

Theater/Playwriting MFA

Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts / SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND MEDIA ARTS

Learn more about the Master of Fine Arts in Theater/Playwriting.

This program is not accepting applications for the 2025-2026 academic year.

About the Program

The Theater/Playwriting MFA program is dedicated to developing each writer's unique voice and equipping the writer with skills necessary to sustain life as an artist. Core coursework provides rigorous training with attention to craft in a range of forms. Additional courses emphasize the collaborative nature of theater-making and provide an environment for creating a network of fellow artists from across disciplines. The curriculum is designed to allow writers to explore areas of interest both within the School of Theater, Film and Media Arts, and outside of it, including research in areas such as African American Studies, Anthropology, Art History, Music or Women's Studies in augmentation of a particular project or idea. Class sizes are small, with individualized instruction as a priority.

Our interest is in training playwrights for artistic success in both current and potential future landscapes. We seek students who are motivated by a desire for passionate self-expression and a sense of social purpose. The program sits within the context of our highly regarded acting, design and directing programs and the vibrant, diverse theater community of Philadelphia.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 5 years

Campus Location: Main, Center City

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: Students complete the degree program through classes offered at convenient times of the day and evening.

Interdisciplinary Study: Research areas are encouraged. Previous areas of interest have included African American studies, anthropology, film, mass media, new media and women's studies. Permission to enroll in particular courses is determined by the department involved.

Affiliation(s): Contacts are maintained with professional theaters with new play programs.

Study Abroad: No formal relationships exist, but study abroad programs in the Lew Klein College of Media and Communication are available. London and Dublin programs include theater visits and can include courses or internships.

Accreditation: The Theater Department is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).

Areas of Specialization: Areas of specialization can be developed through graduate study in any of the research areas. Particularly relevant are courses in film or television writing.

Job Prospects: The program is primarily focused on training our students for careers in the theater industry.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: Along with all university approvals, non-matriculated students are required to obtain written approval from the instructor for each class they want to take.

Financing Opportunities: Assistantships, including tuition remission and a stipend, may be available for exceptional candidates.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Fall: January 15

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APPLY ONLINE to this graduate program.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 3

From whom: Letters of recommendation should be obtained from college/university professors and/or professionals in the field who are familiar with the applicant's work.

Coursework Required for Admission Consideration: Particular coursework is not required, but evidence of playwriting experience and commitment to theater writing are required.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: All applicants must present credentials that are the equivalent of the appropriate baccalaureate degree at Temple University.

Statement of Goals: Introduce yourself in approximately 500 words by relaying your relevant experience, values and areas of interest. Proper essay form should be used, but it may be in a personal style.

Standardized Test Scores:

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 79
- IELTS Academic: 6.5
- PTE Academic: 53

Resume: Current resume required.

Interview: The applicant meets with the Head of Playwriting.

Writing Sample: One full-length script or two one-acts are required for admissions consideration.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:

Number of Credits Required Beyond the Baccalaureate: 60

Required Courses:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
THTR 5392	The Business of the Business in Theater	2
THTR 5804	Dramaturgy	2
THTR 5871	Playwriting I	1
THTR 5872	Playwriting II	2
THTR 5873	Adaptation	1
THTR 5874	Docudrama	3
THTR 8001	Seminar in Dramatic Literature	2
THTR 8002	Seminar in Dramatic Literature	2
THTR 8881	Playwriting III	2
THTR 8882	Playwriting IV	2
THTR 8883	Teaching Playwriting	3
THTR 8985	Teach in Higher Education	3
THTR 9882	Projects in Playwriting (5 terms)	10
THTR 9991	Research	2
THTR 9995	Thesis	8
Select one Design Area course from the following or a general elective: ¹		3
THTR 5613	History of Decor	
THTR 5625	History of Fashion	
THTR 5741	Design for TV and Film	
THTR 8511	Lighting Design II	
THTR 8611	Costume Design II	
THTR 8711	Scene Design II	
General Elective		
General Electives ²		12
Total Credit Hours		60

¹ Consult with the program director in choosing an elective if a Design Area course is not selected.

² Consult with the program director to ensure selection of appropriate electives.

Additional Requirement:

Reviews are held after each term. Each review considers all work done, progress made, and future plans.

Culminating Event:

Thesis:

A full-length play is required.

Contacts**Program Web Address:**

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/theater-playwriting-mfa-ca-thpw-mfa>

Department Information:

Theater Graduate Admissions

Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts/School of Theater, Film and Media Arts

2001 N. 13th Street, 127 Presser Hall

Philadelphia, PA 19122-6016

tfma@temple.edu

215-204-8598

Fax: 215-204-4957

Submission Address for Application Materials:

<https://apply.temple.edu/TFMA/>

Department Contacts:

Admissions:

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Recruitment Coordinator

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Chair:

Fred Duer

fmduer@temple.edu