THEATER AND DANCE

Chair, Associate Professor James Thurston
Associate Professors Annie Kloppenberg and James Thurston; Visiting Assistant Professors Toby Bercovici and Thomas Oldham; Technical Director John Ervin; Teaching Artists Joanna Patterson, Delaney McDonough, 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

[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.

[Articulating the Physical]

Addresses writing as process of discovery, expression of creative and critical thought, and embodied
pursuit. Opinion, authorship, and identity are interwoven and grounded in the body. Through movement, experiential anatomy, and choreographic thought, explore the language of/from the body and understand the textual nature of written words, body, self, society, landscape, visual frame, and dance performance. Look at how choreographic thought informs writing. Translations between the visual and the visceral develop active, individual, confident, and vivid writing voices. No prior dance experience required.  

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.  

Two credit hours.  WEINBLATT

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.  WEINBLATT

TD116Af  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.  PATTERSON

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 synergistic discussion. May be taken a total of four times for credit.  

Two credit hours.  PATTERSON

TD117AfS  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.  KLOPPENBERG, MCDONOUGH

TD117Bf  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
The text is too lengthy and complex to be fully transcribed here, but it appears to be a catalog page from Colby College's 2017-2018 catalogue, listing course descriptions for Drama and Dance. The courses are divided into categories such as "Introduction to Design," "Performance History," "Acting," "Stagecraft," and "Beginning Playwriting," among others. Each course description includes a brief summary of the course content, learning objectives, and prerequisites. Some courses have specific requirements such as concurrent registration or permission of the instructor. The page also mentions the credit hours for each course, ranging from two to four hours. The text is too dense to provide a comprehensive transcription here.
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.  KLOPPENBERG

TD258s  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.  KLOPPENBERG

TD261s  Topics in Performance: The Musical as Dramatic Literature  The Broadway musical is arguably America's most significant contribution to performance history, but it has only recently begun to receive serious scholarly attention. We will examine the form as a major contribution to American art and literature. By looking at representative examples of musicals over the last hundred years, we will explore how this unique combination of song, dance, and story has shaped generations of performance practice. We will also identify key aesthetic trends, locating the ways in which the American musical has reflected and contributed to larger conversations of cultural identity.  Four credit hours.  A.  OLDHAM

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

[TD262]  Topics in Dance: Collaborative Company Experience  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.

TD264Af  Applied Performance/Production: Fall Performance Projects  Three creative processes: First-Year Theater Project, First-Year Dance Project, and Majors and Minors Project. All rehearse separately (rehearsals will not conflict), but perform together at Family Homecoming weekend, October 27 and 28. The Majors and Minors Project provides an opportunity for students from all areas in theater and dance to engage in shared creative research, building on traditions from devised theatrical and collaborative choreographic practices; students collaborate to develop text, movement, and design elements. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Audition.  Two credit hours.  KLOPPENBERG

TD264Bf  Applied Performance/Production: The Taming of the Shrew  The story of Katherina Minola, a fiercely independent young woman held in captivity by her father and then sold into marriage to the highest bidder. Her husband, Petruchio, recognizes her brilliance, and, in his words, the “two raging fires meet together [and] consume the thing that feeds their fury.” Shakespeare's passionate love story and searing critique of gender roles is turned here into a fresh and politically relevant musical adaptation. Parts for 10-20 actors. Performances Dec. 1-2. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Audition.  Three credit hours.  BERCOVICI

TD264Cj  Applied Performance/Production: Scenes from an Execution  Playwright Howard Barkers portrait of a fictional 16th-century artist who is commissioned by the Doge of Venice q at great risk to his political future ™ to paint a grand mural in celebration of a major naval victory. The painter is a woman, a realist, a rebel, and a free spirit, so the government does not get the mnemonic celebration of political and military might it expects. Instead, she reveals war in all its horror, cruelty, and suffering, and chooses prison over changing the mural.
This fascinating parable raises issues of contemporary resonance and espouses the paradoxical mystery of art: that works exist independently of their creators. Performances February 9-10. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Audition. Four credit hours. ERVIN

**TD264Ds**  Applied Performance/Production: The Wonderful World of Dissocia  Anthony Neilson's colorful modern play sends its main character, Lisa Jones, on a journey to a curious land unlike any place else. There she discovers that nothing is as it seems. As the playwright has said, "if you like Alice in Wonderland but there's not enough sex and violence in it, then Dissocia is the show for you." Performances March 15-17. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Audition. Two credit hours. OLDHAM

**TD264Es**  Applied Performance/Production: How to Start Over  An audience-immersive experience written and directed by Katie Monteleone '18. Audience members are led through a series of initiation processes to become new citizens of a utopian society called Ephoria. In addition to rehearsals, performers will attend workshops to develop their work with emotional memory, audience interaction, status, world-building, and immersive theatre. Designers will attend some of the workshops, as well as production meetings. Rehearsals begin February 20. Performances are April 20-21. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Audition. Two credit hours. BERCOVICI

**TD264Fs**  Applied Performance/Production: Quicksand: A Dance Concert  Live performance is ephemeral: sometimes we slip into it and sometimes it drips through our grasp; we experience its impact more palpably than we can recreate individual moments. This evening of new work highlights that ephemeral process of meaning-making as performers, audience members, and student choreographers together negotiate performances of passing realities. Performances April 27-28. Students participating as stage managers, performers, designers, theater technicians, and production assistants may register for credit with approval of the instructor. Nongraded. Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor. Two credit hours. KLOPPENBERG

**TD264Jj**  Applied Performance/Production: Portland Ballet  Students will spend Jan Plan in Portland, Maine where they will participate in daily company classes with the Portland Ballet Professional Company, in a new creative project with a visiting choreographer, and will have part-time internships in a variety of areas. Interested students should contact Professor Kloppenberg early in the fall and are strongly encouraged to enroll in TD116 and/or TD117 in the fall semester to be ready to work at a high level. Nongraded. Cost in 2018: $750. Prerequisite: Audition. Three credit hours. YANOWSKY

**[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.

**TD271s**  Acting II: The Psycho-Physical  An investigation of the use of movement and development of outer form to create character psychology. Techniques explored include those of Anne Bogart, Michael Chekhov, Mary Overlie, Tadashi Suzuki, and Ruth Zaporah. Working with extant text and creating original work, students will develop mind/body and compositional awareness. They will display an understanding of aesthetic knowledge and sensibility by participating in and observing each other's work. 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. BERCOVICI

**[TD281]**  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.

**TD285f**  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. KLOPPENBERG

**TD339s**  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

**[TD355]**  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.**

**TD361s  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.**  
BERCOVICI

**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.  
**Four credit hours.**  
A. THURSTON

**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.  
**Three or four credit hours.**

**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.  
**One to four credit hours.**  
FACULTY

**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.  
**Four credit hours.**  
THURSTON