

Doctor of Philosophy in Theatre and Performance Studies

The purpose of the Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies 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. We offer practice opportunities for doctoral students in directing, acting, and dramaturgy in order to help doctoral students prepare for work as scholar artists. Our graduates have excellent placement in higher education, non-profit organizations, and various posts in the entertainment industry as professional artists and administrators. 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 Junkyard Dog Productions, 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, California State University (Fresno), Southern Utah University, Bismarck State College, SUNY-Buffalo, Columbus State University, University of Kansas, Benedictine College, Wayne State College (Nebraska), and Converse College.

Please visit the Department of Theatre and Dance's **Graduate Resource page** for more information.

Admission to Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

Graduate Admissions

Our holistic application evaluations are based on several criteria: grades, the strength of recommendation letters, written or portfolio samples, previous experience and the fit of your interests with our program. A full list of application materials and deadlines is available on The Department of Theatre and Dance's **admission pages** (<https://theatredance.ku.edu/ma-phd-admissions/>). The Department of Theatre and Dance does not admit new students for the Spring or Summer terms.

The completed application should be submitted **online** (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>).

Contact Information

Graduate Program Coordinator
University of Kansas
Department of Theatre & Dance
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Ph.D. Degree Requirements

The Ph.D. is an academic degree, but students must demonstrate competence in at least one production area. All courses must be chosen in consultation with an advisor.

Code	Title	Hours
THR 800	Introduction to Graduate Study in Theatre	3
9 credit hours of graduate level departmental courses are also required for core courses. Selected with graduate advisor.		9
THR 801	Professional Development Seminar	3
THR 998	Investigation and Conference (for Doctoral Students)	6
9 credit hours of electives are selected with a graduate advisor.		9
9 credit hours of graduate level courses from outside the department (related to students' specialization) are chosen to fulfill secondary field requirements		9
6 credit hours minimum of production credits are required ^{Student selects graduate courses in either scenography, directing, dance, or dramaturgy}		6
Total Hours		45

Note that the graduate advisory committee may recommend that additional courses be taken. After successful completion of the Oral Comprehensive Exam, THR 999 (dissertation hours) will replace THR 998.

Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship

The Department of Theatre Doctoral Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirements are met by fulfilling the following:

- THR 800 Introduction to Graduate Study in Theatre (3 credit hours in 1st semester),
- 3 credit hours of THR 801 Professional Development Seminar,
- THR 999 Doctoral Dissertation,
- If required by faculty advisor for dissertation topic, reading ability in a foreign language or proficiency in an alternative language skill pertinent to the specialty (e.g., computer languages, American sign language). Reading ability or alternative-language proficiency can be demonstrated by: (1) completing with a grade of B or better two college semesters of the language; or (2) completing with a B or better a course in reading comprehension; or (3) submitting a letter from a qualified faculty member attesting to student's language proficiency

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination 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 4 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 1 publishable paper of article length (5,000 to 8,000 words) that demonstrates 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. Submission of a dissertation prospectus 2 weeks before the oral exam.
4. 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, dissertation prospectus and/or other material as deemed appropriate by the committee.

While preparing for the examination, students must enroll in THR 998 Investigation and Conference (for Doctoral Students) . This course may be taken twice for a total of 6 credit hours.

Requirements Post-Comprehensive Exam

Upon passing the comprehensive examination, the student becomes a candidate for the Ph.D. degree and is approved to proceed with their dissertation research and project. At least once each year after passing the comprehensive examination, the student must schedule a meeting with his or her dissertation committee to discuss progress towards the completion of the dissertation and any other concerns. Starting the semester following successful completion of the oral comprehensive exam, students must enroll in accordance with the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Candidacy Policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-candidacy/>). This enrollment includes, but is not limited to, at least 1 dissertation hour every semester until graduation. See the Doctoral Candidacy policy for more information about this University level requirement.

Dissertation

Upon successful completion of the comprehensive oral exam and dissertation prospectus, students adhere to Doctoral Candidacy policy (<http://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-candidacy/>) until they are ready to defend their dissertation. The candidate must present a dissertation showing the planning, conduct, and results of original research and scholarly creativity. The dissertation itself should be an evident product of the candidate's growth and attainment of the ability to identify significant problems; organize, analyze, and communicate scholarly results; and bring to bear on a useful area of interest a variety of research skills and scholarly or creative processes. Further details about the committee requirements and scheduling process can be found in the department's Graduate Handbook. (<https://theatredance.ku.edu/graduate-resources/>)

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of theory, methods and research across sub-fields in Theatre and Performance Studies, showing knowledge in one or more areas of expertise, including directing, dramaturgy or related theatre praxis.

- Conduct original publishable or producible research in the field, based on the development of an original research question and analysis of that question using existing scholarship.
- Hone superior speaking and written skills and be able to use them to communicate effectively to professional and non-professional audience about issues in the field.
- Demonstrate ability to teach undergraduate students with pedagogical skills including the ability to design effective syllabi for theatre courses in play analysis, history, and criticism, and performance studies.
- Be employable, preferably in the field of theatre and performance studies in an institution of higher education, arts administration, or professional work outside of the academy.