THEATER AND DANCE

Chair, Associate Professor Annie Kloppenberg
Associate Professors Annie Kloppenberg and James Thurston; Visiting Assistant Professor Thomas Oldham; Technical Director John Ervin; Production Manager Marjorie Gallant; Teaching Artists Joanna Patterson and Lori Weinblatt

The Department of Theater and Dance offers students a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the history, literature, and production of performance. Our mission is to impart liberal arts values by fostering creative expression, stimulating critical and imaginative thinking, and increasing cultural literacy through study in a spectrum of studio, laboratory, and discussion-centered courses. The program of study is made up of frequent opportunities for practical experience in theater and dance, including creative research and production opportunities and service learning projects. Undergraduate students in theater and dance also enjoy opportunities to increase their abilities in self-reflection, multicultural sensitivity, and the comparison of social values and ethical systems; in short, they learn how to be productive citizens and professional leaders through their scholarly and applied experiences. The department also seeks to entertain and to educate the larger community through its rigorous production schedule of plays, dance concerts, touring artists, and residency workshops with guest artists.

Consistent with the College’s mission, the major in theater and dance is a liberal arts, not a pre-professional, major. It is, however, a major that will prepare particularly interested and talented students for graduate study and further involvement in the performing arts. It is both a structured and sequential major, ensuring that all students have broad exposure and training in acting, directing, movement, design, technical production, performance history, and theory in addition to the opportunity to focus on a specialized track during the junior and senior years.

Requirements for the Major in Theater and Dance

A nine-course* (36-credit) major with the addition of three faculty-led production experiences, one each in the areas of performance and stage management, and an additional experience determined in consultation with the major advisor.

*All courses below are four credits unless otherwise noted.

**Fulfills core or focus curriculum but not both.

Core Curriculum (20 credits, with four credits in each of the following five areas):
(1) Dancing or Acting: 115, 116, 117, 118 (all two credits); or 171**
(2) Design or Stagecraft: 135, 139
(3) Directing or Choreography: 258**, 281**, 285**
(4) Performance History I: 224
(5) Performance History II: 226

Focus Curriculum (eight credits in one of the following areas):
- Dancing/Choreography: 258**, 262, 285**, 355, 361
- Design/Stagecraft: 235, 239, 265, 339, 365
- Scripting: 141, 241
- History/Literature/Theory: 261, 361, English 271

Self-designed (must be chosen in consultation with the student’s theater and dance advisor)

Elective (four credits)
- Must be chosen in consultation with the major’s theater and dance advisor
- Preferably at the 200 or 300 level
- Can be taken in another department with prior approval

Senior Capstone (four credits)
Theater and Dance 493, must be taken in the spring semester of the senior year

Requirements for the Major in Theater and Dance–Interdisciplinary Computation

The theater and dance-interdisciplinary computation major focuses on the growing relationship between computation and performance scenography and the multiple applications of software technologies to stage design. It offers a sequenced, stage design-based curriculum while also providing students with exposure to the theory and practice of dance, acting, choreography, and directing. Students should begin by taking Theater and Dance 113 or 114, and Computer Science 151 in their first year, then Theater and Dance 135 and Computer Science 231 (fall) and 251 (spring) in their second year. The remaining requirements may be taken in any other semester in consultation with the major advisors in theater and dance and computer science.

Required Courses in Theater and Dance
Theater and Dance 113 or 114; 135; 171 or two courses chosen from 115, 116, and 117; 281 or 285; 235 or 365

**Required Courses in Computer Science**
Computer Science 151, 231, 251, 351, and 369 or 451

**Senior Capstone** (four credits)
Designed in consultation with major advisors in both departments

**Requirements for the Minor in Theater and Dance**
A six-course* (24-credit) minor with the addition of two faculty-led production experiences in the areas of performance, stage management, or design/technical production.

*All courses below are four credits unless otherwise noted.

**Fulfills core or focus curriculum but not both.

**Core Curriculum** (16 credits, with four credits in each of the following four areas):

- Dancing or Acting: 115, 116, 117, 118 (all two credits); or 171**
- Design or Stagecraft: 135, 139
- Directing or Choreography: 258**, 281**, 285**
- Performance History: 224, 226

**Focus Curriculum** (four credits):

- Acting/Directing: 171**, 261, 271, 281, 361
- Dancing/Choreography: 258**, 262, 285**, 355, 361
- Design/Stagecraft: 235, 239, 265, 339, 365
- Scripting: 141, 241
- History/Literature/Theory: 261, 361, English 271

**Elective** (four credits):

- Must be chosen in consultation with the minor advisor
- Preferably at the 200 or 300 level
- Can be taken in another department with prior approval

**Honors in Theater and Dance**

Theater and dance majors with a minimum cumulative grade point average in the major of 3.5 and an overall GPA of 3.25 at the end of the January term of the junior year and with unanimous approval of the department faculty are eligible to apply for the honors thesis. Honors projects signify a serious engagement with independent research, and interested students should plan to devote a large segment of their academic time to the project during their senior year. Interested students should contact a faculty sponsor during the spring semester of the junior year to discuss a project and secure that faculty member’s sponsorship. Students must then petition the department for permission to undertake honors work by March 1. With unanimous approval from the department, students can register for Theater and Dance 483. Students wishing to change their honors project must petition the department for approval. Honors research projects will be a total of six to eight credits and will be conducted during the student's last two semesters (one of which may be Jan Plan). Successful completion of the honors thesis will include an approved thesis and an oral presentation at the Colby Liberal Arts Symposium as well as the completion of the required course work for the major. The students fulfilling these requirements and receiving at least an A- for the honors thesis will graduate with “Honors in Theater and Dance.” In cases where requirements have not been fulfilled at the end of either semester, Theater and Dance 483 and 484 (Honors Thesis) will revert to graded Theater and Dance 491 and 492 (Independent Study). For specifics on the procedures and expectations for Honors in Theater and Dance (depending on the proposed area of study, e.g. dramatic literature, acting, dance, design, history, technical direction, or sound), please consult faculty in the Department of Theater and Dance.

The point scale for retention of the major applies to all courses offered toward the major. No requirement for the major or minor may be taken satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

**Course Offerings**

**[TD013] Introduction to the Alexander Technique** The Alexander Technique is an educational method that focuses on teaching individuals efficient, coordinated use of their bodies in everyday activities. Whether standing, sitting, bending, or lifting, students learn to accomplish activities from a place of balance and support. Enhances performance in music, dance, theater, and sports as it minimizes effort, tension, and fatigue. Simple principles realign the body for maximum health and function, thereby reducing stress and injury and improving mental acuity and physical appearance. Noncredit.

**[TD113] The Dramatic Experience** In the digital age, why do people continue to create live performance? What makes the dramatic
experience unique? This introductory course surveys the field of contemporary theatrical production and offers students the chance to experiment with acting, directing, playwriting and/or design projects. By watching a range of live performance works and surveying the history, literature and visual recordings of dramatic performance traditions, students learn to analyze aesthetic and cultural contexts and to discuss and write confidently about their experiences as audience members. Concludes with the creation of an original piece of theatrical performance or design. **Four credit hours.**  

**[TD114] The Dance Experience** A broad introduction to the field of contemporary dance including opportunities to experiment with studio practices (dance techniques and creative choreographic exercises) and to study and analyze the form's history and theory. No prior dance training necessary. Students with dance training are invited to enroll, understanding that technique will be taught at an introductory level but incorporating valuable exercises in contextualizing and discussing dance. At the end students will be able to demonstrate the fundamentals of contemporary dance movement, communicate (in verbal and written form) aesthetic ideas, and meaningfully engage in the creative research process. **Four credit hours.**  

**TD115Af** Theater Technique Lab: British Dialect Scene Study Focusing on material from George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde, students explore scenes through basic acting techniques and learn the mechanics of standard British and Cockney stage dialects. Includes an introduction to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and its use as a tool for learning key vowel and consonant substitutions. Culminates in a workshop performance of selected scenes. Students will develop strong articulation and enhanced listening skills, learn various techniques for effectively producing and sustaining a stage dialect, and explore the practical application of dialect through rehearsal and performance of classic stage literature. **Two credit hours.**  

**TD115Bs** Theater Technique Lab: An Actor Prepares Students will learn practical skills and strategies for understanding and engaging in "actor homework." We will explore the actor's preparation for a production cycle beginning with auditioning, continuing through rehearsal and into performance. Using tools such as deep text analysis, physical and vocal exploration of character, and identifying and experimenting with active choices, students will gain confidence in their abilities to bring their own creative ideas to the artistic process and to become true collaborators with directors and fellow actors. Culminates in a showcase of monologues and scenes from contemporary dramatic literature. May be taken a total of four times for credit. **Two credit hours.**  

**[TD116A] Ballet Forms Technique Lab: Beginning** Beginning-level ballet, focused on developing the functional anatomy of the moving body through classical ballet vocabulary. Students are introduced to the basic vocabulary of the form and encouraged to experiment with groundedness and lightness, balance and stasis, support and tension, force and energy. Students will demonstrate increased flexibility, strength, coordination, and body connectivity. May be taken a total of four times for credit. **Two credit hours.**  

**TD116Bs** Ballet Forms Technique Lab: Intermediate An exploration of the principles of ballet including, but not limited to, technique, vocabulary, and history. Students will make the vital connection between theory and practice by demonstrating their knowledge of technique within the classroom and will recognize the benefits of risk-taking through theory, performance, and evaluation. They will understand the cultural history of ballet through independent practice and research, as well as synergetic discussion. May be taken a total of four times for credit. **Two credit hours.**  

**TD117Af** Contemporary Dance Technique Lab: Beginning/Partnering An introductory contemporary/modern studio course geared toward students with little or no dance experience, but also open to those looking to deepen their practice or practice partnering. Explore contemporary dance movement from a variety of lenses with a special focus on the fundamentals of contemporary partnering—bearing and sharing weight, engaging and following momentum. Look at the athletics and aesthetics of the moving body, develop anatomical, sensory, and spatial awareness, execute increasingly complex movement sequences, and examine the metaphoric expressive potential of bodies in action. May be taken a total of four times for credit. **Two credit hours.**  

**TD117Bfs** Contemporary Dance Technique Lab: Intermediate/Ballet In this studio practicum, students with prior experience will develop greater facility with contemporary/modern dance choreography and a clearer understanding of anatomical structures at work. We will begin with a ballet barre, focusing on increasing efficiency of movement articulation at the joints and progressively warming up the body. The contemporary/modern center work will focus on complex movement patterns in a dynamic range of qualities, exploring how to apply the principles of ballet vocabulary practiced at the barre in choreography that takes the body off center, to the floor, and into the air. May be taken a total of four times for credit. **Two credit hours.**  

**TD118f** Dance Technique Lab: Dance Forms of the African Diaspora: Hip-hop In this studio-based course, students will learn movement techniques rooted in Afro-diasporic aesthetic and physical qualities including groundedness, curvilinearity, polyrhythm, syncopation, and polycentrism. Class is movement-centered, but also emphasizes understanding the historical and cultural contexts, introduces a cross-section of many movement styles under the umbrella term Hip-hop; fundamental pillars of Hip-hop; and both "mainstream" and countercultural level aspects of Hip-hop dance and culture. This course is open to all levels. No previous dance experience required, but those with dance experience are welcome. **Two credit hours.**  

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TD135s Introduction to Design  An introduction to the principles of visual design and their role in the dramatic event. Particular emphasis is placed on bringing the imagined world of the playwright and choreographer to life through the use of space, light, and clothing. Historical and contemporary texts are explored through lectures, critical research, discussions, and projects. Students learn to use their unique creative potential to research and define a design concept, express this concept orally and in writing, and present the concept visually using sketching, rendering, computer visualization, and scenic modeling. Four credit hours. A. THURSTON

TD139fs Stagecraft I  Introduces students to scenic construction, theatrical rigging, lighting production, and prop-making concepts, techniques, equipment, and materials, emphasizing problem solving through research, experimentation, and collaborative learning while considering the environment, economic choices, and safety. Students will learn to appreciate the performative aspects of stagecraft by participating in a behind-the-scenes role during the construction period, technical rehearsals, and performances of a faculty-directed, department production. Independent out-of-class work is essential. Previous experience is not necessary. Four credit hours. A. OLDHAM

TD144f Critical Race Feminisms and Tap Dance  Explores world performing traditions from c. 534 BCE to c. 1700 CE by examining the ways theater, dance, and other types of live performance arise out of and give expression to their surrounding cultures. Using multiple media (text, video, artifacts), students develop a familiarity with aesthetic and social values within specific eras and across time. Oral and written research projects (individual and group) further analytical and collaborative skills and develop cogent and expressive writing and speaking. Exposure to different cultures increases awareness of diversity and the capacity for self-reflection. Four credit hours. L. OLDHAM

[TD223] Critical Race Feminisms and Tap Dance  Listed as Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies 223. Three credit hours. A, U.

TD224f Performance History I  Explores world performing traditions from c. 534 BCE to c. 1700 CE by examining the ways theater, dance, and other types of live performance arise out of and give expression to their surrounding cultures. Using multiple media (text, video, artifacts), students develop a familiarity with aesthetic and social values within specific eras and across time. Oral and written research projects (individual and group) further analytical and collaborative skills and develop cogent and expressive writing and speaking. Exposure to different cultures increases awareness of diversity and the capacity for self-reflection. Four credit hours. L. OLDHAM

TD225s Performance History II  Explores world performing traditions from 1700 to the early 1970s by examining the ways theater, dance, and other types of live performance arise out of and give expression to their surrounding cultures. Using multiple media (text, video, artifacts), students develop a familiarity with aesthetic and social values within specific eras and across time. Oral and written research projects (individual and group) further analytical and collaborative skills and develop cogent and expressive writing and speaking. Exposure to different cultures increases awareness of diversity and the capacity for self-reflection. Four credit hours. L. OLDHAM
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**TD235 Intermediate Design: Interactive Performance**
A studio course concentrating on the exploration of viable design solutions for dramatic texts and choreographic ideas. Conceptual choices are informed by research and expressed through a variety of media including computer design, rendering, modeling, and technical drawings. Emphasis is placed on the necessary balance between theory and practice and centers on an integrated visual design philosophy including scenery, projection, costumes, and light. Students will learn to research for creative design potential, formulate complex design solutions, integrate a more sophisticated understanding of the principles of design using computation and digital media, and express final design ideas in an interactive performance staged in the Cellar Theater.

*Four credit hours.* L. OLDHAM

**TD239fs Stagecraft II**
Further exploration of scenic construction, theatrical rigging, lighting production, and prop-making concepts, techniques, equipment, and materials, emphasizing problem solving through research, experimentation, and collaborative learning while considering the environment, economic choices, and safety. An expansion of the course of study from Stagecraft I in which students will examine scene painting and computer-assisted woodworking. Independent out-of-class work is essential. *Prerequisite:* Theater and Dance 139. *Four credit hours.* ERVIN

**TD241 Playwriting Workshop: Solo Performance and Devised Theater**
Explores two potent resources for theatrical writing: the individual and the collective. Half of the course is devoted to solo performance, in which the life experience of the writer provides the basis for a unique form of storytelling. We will study representative one-person shows and performance art before putting it into practice ourselves. The other half investigates collaborative storytelling, in which the entire class contributes to the process. Taking as examples the work of renowned theater collectives and collaborative playwrights, we turn ideas generated by the group mind into a scripted performance.

*Four credit hours.* A.

**TD258 Improvisational Practices in Dance**
Approaches improvisation as a compositional, formal performance form and, metaphorically, as a means to open to the unknown, prepare to live in unpredictable environments, recognize options as they exist around us, imagine possible futures, and make clear choices. Students cultivate heightened awareness, develop a receptive, responsive bodymind—open, playful, daring, associative, resourceful, and able to craft choices based on instinct and design. Students remain in process and take risks nonjudgmentally, with courage putting those skills to the test in formal performances, carefully crafting each work as it emerges.

*Four credit hours.* A.

**TD261Jj Topics in Performance: Activist Storytelling Workshop**
Students will create original story-based performance pieces inspired by their own passion—issues such as the environment, race, poverty, reproductive justice, freedom of speech, LGBTQ+ rights, disability, diversity, access to education, etc. Students will explore a variety of writing and performance styles and techniques to engage in creative process and generate material. Culminates in a showcase presentation of solo and small group pieces at Colby and at a professional performance venue in Portland, which will require additional travel and rehearsal time the final week of Jan Plan. No previous writing or performance experience necessary. *Prerequisite:* Permission of the instructor. *Three credit hours.* A. WEINBLATT

**TD262s Topics in Dance: Collaborative Company**
Offers students the chance to learn and practice a range of dance production topics. Since content will vary, can be repeated once. Students will experience choreography as an unfolding process, creative research, and a collaborative endeavor. At the end, students will be able to demonstrate fundamentals of theatrical production, communicate aesthetic ideas, and collaborate with artistic team colleagues. *Prerequisite:* Permission of instructor. *Four credit hours.* ANSPAUGH

**TD264Af Applied Performance/Production: Set in the Living Room of a Small Town American Play**
Jaclyn Backhaus’ *Set in the Living Room of a Small Town American Play* is the story of a group of middle- and working-class suburbanites living in Illinois in 1947, all enmeshed in their own tragedies. The play is rooted in the American drama of the 1940s and 1950s, and it playfully explores that style, as well as the pursuit of the American dream. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. *Prerequisite:* Audition. *Two credit hours.* BERCOCIVI

**TD264Bf Applied Performance/Production: Fall Performance Projects**
Fall Performance Projects includes new works by four student choreographers and guest artist Joanna Patterson; highlights first year students in the first year theater and dance projects directed by senior majors Gabriella Foster and Kaylee Pomelow; and features a powerful solo by Visiting Assistant Professor Tsaiwom Akuchu. FPP highlights products of curricular creative research that emphasize experimentation, collaboration, and hybridity. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. *Prerequisite:* Audition. *Two credit hours.* KLOPPENBERG

**TD264Cs Applied Performance/Production: Spring Production**
Auditions held within the first week of classes in February. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. *Prerequisite:* Audition. *Two credit hours.* INSTRUCTOR
TD264Gs Applied Performance/Production: Performance Technology Incubator A student-driven performance incubator exploring the role of computation and digital media technology in live performance. This creative think-tank uses interdisciplinary collaborative process led by professionals in the field to develop an original work for the stage centered on the Humanities theme The Presence of the Past. Students participating as directors, composers, musicians, programmers, performers, stage managers, designers, and theater technicians may register for credit. Performs in Strider Theater March 7-9. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor. Two credit hours. THURSTON

[TD265] Topics in Design A chance to learn and practice a range of theater production topics. Content will change each semester and the course can be taken up to two times. Four credit hours. A.

TD268s Design Thinking Studio: Performative Sculpture Listed as Art 268. Four credit hours. A. BORTHWICK, THURSTON

TD271s Acting II A deep investigation of the actor's tools: body, voice, and imagination in the creation and interpretation of character. Through exploration of classic and contemporary theatrical texts, students will build their vocal, physical, and analytical skills and practice action-based techniques to discover authentic connection to text, creative collaborators, and audience. Through in-class and public performances of monologues and scenes students will develop an understanding of the benefits and consequences of creative and aesthetic risk. They will also hone their creative practice by observing each other's work and learning constructive models for offering feedback and self-reflection. May be taken a total of two times for credit. Prerequisite: Theater and Dance 171 or two different sections of 115, 258, or 261. Four credit hours. WEINBLATT

TD281s Directing Emphasizes the collaborative nature of theater. Allows students to explore a wide variety of performance styles. Practical matters such as casting, the design process, and working with actors will be discussed along with historical and contemporary roles of the director. Students will cast and direct scenes in class and present a final directing concept for a longer, more substantial piece of work. Equal parts studio and lecture, requires stringent attendance and preparatory/rehearsal time outside of class. Students will be able to demonstrate fundamentals of composition and blocking, communicate aesthetic ideas, and collaborate with artistic team colleagues. Four credit hours. WEINBLATT

[TD285] Choreographic Process This introduction to dance-making examines the creative process focusing on physical language, dynamics, and spatial arrangements as possibilities for constructing meaning. We look at movement vocabulary as something that is invented, created personally, crafted carefully in time, space, dynamic arrangement, and relationship to other bodies, always holding the potential for surprise from inside and out. We explore movement ideas, construct and deconstruct movement phrases, discuss readings, choreography, processes, class studies, and roadblocks. Students will begin to discover individual, choreographic points of view and will learn about a diverse set of contemporary choreographers and their work. Four credit hours. A.

TD293s Stagecraft III Further exploration of scenic construction, lighting production, and prop-making concepts, techniques, equipment, and materials. In addition to expanding their studies from Stagecraft II, students will examine welding and three-dimensional computer-assisted wood carving. Out-of-class work is essential. Prerequisite: Theater and Dance 239. Four credit hours. ERVIN

TD335f Applied Choreography Students with previous experience in contemporary choreography at the college level will create original works for formal performance through a rigorous creative process that includes feedback from faculty and peers, presentation of design concepts, and collaboration with student lighting designers. Course will address contemporary issues in dance including viewings of work by active, acclaimed, and emerging professional choreographers. Prerequisite: Theater and Dance 285, or 258 with permission of instructor. Four credit hours. KLOPPENBERG

[TD361] Directing II: Vision and Pedagogy In this advanced directing course, students will develop and hone aesthetic vision through a variety of different creative invitations. They will simultaneously explore the pedagogy of directing: the skills needed to identify and dismantle actor habits and hangups. Prerequisite: Theater and Dance 281 or 285. Four credit hours.

TD361J Advanced Topics in Performance: Presence/Past Directed by a collaborative team of guest artists rooted in visual art, theater, and dance, students will collaborate to create a multi-arts, immersive performance to be installed and performed on tour in Boston. Through both practiced and cutting edge methods, the process examines the tenuous state of communication in our technologically-mediated culture. Artists will examine the relationship between personal and collective histories translated through memory. Interested students studying abroad in either the fall or spring semesters should contact Professor Annie Kloppenberg. Prerequisite: Theater and Dance 164 or audition. Three credit hours. INSTRUCTOR

TD365f Advanced Topics in Design: Architectural Imaging An intensive study of the integrated use of computer-aided design (CAD). Centering on an architectural concept developed through research and contextual study, students utilize CAD to investigate and test design assumptions and to fully conceive multidimensional architectural expression. Students use their own creative potential to develop virtual
architectural models, allowing imagination, critical thinking, and an understanding of traditional and contemporary presentation techniques to define final design expression. Students must have access to a laptop for the semester. **Prerequisite:** Permission of the instructor.  

**TD483f, 484s  Honors Thesis in Theater and Dance**  
Majors may apply for admission in spring of their junior year. Requires research conducted under the guidance of a faculty member and focused on an approved topic leading to the writing of a thesis, an oral public presentation or performance, and a presentation in the Colby Liberal Arts Symposium. **Prerequisite:** Senior standing, a 3.25 grade point average, a 3.50 major average at the end of January of the junior year, and unanimous approval of the department.  

**TD491f, 492s  Independent Study**  
Individual projects in areas where the student has demonstrated the interest and competence necessary for independent work. **Prerequisite:** Permission of the instructor.  

**TD493s  Senior Seminar**  
This capstone experience offers students the chance to engage in seminar-level discussions on the history and aesthetics of performance and to further develop critical and analytical skills related to performance culture. Taught each year by a different member of the faculty who chooses the theme and identifies reading/viewings from a master list developed by the department. The structure includes seminar-style discussions based on significant weekly readings/viewings, a professional preparation workshop, and peer-to-peer tutorial sessions wherein the reading/viewing material is chosen by the students (with the guidance of the professor) and the discussion is generated and moderated by the students (with input from the professor). **Prerequisite:** Senior standing as a theater and dance major.  

**A. THURSTON**

**Four credit hours.**