

# 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. 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

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 (<https://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies/>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<https://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

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  
356 Murphy Hall  
1530 Naismith Drive  
Lawrence, KS 66045-3140

Phone: 785-864-3511

Email: [kuthr@ku.edu](mailto:kuthr@ku.edu)

## 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 in Theatre are required.

THR 800 is required in the first semester.

9 credit hours of graduate level courses selected in consultation with an advisor. Students choose from departmental courses in theatre history, performance studies, dramatic literature, theory, and criticism. Students must take only departmental courses their first semester of graduate study.

## 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. These may include courses outside the Department with prior approval of the advisor and Director of Graduate Study.

## 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 of departments with applicable coursework 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, directing, dance, or dramaturgy.

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

## 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/>)