Undergraduate Major FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Prospective Students

What's the difference between a BFA and a BA in Drama?

A BFA is a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a BA is a Bachelor of Arts. A BFA typically will require that the majority of courses come from theater whereas a BA is a more general degree in which many other university courses across various disciplines are incorporated. The University of Washington only offers a Bachelor of Arts in drama, drama performance, and drama design and the flexibility of the programs enables students to complete the major or multiple majors within 4 years.

Where can I find UW Admissions Information?

The University of Washington School of Drama receives a variety of students who start off their academic career in theater as freshman, transfer students, post-baccalaureate, international, exchange, and graduate students. Please visit the UW Admissions website for information on application deadlines and a list of requirements depending on your student status.

Is it possible to do a campus tour?

Tours of the UW campus are offered by the Office of Admissions daily Monday-Saturday in both the morning and afternoons. Registration is required and you can find more information and sign up for your desired day and time through the Office of Admissions Daily Visitation Page.

Is it possible to meet with someone to learn more about the Drama program?

We encourage prospective and incoming students to visit the School of Drama in order to get a feel for our faculty, teaching methodologies, and to talk with some of our current students. To set up a drama program information session, please contact the drama adviser.

Can I sit in on a class?

Prospective and incoming students are welcome to visit and observe most of our theatre courses including courses in acting, design, directing, stage management, and theatre history. A list of the courses that we offer can be found in the UW time schedule and if you would like to set up a time to visit a particular course, please contact the drama adviser.

Who are your professors?

We have a great mix of theater practitioners and professionals that comprise our esteemed list of faculty. Students are welcome to contact any of our faculty members with more in-depth questions about their discipline or area of expertise.

What type of theater spaces does UW have?
The School of Drama has a variety of performance venues. Our Glenn Hughes Penthouse Theater seats 160 people and was the first theater in the round in the country. The Floyd and Delores Jones Playhouse is a thrust stage that seats 210 people and the Meany Hall Studio Theater is an end-stage that seats 250. There are additional spaces such as the Cabaret Theater among others that students can utilize as part of their education located in Hutchinson Hall and across the University and a complete list can be found on the facilities section of the website.

Current UW Students

What can I do with a degree in Drama?

This question isn’t as much “What can I do with a major in drama?” as much as it is, “What do you want to do with your major?” A major in Drama can open up many opportunities to participate in theater by working as an actor, producer, stage manager, set designer, director, make-up artist, and more. Many of our alumni have gone on to have very successful careers in theater, TV, and film and some of their success stories can be found in the Grad Bag section of the Drama Newsletter. Graduates are by no means limited to careers in theater but are able to find successful careers in business, education, non-profit, and private organizations. This is where work experience and the variety of internships that a student does in college can be critical. Additional information on what you can do with a major in Drama can be found at the UW Career Center or by scheduling an appointment with the Drama advisor.

Is it possible to do a double major?

It is very possible for students to major in drama and another area and finish both in 4 years. Students will want to meet with the departmental adviser in both majors to ensure that they are taking the courses that will best suit their academic pursuits and maximize the efficiency by which they go through the program.

How do I declare the drama major?

Once a student is admitted to the University of Washington they will next choose their major(s). To sign up as a drama major a student must successfully complete the prerequisite courses with a minimum overall GPA of 2.5. Those courses are Drama 201 Plays and Styles, Drama 251 Acting 1, one from Drama 210 Set Design, Drama 211 Costume Design, Drama 212 Lighting Design, Drama 213 Sound Design, and one Running Crew (Drama 290, Drama 291, Drama 292). Once a student has completed those 4 courses they should set up a meeting with the departmental advisor to officially declare the major.

What are the different options of study?

There are 3 different options within the School of Drama that a student can pursue for their Bachelor of Arts Degree. We offer an all-encompassing BA in Drama in which students will take our core curriculum along with 10 credits of upper-division electives specific to their area of interest. We offer a BA in Drama-Performance in which students will take our core curriculum along with intermediate acting courses, advanced acting courses, and various upper-division electives. We also offer a BA in Drama-Design in which students will take our core curriculum along with additional courses in design, advanced design, and upper-division electives.

Can drama courses from other universities count toward the major?

Yes. If you have taken coursework in theatre from other colleges or universities please set up an appointment with the advisor to look at the possibility of receiving credit.

Can I get academic credit for doing internships?

Yes, depending on the content of the internship. If you have an off-campus opportunity in theatre, television, film, production,
stage management, etc. and are interested in receiving credit, please contact the drama advisor so that the internship opportunity can be evaluated. If approved, students will be assigned a faculty supervisor who will meet with the student during the quarter and establish specific learning goals and evaluation criteria. Students can receive up to 6 credits of Drama 493 and up to 18 credits of General Studies 350 toward the 180 required credits needed for graduation.

Can I earn credit for being cast in a School of Drama production or a UTS Show?

Students may earn academic credit for being cast in a mainstage production with a faculty director under Drama 498 Theatre Production. Students cannot get credit for a UTS production unless it is directed by a UW faculty member, in which case a student may earn credit under Drama 298. Drama 498 may count toward the drama electives in the major. To earn credit go to Hutchinson Hall Room 105B to get an entry code.

Acting FAQ

What are some of the types of acting courses that I can take?

The School of Drama offers a variety of acting and performance-based courses. Drama 251 & Drama 252 are our introductory acting courses which are open to all student and majors and are based on the Stanislavsky method. Courses above the introductory level are by audition and include advanced acting courses in scene study, verse, production, singing for actors, dialects, Chekhov, Alexander Technique, Suzuki Method, theatre for youth, and directing among others.

Are there options in film?

Not typically as it is primarily a theater-based major but there are occasionally some options in film such as courses in acting for the camera. Because the University of Washington is such a large campus however, there are courses offered from other departments such as Producing the Documentary Short, History of Film, Screenwriting, Video Storytelling, and Digital Video courses among others that can be incorporated into the student's program of study.

Are there opportunities for undergraduate students to act in shows?

Yes. There are up to 10 different performances per year across both the mainstage season and in the Undergraduate Theater Society. Undergraduate students can audition for any number of shows through their academic careers.

Design FAQ

What are some of the design courses that I can take?

The School of Drama offers a variety of design courses aimed at improving the technical skills and abilities of students. Our beginning-level design courses include Drama 210 Set Design, Drama 211 Costume Design, Drama 212 Lighting Design, and Drama 213 Sound Design. We offer upper level courses in design as well in addition to courses in theatrical make-up, scene painting, design and technical drafting, and digital cinema production among others.

Is there a scene shop/costume shop?

Yes. The School of Drama has both a costume shop and scene shop on campus as well as knowledgeable and skilled faculty and staff to help design-focused students improve their craft.

Are there opportunities for undergraduate students to design shows?

Yes. The Undergraduate Theater Society on campus is comprised entirely of undergraduate students meaning that there are a multitude of opportunities available to students interested in all aspects of design including sets, costumes, lighting, sound,