

School of Drama

Carl Forsman, Dean

I. Overview of School

The School of Drama is committed to training talented young men and women to be exciting, experienced and accomplished professional actors and actresses. The School responds to a definite need in the profession for actors to be technically well-equipped and versatile, as well as creatively inspired. This vital fusion of talent and skill is the concern of the highly qualified professional faculty, which gives close personal attention to each student's development and goals. The School of Drama affirms classical values in its training process. An actor graduating from the drama school will possess a finely honed technique and an artistic sensitivity, capable of discerning standards of quality and integrity. As part of this process, the faculty supports the pursuit of courses in the Division of Liberal Arts in order to provide an artistically and culturally diverse environment that nurtures and develops the whole person. Above all, the actor will be grounded in a behavior that is ethical, disciplined and responsible.

The School of Drama is a member of the Consortium of Conservatory Theatre Training Programs, which also includes Boston University, Carnegie Mellon University, Rutgers University and Purchase College. The consortium's primary mission is to prepare artists for careers in the professional theatre; it also asserts standards for training, encourages public recognition, and influences policy in support of the development of theatre arts. The consortium recognizes that its effectiveness depends upon a membership that represents high standards and demonstrated leadership in the field.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts

Students may pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in either Acting or Directing. The Bachelor of Fine Arts program offers students a thorough foundation in the dramatic arts, with the added perspective and benefit of a liberal arts education. This mixture of arts and liberal arts classes creates a well-rounded artist and citizen.

Each student committed to a career in theatre engages in a rigorous course of study with required classes in voice, movement, and acting. The curriculum also includes more specific skills, including mask work, stage-fighting, verse-speaking, dialects, comedy techniques, singing, and musical theatre. The schedule for each day includes class work relevant to afternoon and evening rehearsal periods. Major works from the classical repertory through the 21st century are studied. A full schedule of workshops and major productions provides vital performing experience. Every year, students completing the four years of actor training are invited at the recommendation of the Dean to participate in an Actor Presentation in New York and Los Angeles for major agents, casting directors and management from all branches of theatre, film and television.

II. Specific Admissions and Transfer Requirements

Audition applicants should prepare three monologues (one classical, preferably from a play by Shakespeare or one of his contemporaries, and two contrasting monologues from contemporary plays). Please be prepared to sing 16 bars of a song without accompaniment. It is recommended that the audition song come from the standard musical theatre repertory. The three pieces and the song must not exceed five minutes total. Each selection should stand on its own as a monologue. Do not use foreign dialects or character voices. Dress appropriately for a rehearsal situation. Costumes and props are unnecessary. Candidates recommended by the Faculty Audition Committee are screened by the Admissions Committee with regard to academic record, potential and social maturity. Transfer students must have the equivalent of the first two years of actor training in the School of Drama at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Potential transfer candidates will be evaluated by audition, portfolio review, transcript content, or prior professional experience.

A. Advanced Standing

Transfer arts credit from other programs and institutions is not normally given. The normal manner of acknowledging prior training is by advanced placement credit. Transfer students and entering students with substantial previous professional training may, at the discretion of the faculty, be granted advanced standing.

III. Standards of Achievement, Evaluation, and Continuation

A. Placement and Classification

College students are classified according to their placement level in the arts program. The normal pattern of progression is one year in each level. Most entering students (college freshmen or college transfers) are placed in the first-year program.

Year One

Studio 1 Students are expected to maintain a minimum 2.3 grade point average each semester in order to be continued for the next semester.

Year Two

Studio 2 Students are expected to maintain a minimum 2.5 grade point average each semester in order to be continued for the next semester.

Years Three and Four

Studio 3 and 4 Students at each of these levels must achieve and maintain a minimum cumulative average of 2.7 each semester.

B. Evaluation

Students are evaluated each term by the entire faculty and informed of their progress. In addition to assigning grades as an evaluation of a student's work, each teacher is expected to provide written commentary. Students are encouraged to discuss with the faculty, at any time, problems and progress in their work. After grades have been considered at the end of each semester, the faculty determines whether or not a student is demonstrating substantial growth toward artistic excellence. For the undergraduate student who does not demonstrate such growth, the faculty decides if he or she should receive a Letter of Warning or be placed on probation for the following semester based on these criteria: (1) ability to absorb instruction, (2) assessment of talent, and (3) ability to work and produce a performance. A student placed on probation who fails to meet the stated criteria in the succeeding semester will not usually be invited to continue in the program. Please see Undergraduate Policy on Student Probation and Continuation.

C. Failing Grades

A grade of F in any required arts course indicates a serious problem. Depending on the nature and extent of the problem, the faculty may, at its discretion, require either: (1) that the student repeat the course or a suitable alternate course, or (2) that the student repeat the year.

D. Continuation

Continuation from one academic year to the next in all programs in the School of Drama is based on several factors. Among these are: faculty assessment of professional potential, class grades, production assignment evaluations, growth in artistic and/or technical abilities as applicable, academic growth, professional demeanor and creative discipline. The student's inability to interact appropriately and productively within UNCSA and School of Drama policies, procedures and expectations will result in dismissal from the program. The School of Drama has developed

a program that is designed to provide a full, rounded and highly professional education in actor training. The School of Drama is aware that its particular professional program is not suitable for everyone. It is the observation of this faculty that each student in the School of Drama is unique and must develop at his/her own pace. It would be detrimental to ask a student to continue to move forward in the program if his/her personal rate of growth does not coincide with the work demanded. In such cases, the student is asked to withdraw and apply to a training program more suited to his/her developing talents. This is in no way a reflection of the student's abilities, but a recognition of the limitations imposed by the School of Drama's four-year program.

E. Division of Liberal Arts (DLA) Requirements

Drama students pursuing the BFA must complete 36 credits hours of DLA courses in order to graduate. See course requirements listed in concentration models, below.