

# ***THEATRE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2018 - 2019***

## ***INTRODUCTION***

To new students: Welcome to the FIU Theatre Program! We are thrilled that you have decided to embark on this educational journey with us. In choosing to become a theatre major, you have elected to prepare for a profession that is rich in rewards, but very high in its demands. This handbook contains information designed to give an overall view of the theatre program and the degrees it offers. It includes information concerning the academic and production requirements, as well as our approach to theatre education. **PLEASE TAKE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATION CAREFULLY.** It will provide answers to many of your questions and will serve as a reference throughout your college career.

To returning students: Welcome back! We are very excited that you are continuing your journey here with us. Please take a little time and review all of the information in the student handbook. Each year it is edited and revised for the new school year. It is very important that you know and understand all of the information here. **PLEASE TAKE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATION CAREFULLY.**

### **Mission**

Through rigorous professional training and ambitious creative activity, the teacher-artists of Florida International University Theatre are committed to developing artists who are engaged critical thinkers driven to enhance the intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural life of the university, city, and world at large.

### **Values**

- We value a comprehensive and balanced approach to undergraduate education.
- We value collaboration, communication, and the creative process.
- We are dedicated to using theory, craft, and problem solving to explore the human condition through theater.
- We encourage dedication, passion, and self-discipline.
- We pride ourselves on maintaining the highest production values possible.
- We embrace cultural diversity and global understanding.
- We recognize the unique expressive capabilities (capacity) of each student.
- We value our ongoing relationships with our alumni
- We value the sharing of knowledge, skills, and abilities between disciplines and departments within the university.
- We value quality administrative services provided to students.
- We value the integration of evolving technology with the creative process.
- We value engagement with the local community.
- We value the impact our students have on the artistic community at the local, regional, national and global level.
- We protect artistic and academic freedom
- We maintain a safe, healthy, respectful learning environment.

### **Results**

Our graduates go on to attend top professional programs, become theatre educators or professionals on Broadway, in the film/television industry, in regional theatres both in the U.S. and abroad.

## ***THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR PROGRAM***

We believe in a comprehensive theatre education at the undergraduate level. Therefore, all our students are required to study and actively participate in all areas of theatre. Performance-oriented students must also study and practice theatre technology. Technology/design-oriented students must also study and participate at some level in the performance experience. The same is true for students whose emphasis is on management, design, directing, or theatre education. In addition, everyone in theatre must also understand the history and theory behind the practice.

You are expected, as an professional in training and a student at this university, to take ownership of your work in the classroom and onstage in a responsible and disciplined manner. This includes but is not limited to: conducting yourself in a professional manner, participating actively, and being an engaged contributor to your own education.

Theatre is a discipline that one cannot master just by taking classes. It must be practiced as well as studied. The faculty and staff regard department productions as teaching laboratories. Therefore, we place equal importance on course work and on production experience. In order to ensure that every theatre major gets production experience **ALL MAJORS ARE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN PRODUCTION WORK EACH SEMESTER WHILE IN THE PROGRAM.** Just acting in productions is not enough; participation in the technical aspects of putting a show together is an essential part of the theatre experience. While this requirement is, on the one hand, a practical necessity if plays are going to be produced, it is also, on the other hand, the best way to put knowledge learned in the classroom to use.

## THEATRE FACULTY AND STAFF

### **JOEL MURRAY**

Ph.D. Bowling Green University  
Professor of Theatre, Chair & Artistic Director  
Teaching Areas: Acting, Directing, Playwriting  
Office: 131B  
Phone: (305) 348-2895  
E-mail: [jomurray@fiu.edu](mailto:jomurray@fiu.edu)

### **FACULTY**

#### **PHILLIP M. CHURCH**

M.F.A., University of California at Irvine, London Academy of Music and Art  
Associate Professor of Theatre, Head of Engagement & External Relations  
Teaching Areas: Acting, TV & Film, Shakespeare  
Office: WPAC 139B  
Phone (305) 348- 3358  
E-mail: [churchp@fiu.edu](mailto:churchp@fiu.edu)

#### **REBECCA COVEY**

M.F.A., University of Wisconsin  
Associate Professor of Theatre, Head of Performance  
Teaching Area: Voice & Movement, Acting  
Office: WPAC 138B  
Phone: (305) 348-3728  
E-mail: [rcovey@fiu.edu](mailto:rcovey@fiu.edu)

#### **TONY GALASKA**

M.F.A. Purdue University  
Associate Professor of Theatre, Head of Design and Production, Production Manager  
Teaching Areas: Theatrical Lighting Design and Technology, Stage Management  
Office: WPAC 137B  
Phone: (305) 348-2564  
E-mail: [agalaska@fiu.edu](mailto:agalaska@fiu.edu)

#### **CHRISTOPHER GOSLIN**

Master of Arts, New York University  
Instructor of Theatre,  
Teaching Areas: Acting I, Theatre Appreciation, skilled in Stagecraft & Lighting  
Office: WPAC 138A  
Phone: (305) 348-2636  
e-mail: [cgoslin@fiu.edu](mailto:cgoslin@fiu.edu)

#### **JENNIFER IVEY**

M.F.A., University of Illinois  
Assistant Professor of Theatre  
Teaching Areas: Scenic Design  
Office: WPAC 135A  
Phone: (305)348-1684  
e-mail: [jivey@fiu.edu](mailto:jivey@fiu.edu)

**IVAN R. LOPEZ**

M.F.A. National Theatre Conservatory, Denver Colorado  
Instructor of Theatre, Head of Audience Development  
Teaching Areas: Intro to Acting, Dramatic Literature, Voice & Movement  
Office: WPAC 133B  
Phone: (305) 348-3365  
E-mail: [irelopez@fiu.edu](mailto:irelopez@fiu.edu)

**DANIEL MITAN**

M.F.A. University of Florida, M.S.Ed University of Southern California  
Instructor of Theatre, SAG/AFTRA, AEA, Society of American Fight Directors.  
Teaching Areas: Acting, Film, Stage Combat  
Office: WPAC 135B  
Phone: (305) 348-2237  
E-mail: [dmitan@fiu.edu](mailto:dmitan@fiu.edu)

**STEPHEN NEAL**

M.F.A. Florida State University  
Instructor of Theatre, SAG/AFTRA, AEA  
Teaching Areas: Intro to Acting, Theatre Appreciation, Playscript Analysis  
Office: AC2- 231A  
Phone: (305) 919-6263  
E-mail: [stephen.neal@fiu.edu](mailto:stephen.neal@fiu.edu)

**MARINA PAREJA**

M.F.A. Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh  
Instructor of Theatre  
Teaching Areas: Costume History, Costume Design, Costume Technology  
Office: WPAC 133A  
Phone: (305) 348-2749  
E-mail: [Parejam@fiu.edu](mailto:Parejam@fiu.edu)

**WAYNE E. ROBINSON, JR.**

M.F.A., National Theatre Conservatory.  
Associate Professor of Theatre,  
Head of Mentoring, Head of Auditions  
Teaching Areas: Acting, Movement and Voice  
Office: WPAC 137A  
Phone: (305) 348-3361  
E-mail: [robinson@fiu.edu](mailto:robinson@fiu.edu)

**LESLEY-ANN TIMLICK**

M.F.A., University of California at Davis, National Theatre Conservatory Voice Program, GCFP,  
Michael Chekhov Teaching Certificate  
Associate Professor of Theatre,  
Teaching Areas: Acting, Voice, Directing, Movement  
Office: WPAC 131  
Phone: (305) 348-2895  
E-mail: [timlickl@fiu.edu](mailto:timlickl@fiu.edu)

**MICHAEL YAWNEY**

M.F.A. Columbia University

Associate Professor of Theatre

Teaching Areas: Acting, Directing, History, Playwriting, Physical Approaches to Theatre (i.e. Viewpoints)

Office: WPAC 139A

Phone: (305)-348-7545

E-mail: [myawney@fiu.edu](mailto:myawney@fiu.edu)

**STAFF**

**BLAIR BROWN**

Costume Shop Assistant

Office: WPAC 128

Phone: (305)348-2749

E-mail: [kbrown@fiu.edu](mailto:kbrown@fiu.edu)

**ROBERT DUNCAN**

Building Operation Coordinator

Office: WPAC 118

Phone: (305)348-1353

E-mail: [roduncan@fiu.edu](mailto:roduncan@fiu.edu)

**GEORDAN GOTTLIEB**

Assistant Technical Director

Office: WPAC 118

Phone: (305) 348-0545

E-mail: [gottlieg@fiu.edu](mailto:gottlieg@fiu.edu)

**JUDY LITT**

Box Office Management/Rentals/Community Outreach

Office: WPAC 110E

Phone: (305) 348-0548

E-Mail: [ilittpin@fiu.edu](mailto:ilittpin@fiu.edu)

**MARIANNA MURRAY**

Office Coordinator

Office: WPAC 131

Phone: (305) 348-2895

E-mail: [murraym@fiu.edu](mailto:murraym@fiu.edu)

**PAULETTE RIVERA**

Financial Analyst

Office: WPAC 131

Phone: (305) 348-2895

E-Mail: [priver@fiu.edu](mailto:priver@fiu.edu)

**GERARDO SUAREZ**

Academic Advisor

Office: 131A

Phone: 305-348-2442

E-Mail: [gsuarez@fiu.edu](mailto:gsuarez@fiu.edu)

**ADJUNCT FACULTY**

**ISRAEL GARCIA**

M.F.A. Florida Atlantic University

Teaching Areas: Intro to Acting, Theatre Appreciation

E-mail: [garciai@fiu.edu](mailto:garciai@fiu.edu)

**PIONEER WINTER**

M.F.A.

Teaching Areas: Dance Performance and Choreography

E-mail:

## ***DEGREE DESCRIPTIONS***

The theatre program offers a B.A. and a B.F.A. degree.

The B.A. degree is a comprehensive, liberal arts degree with courses in all the basic aspects of theatre. This degree contains a fairly equal balance of academic, technical and performance courses. It offers the student with a general interest in theatre the opportunity for a good undergraduate education with a certain amount of specialization. A student who graduates with this degree will be a good candidate for graduate school in a number of different disciplines.

The B.F.A. is a pre-professional selective degree designed to prepare you for a professional theatre career, and/or advanced professional theatre training. B.F.A. and B.A. candidates complete a similar curriculum in the first two years of study. Pending departmental approval, B.F.A. candidates then go on to take advanced courses in performance or design. B.F.A. students are evaluated each semester with performance juries and portfolio reviews by the faculty. Students who graduate with this degree either go on to graduate school, professional internships, advanced conservatory programs or proceed directly to work in professional theatre or related fields.

## ***ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS***

Admission to the theatre department takes place through an audition or interview process as follows:

All candidates for all degrees will need to schedule an audition or interview during one of the theatre departments schedules auditions times. These are offered several times of year, dates available on the website and to schedule auditions and interviews please contact the head of auditioning, Wayne Robinson, for all auditions and the head design/production, Tony Galaska, for all interviews.

B.A. candidates interested in performance need to schedule an audition, during which students are required to present one prepared audition piece, a resume and have one recommendation letter.

B.A. candidates whose interest is in technical theatre or stage management need to schedule and prepare for an interview, at which time they will present a portfolio of their work, resume and one letter of recommendation.

B.F.A. performance candidates need to schedule an audition during which students are required to present two prepared audition pieces, a resume and have two recommendation letters.

B.F.A. design students do not need to prepare audition pieces but should prepare for an extensive interview, at which they must present a portfolio of their work, resume and two letters of recommendation.

**TRANSFER STUDENTS:** Students transferring from independent Florida and out-of-state colleges into the University's upper division must have maintained a minimum 2.0 grade point average based upon a 4.0 scale.

Coursework transferred or accepted for credit toward an undergraduate degree must be completed at an institution accredited as degree-granting by a regional accrediting body or at an institution accredited as degree granting by a national accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education that participates in the statewide course numbering system at the time the coursework was completed. Each academic department reserves the right to determine how transfer credits may be applied to satisfy the specific requirements for the major and/or degree. Students must contact their academic department to obtain any additional requirement needed for their program of study.

Students who transfer from any Florida public community college with an A.A. degree are admissible to the university. However, that does not mean they are automatically admitted to the theatre program. Admission to our theatre degree program is predicated upon completing a successful audition [As listed above] for all BA/BFA Performance candidates or an interview/portfolio review for all B.F.A. Design candidates. Students who audition for the BFA in Performance who are not accepted but who are accepted into the BA program, may, upon completing Acting IV and Voice and Movement II, re-audition for the BFA performance degree. Admission is selective and based on observable talent and professional potential. The student's work in classes will also be factored into the decision. Successful candidates will demonstrate potential in the following areas:

- Text analysis and the world of the play.
- High stakes and strong deeply felt objectives.
- Use of language, rhythm, and musicality in performance.
- Relaxed and articulate body and voice.

The same admission rules apply to students who transfer from other four-year institutions. In regard to transferring theatre credits, FIU will only transfer in a maximum of 60 credits, and these credits will all be lower division credits. Any upper division theatre credits or credits beyond the 60 credit limit that you may want to transfer in have to be evaluated by the academic advisor first.

The theatre faculty has the right to deny accepting any credits not deemed applicable or equivalent to the required FIU theatre curriculum. All transfer students who are accepted as theatre majors must bring a copy of their transcripts from their previous institutions to their first advising appointment so the theatre credits can be evaluated and the proper paperwork can be started if credits beyond the automatic 60 the university accepts are accepted for transfer by the department.

If there is a question about the applicability or equivalency of a given course, the student will need to provide supporting materials, such as catalogue descriptions and/or syllabi to help in determining whether to accept the course. In most cases we will accept the credits for transfer, with the notable exception of performance classes. Placement in the acting sequence really is dependent on the audition and interview results, regardless of the number of acting, voice or movement classes taken elsewhere. The same exception is



true for upper division design related classes. Placement of Transfer students in the design sequence is determined by the portfolio and interview, regardless of previous course work in design.

Please be aware that FIU has a requirement that all students must take at least 30 credits in residence to receive a degree from FIU and that at least half of the required curriculum in your major must be taken in residence. Also, the last 30 credits that you take for your FIU degree must be taken at FIU, regardless of whether the courses are in your major.

## ***ADVISING***

Students must see the theatre advisor each term. They will track your progression in your theatre degree as well as give you access to register for theatre classes.

Our current theatre advisor is Gerry Suarez, he can be reached at 305 348-2442.  
Or by e-mail at [gsuarez@fiu.edu](mailto:gsuarez@fiu.edu)

## ***JURIES***

Each BFA student is responsible for being prepared to be evaluated by the end of each term, and attendance at the Jury is **mandatory**. The evaluations are normally scheduled for the Friday of each semester's exam week. If the date and time is unclear, it is the responsibility of the student to speak with the performance faculty for clarification.

**BFA Performance Majors:** All BFA performance students are required to meet with performance faculty to review their work over the previous semester and discuss the direction of future work. The jury evaluation is based on the work in class, and production. The result of the jury for the student will be either:

1. Passed on to the next performance level
2. Placed on probation
3. Removed from the BFA performance track

**BFA Design Majors:** All BFA design students are required to pass juried presentations each semester, at the end of the fall semester students will formally present their portfolio in a one on one interview format. At the end of the spring semester students will formally

present their portfolios and samples of work from all design or technique classes taken that academic year, plus production/design work assigned that year in a publicly presented juried format. The members of the design/production faculty comprise the jury committee.

## ***SENIOR PROJECTS***

BFA performance and BFA design students are required to complete a Senior Project before graduating. Please refer to the Senior Project Handbook for more information.

Students should begin to plan their Senior Project in their junior year. For BFA performance students the research and the script should be completed by the end of fall semester of the student's senior year. Senior projects can only be presented at the end of the fall or spring semester.

BFA juniors are required to serve as crew for senior projects.

## ***ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS***

Among the university-wide requirements is one that requires any student who enters as a freshman or who transfers with fewer than 60 credits to take 9 credits of their course work during the summer terms. Please take this into consideration when you plan your schedule. Many students use the summer terms to take care of some of their general education requirements, since very few required theatre classes are offered at this time.

Please remember that the University requires a minimum of 120 credits to graduate with a B.A. degree and a minimum of 128 credits to graduate with a B.F.A. degree. For both degrees, a minimum of 48 credits must be upper division (3000 or 4000 level) credits.

All requirements for graduation, including preventing the incurring excessive credit hours, is the sole responsibility of each individual student. It is highly recommended that students seek wise counsel to make their decision and plan their course of study through the academic advice of the program advisor, and area advisors.

## ***PLAN OF STUDY***

Advanced courses in the design tracks are usually taught in alternate years as needed. Special Topics and Internship courses are offered on an as needed basis.

## ***SPECIAL COURSES***

There are two types of special courses in the department: THE 4916 – Research and THE 4950 – Theatre Internship. While a certain number of credits in these special

courses are required in the B.F.A. design curriculum, these courses are not reserved exclusively for design majors.

In the case of THE 4916 – Research, you may, with the prior approval of the professor who will direct the study and the Department Chair, earn credit for study in specific areas not normally covered in the regular course offerings. Some specialized studies in the past have included intensive study in Shakespeare’s language, specialized vocal studies, intensive study in the work of one playwright or one theatre practitioner that resulted in a significant final project, etc. Since directing a research study involves additional work for the professor, the decision as to whether to approve a research project is at the discretion of that professor and the Department Chair. Approval is not automatic. Research credits are not to be used to just get an extra credit to bring a class schedule up to full time status for scholarship purposes, say, with no real expectation that work has to be done. Research credits cannot be used in place of courses normally offered.

You must provide a written statement describing the scope, content and intent of the research, how the work will be supervised and the basis for grading to the professor and the Chair before you can register for the course. Because the number of credits for research is variable, all parties must agree in advance on the number of credits for which you can register. The advisors must sign off on this agreement or you will not receive a permit number to register for the course.

## ***INTERNSHIP***

THE 4950 – Theatre Internship, is a course designed to give credit for work done in a concentrated theatre situation. It is a required part of the curriculum for design majors, but it has potential applications in other theatre disciplines as well, particularly in the areas of stage management. Internships are meant to be conducted off-campus in professional settings and advanced workshops to complement the work you do within the department. You must make all the arrangements for doing an internship well in advance of actually beginning it. The criteria for granting permission to register for an internship include:

1. The organization must be recognized by the faculty as one with a professional standard and strong record of accomplishment
2. The experience should be different from that which can be obtained at FIU.
3. Your work will be adequately supervised and evaluated.
4. Your internship experience will be worthwhile in terms of acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Anyone needing or wishing to take an internship must present a proposal to the professor who will be the teacher of record for the course and to their faculty mentor. This proposal should contain specific information about the nature and scope on the internship work as well as the method of evaluation. Internship application forms are available in the back of the handbook or in the department’s main office. At the conclusion of the internship you need to hand in a detailed journal and ensure that your internship

supervisor submits an evaluation and a suggested grade to the teacher of record so your grade can be properly submitted.

## ***COURSE WAIVERS***

Most of the information about transfer credits was covered in the TRANSFER STUDENTS section. However, there are a few other important pieces of information about which transfer students need to be aware. Besides the 60 credit limit on transfer credits, students need to recognize that not all courses are created equal, especially courses that may carry the same title as a lower division course at a community college as they do at the upper division level at FIU. While a course may have the same title that does not mean that it is the same course. Before we will waive a required course, the student must convince the instructor of the course that they know all the material covered in that course. If the instructor agrees that a particular course can be waived, the student will still often have to take another course instead in order to have enough credits to graduate.

Remember also, that placement in the performance sequence is not determined solely on past acting, voice and/or movements classes but on how well the audition and interview session is conducted. Placement in the design sequence is not determined solely on past classes taken but on how well the portfolio review and interview session is conducted.

## ***ATTENDANCE POLICY***

**Attendance:** The Theatre Department upholds a strict punctuality and attendance policy. You are permitted **one excused** absence during the semester. **Four absences** will result in failing the class. Excused absences are allowed **only in extreme circumstances** and require appropriate documentation within a week of the absence. Examples of documentation might include a doctor's note, death certificate or obituary notice of a family member. Excused absences also include recognized religious holidays. However, if you acquire five or more absences for a **documented medical or personal emergency** you may be required to repeat the course.

**Conduct:** You should also be aware that if you engage in any unprofessional or unsafe behavior during class you may be ask to leave the classroom. **This will count as an unexcused absence.** If you leave class early this can be counted as an absence at the instructors discretion.

**Punctuality:** Repeated tardiness is unacceptable. **Three late arrivals equal one unexcused absence.** If you are absent or tardy for a class you are responsible for the material and information covered in the class that day.

You should also be aware that if an assignment is due and the entire class is unprepared the instructor has the right to cancel the class session that day and give each student an unexcused absence.

## ***SUMMER ATTENDANCE***

**Attendance in the Summer:** The Theatre Department upholds a strict punctuality and attendance policy. You are permitted **one excused** absence during the semester. **Two absences** will result in failing the class. See attendance policy above for more detail about excused absences, punctuality and conduct.

## ***GRADING POLICY***

You must pass all your theatre courses with a “C” or better in order for them to count towards graduation. (“D” is not acceptable.) Anything below a “C” is considered a failing grade, meaning you will have to retake the course. FIU does have a “Forgiveness Policy” whereby you may repeat a course, file a **“Forgiveness Policy”** form with the new grade and get the failed grade off your. Refer to the university policy for more information ([https://onestop.fiu.edu/forms/Forgiveness\\_Policy\\_Form.pdf](https://onestop.fiu.edu/forms/Forgiveness_Policy_Form.pdf))

Not doing well in your theatre classes can also affect your financial situation if you are on scholarship, since all scholarship students must pass their theatre classes with a “B” or better to maintain their scholarship. Please refer to the Probation Policy in this Handbook for more information on how grades can affect your standing in the Department.

If you are planning on attending graduate school you should also be aware that most graduate programs require a “B” GPA or better for admission.

**Grade Appeals:** All concerns about current class grades should be addressed with individual instructors before final grades are submitted. Once submitted, end-of-semester grades (except Incompletes and NR's, which default to F at the end of two consecutive terms) are final. They are subject to change only through a Change of Grade Form to correct an error in computation or transcribing, or where part of the student's work has been unintentionally overlooked". If a student wishes to appeal their grade, the student should follow the procedures outlined below under Grievance Procedures. If a dispute still remains after all grievance procedures have been exhausted, a student can contact the Office of the University Ombudsman ([http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/?page\\_id=587](http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/?page_id=587)). If the appeal process is successful and the student's grade is changed to a grade of C or higher, then the student will be allowed to advance to the next class. Otherwise the student must repeat the class in order to have their grade changed. Students may exercise the University's Forgiveness Policy as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalogue and the FIU Student Handbook to erase the original failing grade if they wish to do so. The online Forgiveness Policy form can be found here:

([https://onestop.fiu.edu/forms/Forgiveness\\_Policy\\_Form.pdf](https://onestop.fiu.edu/forms/Forgiveness_Policy_Form.pdf))

**Incomplete grades:** An incomplete grade (IN) is a temporary symbol given at the discretion of the instructor for work not completed due to serious interruption, not caused by the student's own negligence. Students receiving an incomplete grade must complete the appropriate coursework within two semesters (including summer). If coursework is not completed in this time frame, the incomplete grade (IN) will automatically default to a failing grade (F). Students should not re-enroll in the same course to make up the incomplete grade. To change an incomplete grade, the student is responsible for contacting the course instructor directly to have the appropriate documentation submitted on time.

If a student receives an incomplete grade and has applied for graduation, they must complete the grade prior to the conferral of the degree. If not, the student's graduation

application will be denied and they will need to apply for graduation for the following term.

## ***ACADEMIC COMPLAINTS***

If you have a complaint about a course or production experience, the first step is to discuss your concerns with the directly involved faculty member. All faculty and staff are open to discuss your concerns (i.e. grades). If you take this initial step and you feel the problem still exists, talk to your area head (design or performance) for more assistance. All conversations are confidential and nothing you say will be reported to anyone else without your permission. If your mentor or area head cannot solve the problem, They will refer you to the Department Chair for more help. If the complaint or concern is still not resolved, you will be referred to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs of the College of Communication, Architecture and the Arts.

## ***SCHOLARSHIPS***

A limited number of scholarships are available for theatre majors. The funding for these scholarships comes from the University Scholarship Fund, Dade County Fair Organization and other donors. The amounts of money vary. The actual number and amount of scholarships depend on the funds available. Please remember that these are scholarships, not financial aid stipends.

In order to be considered for a scholarship a student must be a fully admitted and officially declared a theatre major. A student must have received a B or better in all theatre classes for the last semester and must have participated satisfactorily in a performance or production within the last two semesters. Scholarship recipients should be exemplary, both academically and in production participation, and have a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Students need to be fully enrolled with a credit load of a minimum of 12 credits. In some rare cases, seniors in their last semester may be considered for a scholarship even if they are only taking a half load of 6 credits. This would be an exception, not the rule.

Scholarships do not automatically renew from term to term. Students who want to be considered for scholarships must reapply each semester.

Notification via e-mail sent to the students will state the amount of award as well as the term awarded. Scholarships are awarded for the fall/spring semesters. No scholarships are awarded for the summer term. The system will open twice a year for you to apply for a scholarship November and March you will be notified when it is time to apply by e-mail .

The scholarship site for applying is [fu.academicworks.com](http://fu.academicworks.com)

## ***MAINTAINING ACADEMIC STANDARDS***

As a theatre student you will always have the problem of balancing the time demands of your classes along with productions. Both are important. The best theatre education comes from being as busy as you can manage. The key to being a successful theatre student is efficient personal time management. You must keep up with your class assignments. Avoid the tendency to put off doing work, because you will be caught with due dates approaching and insufficient time to catch up. Plan ahead to allow for the heavy time demands created by opening nights. Begin the major term projects early to avoid the end-of-term and show-opening crunches.

Using your time efficiently may mean that you have to sacrifice some of your social and recreational time, but the rewards you gain – a better education and less stress – are well worth it. Students who have jobs must plan to work fewer hours.

It is ultimately your responsibility to determine how much of a class and production load you can manage. While there are certain restrictions in terms of minimum course loads and production participation requirements, don't over-commit to the point where you end up doing nothing well.

## ***PRODUCTION PROGRAM***

FIU Theatre is the producing side of the theatre program. The department produces shows in three different performance spaces; the Wertheim Main Stage, the Black Box Theatre and the Studio Theatre in DM 150. The main theatre contains a proscenium stage, fly loft, orchestra pit and a 218 seat auditorium. The Black Box theatre is a flexible staging space with a 150 seat capacity. Both spaces are supported by dressing rooms, a student lounge, a library, excellent lighting and sound capacities and scenery and costume shops. The department also produces plays in the Studio Theatre DM 150. This space is primarily used for student-directed shows, senior projects and class-related productions.

FIU Theatre announces the shows for the upcoming season in the spring. The department produces four main, faculty/guest directed shows. Auditions are held late in the spring term for fall semester productions and in late November for spring semester shows. BFA performance students are required to audition for all productions in the main season. All performance majors must accept the role for which they have been cast. If, for compelling reasons, you cannot accept a role in a given semester, you must discuss this with both the director and Chair of the department before or at the time of the audition. Work schedules outside of the department do not constitute compelling reasons.

Students cast in a production must acquire appropriate rehearsal clothing items. Men: You must bring hard sole dress shoes and suit jacket. Women: Character shoes and long dress. All students cast in a production must also have or purchase a makeup kit.

Theatre is a very demanding undergraduate major because it requires the student to juggle academic courses and a busy production schedule. We understand that the cost of higher education has become extremely high and many college students may have to work. However, theatre classes, lab hour's crew calls and rehearsals for our program run on a set time table that we cannot change, for each individual student's work schedule.

If you have to work you must work your schedule around our schedule in order to be successful theatre major. Make sure that you arrange your hours with your employer accordingly and give them a lot of notice when you are needed for crew calls and rehearsals, etc.

Our major productions serve several purposes. First, we regard them as the primary training laboratory for our students. We prepare the productions using standards and procedures as close to a professional level as possible. Rehearsals are planned and run in an organized, disciplined manner. Actors are required to adhere to attendance and preparation policies, and to put forth their best effort in both rehearsal and performance situations. The sets, props, costumes, lights and sound are of professional standards in design and execution and operation. Active participation in these productions is essential preparation for advanced academic or professional work.

The productions also provide live theatre experiences to the FIU and Miami communities. Our productions are one of the important contacts the community has with FIU. Therefore, it is important that we present the best theatre possible with our resources.

## ***CASTING POLICY***

All students registered in Acting III through VIII are required to audition and accept roles in our theatre productions. Only students who have passed Acting II will be eligible for casting. Due to the high skill level required for musical theatre productions we reserve the right to cast outside the department when necessary. Any student placed on probation will not be eligible for casting in any production taking place in the following semester. However, the student placed on probation is still expected to audition as part of his/her training obligations.

Students who do not audition face the following consequences:

- 1) Loss of scholarship
- 2) Probation
- 3) Removal from the BFA program

## ***PRODUCTION WORK ASSIGNMENTS***

All theatre majors are required to do production work on major productions. All students involved must initial after their name on the assignment sheet to acknowledge the acceptance of their specific responsibility and/ or assignment. It is important to check the callboards everyday as notices are posted with great frequency during the production process.

The faculty and staff regard these assignments as being very important. We evaluate each student's performance of his/her production participation at the end of each semester. Failing to fulfill production assignments directly affects eligibility toward scholarships, future faculty recommendations and end of the year evaluations.

### **Production Assignment Policy:**



1. Freshmen will get one production assignment each semester of their freshmen year. This assignment will be part of the required work for Stagecraft and Costume Technology. These assignments will be posted on the Call Board and will be announced in the Stagecraft and Costume Technology classes.
2. In addition to Stagecraft and Costume Technology classes, each major is required to complete four (4) semesters of Tech Labs (1 credit each), and two (2) semesters of Production Participation (1 credit each), for a total of six (6) production work credits. BFA Design students are not required to complete the two semesters of production participation. The difference between the Tech Labs and Production Participation is that the Tech Labs take place during specifically scheduled hours that show up on the class schedule, and the Production Participation hours are not scheduled in the computer. Production Participation hours are arranged with the appropriate supervisor, depending on the nature of each production assignment.
3. The criteria which determine the course grade is the same for both the Tech Labs and the Production Participation courses. They are as follows:

To be assigned any grade at all the student must have completed their Assigned crew work. The actual grade will be determined by these factors:

- a. Attendance
  - b. Preparedness (coming in proper attire and with the proper Equipment)
  - c. Ability to follow instructions
  - d. Ability to work and function as a team
  - e. Preparedness to take on additional work
  - f. Demonstration of a positive attitude
  - g. Adherence to all safety regulations and procedures
4. The attendance policy for all Tech Labs and Production Participation students is the same as for all theatre classes. Please refer back to the Department Attendance Policy section of this handbook as a reminder of the policy.
  5. In addition to this department policy, the following policy regarding tardiness is in place for the Tech Labs and Production Participation, as well as all crew assignments: If a student is .01 to 10 minutes late, she/he is required to make up an extra half hour of lab time or crew call time. If a student is 10.01 to 15 minutes late, he/she is required to make up 1 hour extra of lab time or crew call time. If a student is 15+ minutes late, he/she loses the whole lab session or crew call that day, and it will count as an unexcused absence.

## ***PROBATION POLICY***

Theatre students who do not follow proper policy and procedures and demonstrate unsatisfactory work in class and production face the possibility of probation. All students

who are placed on probation will be required to meet with the Department of Theatre Disciplinary Committee. **A student may be placed on probation two times. After the third offense the student will be removed from the theatre program.**

The following conditions constitute probation:

- 1: If the student receives a D or lower in a theater class  
(In this case the course must be repeated)
- 2: Student fails or drops a course they have previously received a D or lower.
- 3: Unsatisfactory jury or portfolio review
- 4: Incomplete Production Participation/Lab assignment(s)
- 5: Misconduct that is documented by faculty and staff,  
Departmental handbook or the Disciplinary Committee (i.e. plagiarism)
- 6: Violation of contractual obligation to the department. (i.e. contracts, missing crew/rehearsals calls, strike, production participation contract, scholarship obligations, safety violations etc.)
- 7: Pulling pranks during a performance. (i.e. changing hand props or lines)

Consequences of probation: (include but are not limited to)

First Offense:

- 1: Loss of scholarship with the department.
- 2: Possible postponement of graduation.
- 3: Ineligibility for casting or design assignments in the Fall/Spring season productions (summer terms A & B are not counted as regular academic semesters.)
- 4: Requirement to make up the Production Participation assignments in the following semester.
- 5: No additional projects (i.e. APO performances, student productions, outside theatre work, KCACTF, etc.)
- 6: Meeting with the Department of Theatre Disciplinary Committee
- 7: Removal from cast/design assignments for current theatre productions.

Second Offense:

- 1: Any and all of the repercussions listed above.
- 2: Meeting with the Department of Theatre Disciplinary Committee
- 3: Possible removal from the program.

Third Offense:

1. Removal from the program.

Please note: If you are on probation you will not be eligible to attend the Kennedy Center American Theatre College Festival (KCACTF) or receive any financial assistance to attend any regional or national theatre conference.

## ***STUDENT/FACULTY STUDIO PRODUCTIONS***

While the Department's principal focus is on the regular season's productions, we do encourage studio productions, produced and directed by either students or faculty, as well. Anyone interested in finding out how to go about doing such productions, please contact Associate Professor Michael Yawney and Technical Director Chris Goslin. You will be provided with an information sheet and an application form. Some Department facilities and limited equipment are available for approved productions.

## ***STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT PRODUCTIONS***

All theatre majors are required to attend FIU Theatre main season productions.

Students on the production's creative and production teams (actors, designers, stage managers, board ops, run crews, and front of house) are entitled to receive two (2) complimentary tickets to ONE performance of that production. Those tickets can be used by any guest the student invites. Tickets are subject to availability and must be reserved at least 24 hours in advance through our Events Manager, Judy Litt, by visiting the theatre box office.

Theatre majors who are not on the production's creative and productions teams are entitled to receive one (1) complimentary ticket to ONE performance of that production. Student must be enrolled and in good standing during that semester. Tickets can only be used by the theatre major and are not transferable. Tickets are subject to availability and must be reserved 24 hours in advance. You can make your reservation with our Events Manager, Judy Litt, by visiting the theatre box office or you may reserve your ticket online by using the coupon code SHOBIZ at checkout. Student must use their name to reserve the ticket and cannot give the coupon to anyone not enrolled in the theatre department. Any non-theatre majors who use the code will be asked to pay full price at the door and their complimentary ticket will be revoked. You may be asked to show your FIU ID at the door.

Most performances begin at 8pm (Sundays are at 2pm). You are expected to arrive 10 MINUTES BEFORE the start time so you are in your seat by the time the play begins. If you do not arrive 10 minutes before the start time, your complimentary tickets may be released to any patrons on the waiting list. Late seating is not guaranteed as it disrupts the performance and is disrespectful to your fellow theatre majors.

While students are not required to attend senior project performances or other studio type productions, we strongly encourage all theatre majors to do so. Not only will you be supporting your fellow theatre majors, you will be seeing live theatre, which will enhance your theatre education.

Tickets for professional productions are often offered to the department for free or at special group rates. We announce such offers in classes, e-mails, and notices posted

around the department. Since these offers usually come to us on short notice, you should make a practice of checking your emails and department boards. Local professional theatre companies such as GableStage, Miami New Drama, and Actor's Playhouse also offer student ticket prices to all of their performances. You can also get \$5 tickets to many shows and other cultural events at CultureShock ([www.cultureshockmiami.com](http://www.cultureshockmiami.com)). Take advantage of these ticket offers whenever you can. Seeing professional theatre is an important part of your development as theatre artists. It is also never too early to start getting connected with professional theatre artists who may be your employers or colleagues in the future.

## ***CARE OF THE FACILITIES***

EVERYONE is responsible for keeping our spaces in the Wertheim Performing Arts Center clean and orderly. No food or liquids (except water) are allowed in the performance spaces. Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building or on campus. Make sure to properly dispose of leftover food items. Make an extra effort to keep the spaces clean. Do not leave trash and empty water bottles lying around. Do not mark up the walls. **This building and all our spaces are to be treated with pride and respect for those who are fortunate enough to work and study here.**

Our studio theatre in the DM building and the black box theatre in WPAC are the most heavily used for our teaching/performing spaces. These spaces need constant maintenance. It is your responsibility to keep them clean and free of clutter.

Please do not assume you can just walk in and use any space that looks empty. If you want to use the studio, black box or main stage or any of our spaces for rehearsals or meetings you must reserve the space through the Technical Director. The Room Reservation form can be found in the mail-room mailbox titled "Room Reservation Form". The Technical Director will give you a list of all the specific rules for using these spaces. Failure to obey these rules will result in your not being allowed to reserve any of these spaces for rehearsal in the future.

The faculty reserve the right to close any space in WPAC without any prior notice.

## ***EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE***

Faculty, staff and students may not remove any equipment or furniture from one space to another without prior permission of the Chairperson and the Technical Director. For example, plastic blocks and furniture cannot be moved from WPAC 120 to DM 150. Please place items used for class (i.e. black boxes and mats) in designated areas.

## ***SELECTION AND REJECTION***

Theatre functions by selection: casting choices have to be made; production jobs assigned; designers selected. Some people are not chosen. This is as it should be. Simply deciding to major in theatre and taking classes will not make you a theatre professional. At each step up the ladder the numbers are reduced: from high school to community college or lower division university; from there to upper division work; to graduate training and finally to professional work. As a theatre student you must be able to face rejection. Failure to be cast in a play does not mean that you have no future in the theatre. The director will, if asked, give you a personal evaluation of your audition and reasons for the casting choices. In the meantime, use your opportunities. Take a small role, if offered, and make the most of it. Make the most of your class projects in scene study and performance exercises. Get involved with student productions and prepare well for the next audition. Whether in class or in a production work hard and maintain a positive attitude.

If you are continually turned down and not encouraged by your instructors you might want to reconsider your career options. Your place in theatre may be better suited as a devoted amateur. But make this decision only after you have worked as hard as you are able and have done your very best.

## ***LIFE AFTER FIU***

A Bachelor's degree from FIU is not a passport to instant success in theatre. In most cases, further training is necessary. For actors this usually means enrolling in a graduate or professional program. The good ones are highly selective, with entrance by auditions that are usually held in the winter. It is absolutely essential to have a well-selected, immaculately prepared audition and a good grade point average to be admitted into any of the quality programs.

In the design fields, graduate work in an M.F.A. program is usually necessary. A good portfolio is essential for admission. Your advisor will help you to prepare. It is sometimes possible to secure jobs in the technical and business fields with an undergraduate degree if you have extensive experience and strong recommendations. Here, too, further training is preferred.

## ***THEATRE MINOR***

The Department also offers a minor in Theatre, which complements a number of majors in the university, including elementary education, hospitality, psychology, political science etc.

The minor in theatre is a 15 credit minor. The following courses are required: as is true of the theatre majors, theatre minors must earn a grade of “C” or higher in all required courses to earn the theatre minor degree.

<u>COURSE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CREDIT</u>
THE 2000	Theatre Appreciation	3
TPA 2210	Stagecraft I	3
OR		
TPA 2220	Stage Lighting I	3
OR		
TPA 2332	Costume Technology	3
OR		
TPA 2010	Introduction to Design	3
TPP 2100	Intro to Acting	3
Also Theatre Electives for 6 credits		6
Total credits for minor		15

If you are interested in minoring in theatre instead of majoring, please see a Department Advisor for details.

## ***OUTSIDE WORK***

We expect our students to be fully committed to our training and productions during the regular academic year. Students may engage in outside creative work in the theater only with the approval of the FIU Theatre Department. For approval students must submit a request form to the Head of Performance or Head of Design. The form can be found at the end of this document. The faculty of the specific discipline will consult with and make a recommendation to the Department Chair, who will have final approval. We prefer our students to seek out professional theatre/film opportunities in the summer. Please consult with the faculty and visit the information board in the hallway to find out about possible summer opportunities.

The outside project must have a clearly defined schedule with a definite end date.

Please note that, no student will be released from their production assignment for outside creative work.

## ***UNIVERSITY EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION***

During any emergency, information about FIU operations is available on the FIU home page at [news.fiu.edu](http://news.fiu.edu), as well as text messages sent to the university community. Updated information on university operations is also available to employees, students and their families by calling 305-348-4357. If you have a true emergency and need to contact FIU police call 305-348-5911.

## ***AND FINALLY.....***

After all these weighty matters, remember that theatre should be enjoyable! That's why we all do it. Enjoy your work here. Get to know everyone, faculty and staff included. Enjoy each other's company – you might as well because you will be spending a lot of time together. Remember, everyone here has the same goal – to study, to train and to produce good theatre. Help each other and you help yourself!