

School of Design & Production

Michael Kelley, Dean

I. Overview of School

In recognition of the primary importance of designers, craftsmen, and managers as full collaborators in the performing arts, the School of Design and Production offers a unique and comprehensive program of instruction and practice in eleven different concentrations at the master's degree level in theatrical and entertainment design, production, management, and specialized crafts.

At UNCSA, students design and execute the sets, properties, costumes, lighting, wigs, makeup, and sound. Our students manage all production aspects for more than twenty productions and events each year. The School of Design and Production partners with the Schools of Dance, Drama, Filmmaking, and Music in mounting productions and projects, including operas, musicals, plays, films, ballets and contemporary dance performances.

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) is a terminal degree professional training program consisting of three years of advanced study and successful completion of a thesis. The total credits vary by concentration, and can be viewed in the individual curriculum models. The MFA thesis must be successfully completed within five (5) years of the student's initial enrollment in the program. This program is open to college graduates holding an undergraduate degree who wish to specialize in one of four design concentrations, or one of seven production concentrations. Studio, coursework and production assignments escalate in scale and complexity to prepare students to take full responsibility for productions as professional designers, managers and technicians.

Design and Production Concentrations

Classes are small and the resident faculty members are both working professionals and full-time participants in the training program. The faculty regularly gives guidance and evaluation to each student throughout the three-year program.

Design Concentrations:

- Costume Design
- Scene Design
- Sound Design
- Wig and Makeup

Production Concentrations:

- Animatronics
- Costume Technology
- Production and Project Management
- Scenic Art
- Stage Automation
- Stage Properties
- Technical Direction

II. Specific Admissions and Transfer Requirements

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program in Design and Production is a three-year graduate program offering specialization in animatronics, costume design, costume technology, scene design, scenic art, sound design, stage properties, stage automation, technical direction, wig and makeup design, and production and project management.

Admission to the MFA Programs in the School of Design and Production is by application, interview, and portfolio assessment. Candidates must have completed an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university (or the equivalent if the institution is located outside the United States). To apply, candidates must submit the following:

- a completed application form and application fee,
- two letters of recommendation,
- an official transcript with a seal or registrar's signature from each college attended (copies are unacceptable and international students must submit a certified English translation for each transcript),
- a résumé detailing the applicant's artistic experience and educational objectives, and
- a TOEFL test (if the candidate is an international student.)

The following must occur before a student is officially admitted to the program:

- the applicant must attend an interview and portfolio evaluation with faculty from the School of Design and Production,
- a website link or a "take-away" of portfolio samples must accompany the interview (usually in the form of a print-out, disc or thumbdrive, but other forms may be acceptable),
- the faculty submits a written evaluation of the applicant's interview. The application is then sent to the Dean of the School of Design and Production for final approval. To assure a safe and collegial campus, background checks of applicants may be required.

All students in the School of Design and Production must be able to physically, artistically and intellectually participate in all phases and activities of the program area in which they are enrolled. In general, students in the School of Design and Production must possess the ability to communicate clearly with faculty and other students in classes and production activities; and must be able to watch and hear theatrical productions and possess the ability to analyze and discuss them. The various professional fields of design and production have specific physical demands. The School of Design and Production embraces inclusiveness and will make reasonable accommodations for students showing professional promise and the ability to handle the rigorous work of the program and of the field. It is important to note that not all disabilities can be accommodated.

Transfer Credit or Advanced Institutional Credit

The School of Design and Production will consider transfer credit for graduate level arts classes taken at an accredited college or university on a case-by-case basis. Only courses that have received a grade of B- or better will be considered. An official transcript from the original granting institution must accompany all transfer credit requests. Any additional supporting documentation will be determined by the Dean's office and/or the Registrar's office.

Graduate transfer students will be placed according to ability and experience at the discretion of the appropriate dean and faculty following review of prior courses and interviews with faculty members. Where applicable, placement tests may be administered and appropriate advanced institutional credit is awarded. The School of Design and Production requires that a minimum thirty six (36) graduate credit hours toward the MFA must be earned at UNCSCA.

III. Specific Standards of Achievement, Evaluation, and Continuation

A. Portfolio Review

All students are required to present their work to the entire faculty in a Portfolio Review at the end of the Spring Semester each year. The faculty uses this presentation to further develop an understanding of the student's progress and steer the student's future in the program.

B. Production Evaluations

Students enrolled in Production must participate in the Production Evaluation process at the end of each semester of enrollment. More specific information concerning the Production Evaluation process is available from the faculty of each concentration. All work covered in the courses titled Production (DEP 6000, 7000, 8000) will be graded and evaluated at the end of each semester by the entire D&P faculty

C. Residency and Placement

The School of Design and Production requires that a minimum thirty six (36) graduate credit hours toward the MFA in Design and Production must be earned at UNCSCA. The MFA degree must be completed within five (5) years of the graduate student's initial enrollment in the program.

Placement in the program is based on the faculty's assessment of a student's prior training, abilities, and proficiency.

D. MFA Thesis Requirement

As a terminal degree, the MFA requires a rigorous thesis. Each MFA concentration in Design and Production has thesis requirements and guidelines specific to the concentration and field. For further information, consult the director of the specific MFA concentration. The MFA thesis must be successfully completed within five (5) years of the student's initial enrollment in the program. Graduate students are responsible for all costs incurred to deliver their thesis, including materials, printing and archived elements.

E. Continuation

Graduate students in the School of Design and Production MFA programs are required to maintain a minimum cumulative combined 3.0 or higher GPA average in arts classes. A graduate student may accumulate only a maximum of eight (8) credit hours of the grade of "C" (including "C+" and "C-") and remain enrolled in the graduate program. A graduate student who receives a "D" or "F" is subject to Probation or Dismissal. Students who fail to maintain these levels for a given term are placed on Arts Probation for the following term. Students who, in the judgement of the faculty, fail to demonstrate sufficient professional development in the arts may receive a letter of Warning and/or be placed on Probation. The decision of the Dean as to continuation under Probation or Dismissal from the program is final.

Continuation from one academic year to the next in all concentrations in the School of Design and Production is not automatic, and 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. If a student is found to have interacted inappropriately with the UNCSCA or School of Design and Production community, or to have failed to follow UNCSCA or School of Design and Production policies and procedures, will be dismissed from the program. Please see the Graduate Policy on Student Probation and Continuation. Students who do not exhibit satisfactory grades, growth and performance will be dismissed.

F. Additional School of Design and Production Policies

Students must read and comply with all policies and procedures in the School of Design and Production Student Handbook. Students must sign a Student Agreement at the beginning of each school year verifying that they have read the Design and Production Student Handbook and yearly affirm they accept the policies and procedures contained therein.

IV. Additional Costs, Materials, and Equipment

Students are personally responsible for obtaining the supplies and equipment required by their MFA concentration including Production, such as drafting equipment, shop hand tools, drawing and design supplies, as well as required (or recommended) textbooks for courses. Expenditures will be heaviest during the first year, as students make major investments that they will use for the rest of their professional careers. Students not already owning some of the necessary major equipment and supplies needed should be prepared to spend \$750 to \$1200 or more during the early part of their first year. Respirator purchasing and fit-testing is conducted annually on-campus for programs that require respirators.

All Design and Production students are required to have a working computer and printer. Computer and software requirements and recommendations are specific to each program and area of concentration. Many software packages will be available to current students via University license agreements and subscription, but may have annual reactivations or cloud storage requirements. Please review the most current requirements below. If your program is not detailed here, contact the Director of the MFA concentration for further information before purchasing computers, software, apps, or other specific equipment.

Sound Design Student Requirements:

Apple MacBook Pro:

- Thunderbolt Port
- Ethernet port or Thunderbolt to Ethernet adapter
- 16 GB minimum system RAM
- 70 GB or more of available storage space for Logic sound libraries
- AppleCare Protection Plan

Software: Apple LogicX available via the Mac App Store

Thunderbolt Drive:

- 500 GB minimum size
- SSD preferred but rotational HDD acceptable
- Thunderbolt cable
- Bus Powered drive, highly recommended

Wig and Makeup Student Requirements:

- iPad with Apple Pencil: recommended iPad 7th generation or newer, but iPad 6th generation, iPad Air, or iPad Pro will work. Another brand of tablet with digital pencil compatible with ProCreate is acceptable. If the student has a different preferred digital rendering program, please contact faculty.

Stage Properties Student Requirements:

- Mac or Windows (laptop preferred)
- 16GB minimum system RAM
- 70 GB or more of available storage space

Costume Design and Costume Technology Student Requirements:

- Mac or Windows laptop
- MS Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- Additional recommendation for Design students:
 - iPad with Apple Pencil
 - Scanner

V. Optional Internships

Students may, with the permission of the Dean and the approval of the faculty, receive credit for up to one term of arts courses for an internship with a professional company. These students continue to pay regular tuition to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.