playwriting, intermedia performance, dance theatre, among others). The thesis project should be substantial (e.g., original script; direction of a full-length play, evening of solo performance) and is accompanied by a critical text (approximately 20-30 pages) that provides the critical and methodological context for the work. Because every project is different, the specific requirements for the project will be determined in consultation with the major advisor/chair and other members of the graduate faculty. It is not expected that staged works will be fully designed or staged in a particular venue. Students should be aware of financial limitations and other resources such as space. Students are responsible for all logistics related to production, including venue, production rights, and other potential practicalities for production.

Thesis Project Presentation

It is expected that all members of a Thesis Project Committee will attend at least one public performance or presentation of the thesis showing. In the event that a member of the Thesis Committee is unable to attend the Thesis Project, the faculty member and student may agree *in advance* on a suitable form of documentation (e.g., video recording of performance). In the event that a faculty member cannot attend a Thesis Project presentation and no form of documentation is deemed adequate by either the student or faculty member, then that committee member will be replaced by another member of the graduate faculty most suitable to the project. This will necessitate a re-filling of the **M-Form** and may delay degree conferral depending on the timing. To avoid such difficulties, students should confirm the dates of any performances or public presentations with all members of the thesis committee at the earliest possible date and no later than **4 weeks in advance** of the presentation. If the presentation will be scheduled for the summer, when many faculty are traveling, then arrangements for documentation and attendance should be confirmed by the end of the spring term. When the dates of presentation are confirmed, invitations to attend should be sent to all members of the thesis committee, the Director of Graduate Studies, and any other relevant members of the faculty.

While we are happy to promote the event via the departmental media outlets, the student is solely responsible for acquiring a venue, securing rights (if applicable), publicity, promotion, and assuming any other legal or logistical responsibilities for a public performance or presentation of the thesis project. Neither the thesis chair, committee members, DGS, Program Administrator, nor any member of the department may be held either responsible or legally liable for the student's presentation off campus. As noted in the opening section on **Ethics and Professional Conduct**, students working off campus are expected to follow all legal, ethical, and professional guidelines including but not limited to the use of scripts and property rights (e.g., securing the appropriate rights to produce an existing work), ethical interactions with performers (including laws governing use of Equity actors and other union performers), the legal use of spaces and venues, and responsible consideration for audience members (e.g., including appropriate warnings regarding effects that may physically affect audience members, content inappropriate for all audiences, and the general well-being of spectators).

Committee Formation

By the end of the fall term, each student should select a **major advisor/committee chair** and begin forming a thesis committee. This is usually done in consultation with graduate faculty and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure that each student is optimally mentored. Students should consult with their initial advisors (appointed upon acceptance to the program) and the DGS in this process.

After the major advisor/chair is chosen, the student will form a thesis committee of 2-4 additional faculty (3-5 faculty total). One member of this committee may come from outside the department if deemed appropriate to the project and approved by the other departmental members of the committee and the DGS prior to invitation. All committee members, regardless of department, must be members of the Graduate Faculty at UB and hold a terminal degree (MFA, DFA, PhD, etc.). All MA committees must be approved by **February 1**.

THESIS PROCESS

Overview

The MA in Theatre & Performance is intended to be completed in one year. Students complete two semesters of coursework during the fall and spring semesters, followed by a Masters Thesis (TH 600). If a student desires to take TH 600: Masters Thesis over more than one semester, the course may be repeated for credit.

Students must maintain continuous enrollment to remain in good standing. For MA students completing their thesis in the fall after the completion of coursework, it is not necessary to enroll in summer thesis credits. Student who plan to complete their thesis in the summer following coursework, they should enroll in 6 credits of thesis work for the summer.

The following schedule is recommended for MA students.

Proposal and Abstract

In consultation with the major advisory, each student should develop a preliminary thesis abstract (approximately 250 words) by the conclusion of the spring term. A final abstract of the thesis will be included with the final submission of the manuscript to the Graduate School. This proposal abstract must be approved by the major advisor/chair and the DGS before the student enrolls in TH 600 (Masters Thesis Guidance). The proposal applies to both the MA Thesis and MA Thesis Project.

The purpose of the abstract is to define the research question for the student and the committee and to describe the anticipated outcomes for the thesis work. If the student is proposing a paper, then a preliminary thesis, critical context, and area of inquiry should be clearly defined. Most simply, the abstract clearly defines the scope of the thesis work, the anticipated outcomes, and the expectations. It is important that both student and committee members understand and agree to the thesis as defined in the abstract to avoid misunderstandings and miscommunications in the future. The abstract should be complete and approved prior to filing the Application to Candidacy (ATC).

Application to Candidacy (ATC)

The ATC form requires that students specify courses and as well as the finalized concept of the thesis paper or project (i.e., thesis abstract). Later adjustments or changes require approval by the graduate school—by petition. The ATC is submitted to the graduate secretary by the end of the spring term. To be eligible for a **September 1** conferral date, the ATC must be submitted to the Department by **June 1**.

The ATC must include the following attachments:

- Copy of the unofficial UB transcript;
- Course syllabi for every course whose title does not clearly indicate the course's relationship to the Theatre & Performance requirements, or which is from another department;
- Copies of any approved graduate petitions for undergraduate courses taken for graduate credit;
- Copies of syllabi and forms for any independent and directed studies courses without an official course description.

Expected Conferral Date	September 1	February 1	June 1
Date to submit to Department:	June 1	September 1	February 1
Completed ATC with all required signatures and attachments due to Graduate School	July 1	October 1	March 1

Formatting

MA Thesis and Thesis Project should follow conventions and formats consistent with the discipline and agreed to by the student and the major advisor/chair. Generally, MLA or Chicago Manual of Style endnote citations are preferred. Specific guidelines from the UB Graduate School are outlined in the [Guidelines for Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Preparation and Submission](#).

While **preparing the thesis**, a student should:

- Refer to the Graduate School's [General Graduate Degree Requirements](#) to ensure eligibility for degree conferral.

- Familiarize her/himself with the Graduate School's [Guidelines for Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Preparation and Submission](#). It provides details regarding the thesis's required format (e.g., reference styles, font, pagination), applicable copyright policies, and steps for final submission.
- Recall that the expectations and consequences outlined in this document under **Academic Integrity**. Any violation of these policies may result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- Consult periodically with her/his committee as per the expectations set forth at the proposal defense.
- Set a mutually convenient defense date once the committee agrees there is sufficient evidence that the thesis is nearing completion and that it will meet standards of accuracy, clarity, depth, creativity, and rigor.
- Submit a full and polished final version to the committee at least two weeks in advance of the defense.
- Inform the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Administrator of the defense time and location.

Oral Defense

A public oral defense of the thesis is required for all students who complete a master's thesis or project. The oral defense is attended by the candidate's major advisor, thesis committee, and members of departmental faculty (as agreed to by the candidate and major advisor). The candidate has the prerogative to open the thesis defense to a larger audience, but this is not required.

The oral defense consists of a brief presentation by the student followed by questions and comments from the committee. Alternative formats may be allowed at the discretion of the thesis advisor/chair and in consultation with the committee members. The purpose of this defense is not, as the name may imply, to challenge the candidate's work, but to allow for an open review of the process. The terms set forth in the abstract should appropriately outline the goals for the project and set the parameters for the defense. Did the research unfold as anticipated? Were there new, unforeseen revelations or complications? This is a discussion to explore the various aspects of the project and to understand the thesis or project as a process.

After the question and comment period, the committee confers privately to reach a determination on the status of the thesis. The major advisor notes all feedback and recommendations and is responsible for providing the student with a written summary thereof following the defense. The student is then invited to rejoin the committee and is informed of the outcome, which may include:

- **Unconditional Pass.** No revisions needed. Committee members sign and submit the [Multi-purpose Form](#) (M-Form) to the Director of Graduate Studies. The student may proceed to the final steps for [MA conferral](#).

- **Conditional Pass.** The thesis is passed contingent upon adequate revision. Committee members sign the [M-Form](#). The student must make required revisions and obtain the approval of all committee members. The chair signs the M-Form again to attest that revisions have been approved by all committee members. Once the M-Form is received by the DGS, the student may proceed to the [final steps required for degree conferral](#).
- **Determination Postponed: pending revision.** Any committee member who feels that extensive revisions are required and that the thesis is not passable—even on a contingent basis—in its current form may decline to sign the M-Form. In this case, the student must make revisions and submit these to the abstaining committee member(s) to obtain approval. Once the M-Form has been signed by all committee members and all final revisions have been accepted, the student may proceed to the [final steps required by the Graduate School for degree conferral](#).
- **Determination Postponed: pending revision & re-defense.** If the thesis and defense are considered inadequate, the committee may offer the student an opportunity to make substantial revisions and redefend the thesis. In such cases, a strict schedule for revision and redefense must be established and communicated to the student. If the student does not meet the deadline for redefense or is not passed upon redefense, the student will be dismissed from the MA Program.
- **Unconditional Fail.** If the committee reaches the unanimous conclusion that the thesis's flaws are unresolvable and that the student's work is without merit, the thesis is considered failed and the student will be dismissed from the MA Program. There will be no opportunity for revision.

Multi-Purpose Form (M-Form)

The M-Form, which must be signed by the thesis committee members, certifies completion of all degree requirements. It serves as the master control document ensuring a student's compliance with THD and the UB Graduate School requirements. Students should meet with their thesis committee prior to the M-form submission date. Also, students should meet with the Graduate Program Administrator well ahead of time to insure that courses, thesis/project, and all paperwork are in order by the deadline.

Graduation Checklist

For candidates completing a Masters Thesis: An oral defense of the thesis must be authorized and held (see above). To graduate, the following must be on file in the Graduate School by the prescribed deadlines:

- Approved [Application to Candidacy](#) (with all necessary attachments, including original transcripts)
- [M-Form](#) (post oral defense)
- [Electronic submission](#) of the master's thesis

For candidates completing a Masters Project, the following must be on file in the Graduate School by prescribed deadlines prior to degree conferral:

- Approved [Application to Candidacy](#) (with all necessary attachments, including original transcripts)
- [M-Form](#)
- Brief written summary of project completed (normally no more than 150 words)

In both instances, the Graduate School will verify satisfactory completion of all courses to be applied toward the degree.

Degree Conferral

The Graduate School confers degrees three times per year: February 1; June 1; and September 1. Refer to the Graduate School's details on [degree conferral deadlines and requirements](#) (also noted above under **ATC**). For September conferral, all materials (including defense) must be submitted by the Friday before classes begin in the fall term. In 2013, this date was August 16.

Participation in Commencement

Each May, College of Arts & Sciences holds a commencement ceremony to acknowledge graduating students. This is only a ceremonial event; it is neither equivalent to degree conferral nor is participation required (though it can be very meaningful). Students who pass the oral defense by April 1 may participate in commencement even if revisions are not complete. Otherwise, students must wait until the next academic year's ceremony.

EXTRACURRICULAR COMPONENTS

This section outlines the opportunities and expectations regarding further intellectual and professional development. It is expected that Theatre & Performance students will seek additional opportunities in their field of interest. Students are encouraged to contribute and participate in ways that are meaningful and beneficial.

FUNDING AND MATERIAL SUPPORT

Steig O. Olson Endowed Scholarship

All students admitted to the MA in Theatre & Performance are eligible for a Steig O. Olson Scholarship. This scholarship is provided by an endowment generously donated by Steig O. Olson, class of 1948. This merit-based award is available to graduate students in Theatre on the basis of their potential as demonstrated in the application to enroll. There is no separate application required to receive this award. The Olson Scholarship is available for the first year of coursework only and cannot be extended, even if the student continues in the program.

Abbe Raven and Martin Tackel Student Production Fund

Generously provided by UB Theatre alumni Abbe Raven '74 and Martin Tackel '73, this award supports the final presentations of Graduate Studio work in the spring semester. To request funding for Studio presentations, students should submit brief proposals for funding to include: a brief description of performance project; budget and justification; and rationale for connection to student's field of study. Students should submit their requests to the Faculty for TH 540: Graduate Studio by **March 1, 2016** to receive consideration. Every effort will be made to fund students equitably.

OUTSIDE PRODUCTIONS

It is expected and encouraged that Theatre & Performance students will seek outside performance and production opportunities. It is important to balance these opportunities within the curricular requirements of the MA program. Outside production work can be announced via the graduate and departmental listservs and students are encouraged to invite faculty to attend performances and productions where appropriate. Please note that because of demanding and sometimes conflicting schedules, faculty may not be able to attend every production.

Appendix A. THESIS DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for each of the possible conferral dates. Students should discuss these deadlines with their advisors as soon as possible. Dates in **bold** are set by the Graduate School and are not negotiable. Failure to submit the necessary materials by the dates listed below may result in delayed graduation and additional enrollment costs. Students are required to maintain continuous enrollment to remain in good standing. This applies to fall and spring enrollment only. Summer term enrollment is not required unless the student intends to complete the thesis during the summer.

SEPTEMBER 1 CONFERRAL

This is the date necessary to complete the MA in 12 months. This schedule is desirable for students wishing to complete the program in the shortest time possible or who intend to enroll in other programs (PhD or MFA) for the following fall.

- February 1: Select major advisor
- April 1: Confirm committee members
- May: Complete coursework
- June 1: Submit final draft of thesis abstract
Submit signed ATC form to DGS (must include all required materials)

July 1: Submit ATC to Graduate School

This is forwarded by the DGS. The form must be circulated through the Dean's office en route to the Grad School. Because of summer vacation schedules, it is essential that the ATC be submitted to the Department by June 1. Failure to do so may result in a delayed process and the need to register for additional thesis credits in the following semester.

- August 1: Submit final thesis draft to advisor and committee
- August 1-10: Oral defense
- August 15: Submit signed M-Form and all required materials to the Grad School**

This includes any required revisions and a properly formatted electronic submission of the thesis.

FEBRUARY 1 CONFERRAL

August 1: Confirm major advisor
 Confirm committee members

It is recommended that the selection of advisor and committee members be completed by the end of the spring term, but any further changes should be confirmed by August 1 at the latest to adhere to a schedule for February 1 conferral. All required coursework should be completed by August 15.

August 15: Complete any outstanding coursework

September 1: Submit final draft of thesis abstract
 Submit signed ATC form to DGS (must include all required materials)

October 1: Submit ATC to Graduate School

This is forwarded by the DGS. The form must be circulated through the Dean's office en route to the Grad School. Because of summer vacation schedules, it is essential that the ATC be submitted to the Department by September 1. Failure to do so may result in a delayed process and the need to register for additional thesis credits in the following semester.

December 1: Submit final thesis draft to advisor and committee

December 1-15: Oral defense

January 9: Submit signed M-Form and all required materials to the Grad School

This includes any required revisions and a properly formatted electronic submission of the thesis.

June 15 Conferral

December 1: Confirm major advisor
 Confirm committee member

It is recommended that the selection of advisor and committee members be completed as soon as possible in the fall term, but any further changes should be confirmed by December 1 at the latest to adhere to a schedule for June 15 conferral. All required coursework should be completed by December 15.

February 1: Submit final draft of thesis abstract
 Submit signed ATC form to DGS (must include all required materials)

March 1: Submit ATC to Graduate School

This is forwarded by the DGS. The form must be circulated through the Dean's office en route to the Grad School. Because of summer vacation schedules, it is essential that the ATC be

submitted to the Department by February 1. Failure to do so may result in a delayed process and the need to register for additional thesis credits in the following semester.

April 1: Submit final thesis draft to advisor and committee

May 1-15: Oral defense

May 21: Submit signed M-Form and all required materials to the Grad School

This includes any required revisions and a properly formatted electronic submission of the thesis.

Appendix B. KCT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following are the policies most relevant to Theatre & Performance students who may be using the KCT. The fully guidelines for the use of the KCT are available [here](#).

BASIC PROVISIONS

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND LICENSING

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS: No activities in violation of Federal, State, or Local laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations or the opinion of the Board of Health shall be permitted on KCT premises, and it shall be the responsibility of the USER, while under the terms and duration of this Rental Agreement, to enforce this provisions.

USER REPRESENTATIVE (typically the student responsible for the production)

At the time of the Rental Agreement, USER will furnish to the DEPARTMENT the name, address, phone numbers, and e-mail address of the USER's representative. This representative will be the sole person authorized to make decisions, resolve problems and conflicts, and negotiate any alterations in event procedure with the DEPARTMENT. If USER must change representative, the DEPARTMENT shall receive written notification of the change not later than eight (8) hours prior to such change.

DAMAGE PAYMENTS

The USER is responsible for all damage caused by any person association with the production under their supervision. The USER will be held responsible for the costs of such damage, and the additional charges will be withheld from the receipts from the production. Any additional costs will be included in a separate invoice for payment. USER further agrees to leave the KCT premises in the same condition as existed prior to the USER's event. Any additional charges incurred because of post-event clean-up will be borne by the USER. The DEPARTMENT will not be responsible for any damage of loss to USER's property, or that of the USER's agents, employees, or other staff, regardless of the cause of such damage or loss.

SAFETY

- A. USER shall not obstruct the entrance to the premises, halls, stairs, lobby, and audience chamber, nor allow the same to be obstructed in any manner. USER further agrees not to bring onto the premises any material, substances, equipment, or object that is likely to endanger any person on the premises or constitute a hazard to property thereon. The DEPARTMENT shall have the right to refuse to allow any such material, substances, equipment, or object to be brought onto the premises and the further right to require its immediate removal.
- B. Patrons or other non-stage personnel are prohibited from being on stage or in the wings at all times unless approved in advance by the DEPARTMENT.
- C. USER must adhere to all University at Buffalo and State of New York safety policies and generally accepted standards applying to health, life, and fire safety. Questions may be directed to the University at Buffalo's Office of Environmental Safety and/or the Department of University Police.

PARKING

Parking is not permitted in the "Service Area," "Loading Dock," or service roads. All vehicles parked on campus before 3:00 PM weekdays must display a registered University hang tag or guest tag, or park in one of the "paid lots" or at a meter.

TECHNICAL RULES

1. STAGE PERSONNEL

A TECHNICAL SUPERVISOR or the KCT Manager is required for all technical rehearsals, the CFA hires technical supervisors. A FACULTY/STAFF member or CFA technician must be present and any and all performances in the KCT.

2. REPRODUCTION

USER agrees that no recording of any kind, either visual or audio, will be made of the event covered by this Agreement except for archival purposes and with the express written consent of all ARTISTS involved in the event.

3. SOUND/LIGHTING CONTROL

The DEPARTMENT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR must approve the sound and lighting board operator(s) and may require that trained CFA Technical Supervisors be assigned to these positions. The DEPARTMENT reserves the right to control the final equalization and sound level for any event.

4. SET-UP, TECHNICAL REHEARSALS AND STRIKE

All set-up, technical rehearsal, and strike times must be scheduled and made part of this agreement. There are only 3 5-hour calls allowed prior to opening, no other technical rehearsal is allowed. USERS of sets, props, pedestals, theatrical equipment, and related materials in the KCT are expected to remove these items immediately following the conclusion of their event and return the spaces to their pre-event condition. The KCT must be returned to a neutral setting each and every day so that classes can be conducted with their normally available floor space. All soft goods, equipment, and tools must be returned to their proper location and be in working order. The stage floor must be cleared of tape and swept clean. The control booth must be restored to pre-event condition. In the event that a USER fails to remove the materials above immediately following the conclusion of their event, the USER shall be liable for the cost and removal and storage by the DEPARTMENT. The DEPARTMENT shall not be liable for any damage to property so removed. The DEPARTMENT KCT Manager is solely authorized to determine whether a strike meets the requirements as stated above.

5. STAGE PREPARATION

All tape used on the stage surface must be of light adhesive, approved for use by the DEPARTMENT Production Manager. The USER shall not allow the use of nails, tacks, stage screws, or similar items to be driven in or placed in any part of the premises without prior approval of the DEPARTMENT Production Manager.

6. SUPERVISION/RESTRICTIONS

No rigging or stage equipment shall be used or changed without the prior knowledge and approval of the DEPARTMENT KCT Manager. No painting is allowed in the KCT at any time. No one associated with the production shall be allowed on the lighting grid.

7. TIME

Time shall be of the essence in this Agreement and the time herein granted shall not be extended for the use of the premises or for the installation or removal of equipment without the written permission of the CHAIR and PRODUCTION MANAGER or KCT Manager. ALL TIME/DATE ADJUSTMENTS (e.g. curtain times and performances dates) must be made in writing by USER and approved by the DEPARTMENT a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the first day of use under this agreement.

8. KEYBOARD USAGE AND TUNING SERVICE

Use of piano must be requested a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance. USER must provide any other instruments. USER is responsible for any damage to the piano.

9. SMOKING

Smoking is prohibited in the KCT.

REHEARSALS & PERFORMANCES

Rehearsals without technical support

Lighting and Sound

- Lighting is limited to the Smartlink Lighting system, located on the exterior of the booth. Exceptions might be made with permission of the KCT manager under proper supervision.
- Sound is limited to a portable player provided by the user. KCT playback might be accessed if a technician is hired.
- Only small amounts of white, labeled spike tape may be used and must not interfere with spikes of departmental productions.

Technical Rehearsals and Performances

Lighting and Sound

- If a CFA Technician is required. At least four weeks prior to production, producer must arrange with the Production Manager to coordinate the hiring of the CFA Technician to be present during technical rehearsals.
 - o The CFA Technician will help instruct your light and sound board operators on the equipment. S/he will not run the equipment for the production unless the producer has arranged for this at the going rate.
 - o Burnouts and other technical challenges must be communicated to the KCT Manager via e-mail.
- Rep Light Plot. The light plot is fixed. It may not be changed in any way, nor may anyone but the KCT Technician go up on the grid for any reason unless specifically approved by the KCT Manager.

- o The Rep Light Plot may be cued and saved on media provided by the users.
- o The Rep Light Plot will have 5 specials, which may not be refocused.
- o Changes of color media to the Rep Light Plot are not permitted.
- o One follow spot is available. Producer must provide a follow-spot operator if this is to be used.
- Sound Equipment. The speakers may not be moved. The producer and director may run sound for the project from a portable sound source. The department takes no responsibility for the security of such devices in the space. We recommend that all equipment provided by the producer or director be taken home after each use.
- Limitations on other Technical Support.
 - o The use of fog or smoke is not permitted.
 - o Stapling, screwing, or nailing into the stage floor is not permitted.
 - o Painting inside or near the KCT is not permitted.
 - o Scenery and prop construction will not be provided by the shop. All scenery and props must be provided by the producer or director and must be transported to and from the KCT by them.
- Maintenance of the KCT.
 - o The general maintenance of the KCT is the responsibility of any group that uses it and a condition of its use. The director and producer are responsible for ensuring that the space is returned to its original condition after each use. Any problems encountered or damage must be reported to KCT Manager the following morning. The space must be returned to its original condition at the end of the production. Should the space be seriously damaged or not returned to its original condition as stipulated above, the Season Selection committee will consider suspending the director, producer, or producing organization from using the space for a period of time to be determined based on the nature and extent of the damage or problem.

House Management Procedures

All KCT events that are open to the public must have a designated House Manager and at least two ushers, provided by the producer. The name of the House Manager should be included in the initial proposal.

The House Manager is responsible for seeing to the good order and safe conduct of the audience. S/he will supervise and coordinate the ushering staff, ticket sales, and ticket-taking; oversee seating, house order, and cleanliness; enforce house rules; and handle any issues that arise regarding accessibility, and fire and safety issues. The House Manager must make the audience aware of any special effects or content issues in the project that might offend or have negative health or safety impact for some patrons, such as strobe lights or loud noises.

The House Manager coordinates the start of the presentation with the Stage Manager. The House Manager must arrive at least one hour prior to opening the house to prepare the house and set up either the KCT box office or a table in the KCT foyer for box office functions. Generally one usher is placed at the foot of the staircase leading to the audience seating to collect tickets, another usher is placed at the top of that staircase to hand out programs and assist patrons in finding a seat, and the balance of ushers, if any, should be strategically placed around the house to assist patrons. Patrons with ambulatory restrictions may enter the house through the double doors leading to the deck.

The House Manager and Ushers will restore the house to its original condition following every presentation, including but not limited to: picking up discarded programs, replacing seats in their original positions, and collecting any belongings left behind by patrons.

Box Office Procedures

When charging admission fees, the following procedures apply. All monies collected at any KCT project event must be accounted for, and therefore contribution, donations, or “passing the hat” are not permitted.

The “House Manager” is responsible for following these procedures and accounting for money and tickets collected. Each producer/director should provide the name of the project’s House Manager in the project proposal.

All events will charge admission, and must sell general admission, single-price tickets with a minimum price of \$5.

The producer or producing organization should provide the House Manager with adequate start-up funds in appropriate denominations to accommodate making change for patrons. For example, if your admission is \$5, you should consider beginning with 8 five-dollar bills, 2 ten-dollar bills, and 1 twenty-dollar bill.

Ticketing is done with numbered carnival-style ticket rolls. The producer is required to supply the ticket roll. Accounting is recorded on the “Ticket Sales Reporting Sheet for Single-Price Ticketing Event” form attached. The ticketing and accounting procedure is as follows:

- The House Manager and Faculty/Staff Monitor agree on the starting ticket number.
- Tickets are sold in numeric order.
- As patrons enter the theatre, their tickets are torn and stubs retained by the ushers.
- After all tickets are sold for the event, the House Manager and Faculty/Staff Monitor agree on the ending ticket number.
- If there is any discrepancy between the number of tickets sold (minus complimentary tickets) and the box office receipts, the House Manager and Faculty/Staff Member will count the torn ticket stubs to resolve the issue.

The House Manager tracks complimentary tickets on the “Complimentary Ticket Sign-In Sheet.” When complimentary tickets are given, the word “comp” must be written on the ticket stub. All persons receiving complimentary tickets print and sign their name and indicate their ticket number on the Complimentary Ticket Sign-In Sheet.

All tickets must be sold at the door. No presale tickets are allowed.

Once all accounting is completed, the House Manager and Faculty/Staff Monitor enclose the box office receipts, ticket stubs, and Complimentary Ticket Sign-In Sheet in a sealed envelope and sign their names across the seal. The House Manager brings the sealed envelope to the THD Resource Management Director, the following business day to be deposited in the proper account. If the department advanced the project \$100 for royalties, props, and such, the first \$100 of receipts will go toward paying back that amount. After that, the department will retain \$1 per ticket to go toward the maintenance of the space and equipment.

For tickets with more than one performance, please fill out a “Ticket Sales Totals Sheet for Single-Price Ticketing Events,” which captures the daily and overall totals. One copy of this form should go to the Resource Management Director and the other is for the producing organization’s records.

PLEASE REQUEST the “Ticket Sales Reporting Sheet,” “Complimentary Ticket Sign-in Sheet,” and “Ticket Sales Reporting Sheet (Totals)” from the THD Production Manager, at least one day, before your production dates.