

# Master of Fine Arts in Theatre

## DROWSY CHAPERONE



The Western Illinois University Department of Theatre and Dance offers a program of graduate study leading to a Master of Fine Arts degree in the following areas of concentration: acting, directing and design (costume, lighting and scenic). The MFA is a 62-semester-hour program that takes three years to complete. A professionally-oriented, terminal degree, the MFA program is designed to be a transition between collegiate training and the professional theatre and related careers. The program integrates the theoretical with the practical by combining technical preparation and intellectual endeavor with intensive application in designing, directing and performing in theatre productions during the academic year.

## Admission Requirements

Admission into the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program is by audition/interview and/or portfolio review. Western Illinois University recruits in Chicago, at USITT, SETC, LINK and on campus. Individual auditions can be arranged. For information about the program and assistantships, contact the Theatre and Dance department office. Applications for admission into the WIU School of Graduate Studies should be sent a full semester before entering. The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is not required. Degree-seeking students qualify for admission if they have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.75 for all hours of undergraduate work attempted, or a 3.0 or higher GPA for their last two years of undergraduate work. Students not meeting these requirements can be admitted on probationary status but must attain at least a "B" average during their first six semester hours (sh) of graduate-level work; probationary students are not eligible to receive assistantships during this time. For more information about graduate school and applications for admission, contact the WIU graduate office, (309) 298-1806, or visit the website at [wiu.edu/grad](http://wiu.edu/grad).

## Degree Requirements

A minimum of 62 sh are required for the MFA. Specific programs of study will be designed for each individual based on previous experience and expertise. All students must successfully complete selected required courses in their area of emphasis. Depending upon that expertise and knowledge, students may be required to take additional coursework, or demonstrated competencies may substitute for some courses.

Each year, the department presents five mainstage productions, 8-10 studio productions and two dance concerts. Graduate students in acting may perform in mainstage and studio productions. Design students receive major design assignments for mainstage and studio productions.

## Graduate Faculty and Staff

- Carolyn Blackinton, MFA, Florida State University
- William T. Clow, MFA, Illinois State University and dean, College of Fine Arts and Communication (WIU)
- Jason Conner, MFA, Western Illinois University
- Lysa Fox, MFA, California Stage Long Beach
- Jeannie Galioto, MFA, San Diego State University
- Steven House, MFA, Illinois State University
- Hadley Kamminga-Peck, Ph.D., University of Colorado—Boulder
- Tammy Killian, MFA, Florida Atlantic University
- Bill Kincaid, MFA, Southern Illinois University
- DC Wright, MFA, Boston University
- Josh Wroblewski, MFA, University of Nevada at Las Vegas

## Assistantship Opportunities

Financial assistance is available from the department in the form of tuition waivers and assistantships. A stipend and a full waiver of tuition are awarded with a graduate assistantship. Tuition waivers are also offered for the summer session. Graduate assistantships are available for students in acting, directing, and in each of the design areas. Duties are related to the student's area of concentration, which must be declared at the time of application. MFA students may serve the department as teaching assistants in Introduction to Theatre, Analysis and some introductory

**Program Location:**  
Macomb

## Contact Information

**Questions about the program:**  
Department of Theatre and Dance  
(309) 298-1543  
[theatre@wiu.edu](mailto:theatre@wiu.edu)  
[wiu.edu/theatre](http://wiu.edu/theatre)

**General admission questions:**  
School of Graduate Studies  
(309) 298-1806 or (877) WIU GRAD  
[Grad-Office@wiu.edu](mailto:Grad-Office@wiu.edu)  
[wiu.edu/grad](http://wiu.edu/grad)



WIU Theatre and Dance



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**Western Illinois  
University**

performance courses, and as publicity assistants. Design majors do technical work and design for the production programs.

*Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability and veteran status.*

## Distinctive Features

- The graduate curriculum requirements offer both depth and breadth in areas of specialty and additional opportunities for electives in theatre and the arts.
- Students receive intensive application in the dynamic production program and are mentored on auditions and portfolio preparation.
- There is a strong stage combat program at Western. Students can take numerous courses in combat and earn certification in armed and unarmed combat. WIU has one of the best theatre armories in the country.
- The department has gained national recognition for its students' performances and presentations at the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival and the American College Dance Festival.
- The department is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).
- BYOP, or Bring Your Own Play, is the University's 10-minute playwriting festival. Numerous BYOP playwrights have gone on to win national awards and their own international productions.



## MARCH TALE



## Facilities

- *Hainline Theatre* – The theatre seats 387 people, has a full fly system and ETC lighting control. It also contains complete monitor, closed circuit television, headset and digital sound systems. Mainstage theatre productions and dance concerts are presented in Hainline Theatre.
- *Horrabin Theatre* – A thrust stage, which can be viewed by 167 people, provides a place for mainstage theatre productions each year.
- *Simpkins Theatre* – This space is used for studio theatre productions; staging is flexible and creates an intimate space.
- *Brophy Dance Studio* – Dance classes, rehearsals for dance concerts and informal dance presentations are held in the Brophy Hall Dance Studio.

## Alumni of the MFA in Theatre at Western

Former Western students have appeared in Broadway and Off-Broadway productions, major motion pictures, television series, commercials, outdoor dramas and regional theatre; have designed sets for local, regional and network television shows; and have worked as technical directors, designers, dressers, technicians and stage managers around the world. Our alumni have worked at Paramount Pictures; Walt Disney Productions; the Goodman and Steppenwolf theatres in Chicago; the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis; the Folger Theatre in the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC; the Public Theater in New York; the Alabama, Wisconsin and Georgia Shakespeare festivals; Spielberg Productions; and NBC, Nickelodeon, CBS, Showtime, HBO, PBS, WGN and ABC television networks.



*“One of the best choices I ever made was going to WIU. The Department of Theatre and Dance had a perfect blend of academia and performance opportunities in the program to prepare me for success as a working actress. I knew the department faculty/staff personally; I had personal relationships with them all and knew they had my best interest at heart. I am and always will be proud to be a Leatherneck!”*

*– Melody Betts, MFA Acting 2009,  
WAITRESS on Broadway and National Tour*