Doctor of Philosophy in Theatre

The purpose of the Ph.D. in Theatre is to develop leaders in the areas of both studies and practice. The curriculum requires an intense exposure to critical theory, history and historiography, and the craft and art of performance, especially directing. The majority of graduates become teachers in higher education, artists or both. Recent and former students from the M.A. and Ph.D. programs work or have worked across a wide array of academic and artistic settings, including Southern Methodist University, The Ohio State University System, Chapman College, Washburn University, CBS, Disney Productions, University of Costa Rica, University of Minnesota (Morehead), Southern Illinois University, University of Georgia, Texas Christian University, University of Minnesota (Duluth), University of Arizona, and Converse College.

Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (http://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Graduate Admissions

Applicants for the Ph.D. program in Theatre typically hold the M.A. or M.F.A. in theatre or a related field. To be admitted, a student will ordinarily be expected to have a Graduate Record Examination score of at least 148 (verbal), 144 (quantitative), and 4.5 (analytical writing). Students who took the GRE before the implementation of the analytical writing section (i.e. before October 2002) will be expected to have an analytical score of 600 or above. Applicants should also have a grade-point average of at least 3.2 for undergraduate and at least 3.5 for graduate work; and a master’s degree acceptable to the graduate faculty. Deficiencies in a student’s background may necessitate remedial courses. These courses do not count toward the degree requirements.

Visit the Department of Theatre (http://theatre.ku.edu) for more information about application materials required.

To apply for Fall admission into the Ph.D. program, please submit all application materials no later than: January 1 (to be considered for admission with financial support) or February 15 (for admission consideration without financial support). The Department does not admit new students for the Spring or Summer terms.

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

The Ph.D. is an academic degree, but students must demonstrate competence in at least one production area. Normally the Ph.D. requires 60 hours not including Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirements. All courses must be chosen in consultation with an advisor.

Core Requirements

12 hours of core courses are required. In consultation with an advisor, students choose from departmental courses in theatre history, dramatic literature, theory, and criticism.

Elective Requirements

9 hours of electives are required. Elective courses focus on the academic study of theatre/performance history, theory, and related methodologies. Courses are selected with a graduate advisor to reflect the student’s special interest. Some courses may be taken outside theatre, for example in film and media studies, English, American studies, African-American studies, and history.

Secondary Field Requirements

Students choose 9 hours at the graduate level from outside the department to assist them in writing the dissertation. Courses are related to the student’s proposed specialization. (See examples under Elective Requirements.)

Production Courses

6 hours of production courses are required. To become competent artists as well as developing research scholars, students choose a sequence of graduate courses in either scenography or directing.

Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship

Contact your department or program for more information about research skills and responsible scholarship, and the current requirements for doctoral students. Current policies on Doctoral Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship are listed under Degree Requirements in Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination (6 credit hours) is an essential element of the doctoral program, providing an opportunity for students to focus and consolidate the diverse strands of their graduate course work, to demonstrate competence for teaching in particular subject areas, and to establish a strong foundation for moving on to the dissertation. It consists of 3 parts:

1. A written examination, which covers 4 or 5 areas of expertise. Ordinarily, each area corresponds to a member of the student’s committee.
2. Submission of 2 publishable papers of article length (5,000 to 8,000 words) that demonstrate the student’s ability to research and write original scholarship at a level appropriate to the field. Publishable papers may be revised versions of papers submitted in KU courses. Publishable papers must be submitted on the first day of the written examination.
3. An oral examination, given 2 to 4 weeks after the written examination. The oral examination lasts about 90 minutes and may revisit material covered in the written examination, the publishable papers, and/or other material as deemed appropriate by the committee. While preparing for the examination, students may enroll twice in THR 998 Investigation and Conference (for Doctoral Students).

Dissertation

Doctoral candidates are required, after passing the comprehensive oral examination, to be continuously enrolled in one or more hours of dissertation or programmatically equivalent coursework that both moves
the student towards degree completion and reflects, as accurately as possible, the candidate’s demands on faculty time and university facilities. During this time, until all requirements for the degree are completed (including the filing of the dissertation) or until 18 post-comprehensive hours have been completed (whichever comes first), the candidate must enroll for a minimum of 6 hours a semester and 3 hours a summer session.