

Career-Related Services

Career Counseling
Graduate School Planning
Career Resource Library
Career Assessments
Internship Planning
Credentials Services

Hours

Monday - Friday
8 am - 5 pm



School of UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES
512-232-8400 Jester A115

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Theater & Dance



Career Options for Theatre and Dance Majors

This booklet contains specific information about majoring in theatre and dance at The University of Texas at Austin, as well as career opportunities related to this major. The careers listed typically require a bachelor's degree, and special certification or training requirements are noted. Please use this booklet as an idea generator, rather than as a comprehensive list of all career options for theatre and dance majors. The career descriptions were obtained from the Center for Strategic Advising & Career Counseling (CSA&CC) library resources and career websites (see listing of sources on last page).

The first section, "Direct Career Opportunities," includes careers that use the creativity and communication skills acquired by theatre and dance majors. The second section, "More Career Opportunities," lists careers that are potentially available to all fine arts majors who have related experience or coursework.

For theatre and dance majors, there are many career options that require a master's or doctoral degree but do not require any particular undergraduate degree. Examples of these include law, international affairs, museum administration, library and information studies, hospital administration, and many more. For careers requiring graduate education, please visit our library or speak to a career counselor.

The CSA&CC offers many other services and resources to help you with your career planning. These include:

- Career Counseling
- Career Assessment
- Career Information Library
- Internship Information
- Graduate School Planning Assistance

Visit our website at utexas.edu/ugs/csacc or call 232-8400 for more information.

MAJORING IN THEATRE AND DANCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Departmental Website: www.finearts.utexas.edu/tad

Campus Location: WIN 1.144

Phone Number: 512-471-5793

DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR

Study in the performing arts offers exposure to creative, dramatic expression, primarily in front of live audiences. It involves all types of artistic performance in theaters, in educational institutions, on TV, in movies, and outdoors. All major aspects of performance preparation are studies, including music dance, acting, set design, stage, setup, scenery, decorations, light and sound productions, costumes, and makeup.

AREAS OF STUDY

Acting

Directing

Playwriting

History/Criticism

Dance

Choreography

Lighting Design and Technology

Costume Design and Technology

Set Design and Technology

Creative Drama

EXAMPLES OF COURSES

T D 311T Singing for the Stage

Introductory topics in theatre and dance, including basic research methods, contemporary and local performance, the role of the artist in society, the philosophy of a fine arts education, and the exploration of campus resources.

TD 312M Movement Improvisation

Exploration and study of elements of movement design. Three hours a week for one semester, with additional laboratory hours as required.

TD 323C Directing I

Study and practice of the fundamentals of stage directing: composition, picturization, movement, gesture, and unit structure.

T D 324 Design and Technology for Performance

Exploration of aspects of design and technology in performance, including costume, lighting, scenery, and sound.

Skills Gained by Theatre and Dance Majors

Ability to communicate emotions

Imagination and flexibility and ideas creatively

Public speaking skills

Ability to practice and concentrate

Aesthetic awareness intensely for long periods of time

Interpretive skills

DIRECT JOB OPPORTUNITIES

This sampling includes careers that use the creativity and communication skills typically acquired by theatre and dance majors.

Arts Manager/Administrator

Organize and manage the activities associated with dance by performing administrative, business or management functions for dance companies, theatres, regional arts/dance agencies and dance organizations. Set up and manage seasonal festivals and community dance projects, manage ticket sales, write press releases, market productions in the community.

Casting Director

Audition and interview performers for roles in plays or movies. Read scripts and collaborate with production staff about characters' personality, voice quality, and physical appearance. Develop advertisements for media and trade publications. Hold open auditions and "pre-read" screening sessions. Develop files of potential performers and create networks with agents of well-known performers.

Costume Designer

Conduct research into the locale, period, and social background of the production, using libraries and museums to study clothing styles and fabrication. Draw sketches of costumes for the director's approval. Get bids from costume shops. Select fabric, approve clothing patterns, and monitor the progress of developing the costumes or shop for ready-made clothing and wigs, beards, etc. from wig shops. Schedule fittings and a dress parade under stage lights with scenery and props.

Dance/Movement Therapist

Work with individuals of all ages, groups and families in a wide variety of settings, such as psychiatric and rehabilitation facilities, schools, nursing homes, drug treatment centers, counseling centers, medical facilities, crisis centers, and wellness and alternative health care centers. Focus on helping clients improve self-esteem and body image, develop effective communication skills and relationships, expand their movement vocabulary, gain insight into patterns of behavior, and create new options for coping with problems.

Dance Notator

Record a dance company's repertoire and reconstruct and rehearse previously choreographed dances or ballets by using symbols derived from Benesh or Lananotation systems.

Dance Teacher

Teach different dance styles to people of all ages in private dance schools, the community or in independent and state schools and colleges. Choreograph dances for students, teach related topics, such as history of dance, anatomy and physiology related to dance, and dance notation.

Drama Therapist

Work closely with a consultation team of medical professionals to treat and rehabilitate people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. Draw from the creative processes used in drama to conduct individual or group sessions to determine the underlying causes of problems and develop therapeutic goals.

Dramaturg/Literary Manager

Research, advise, write, and edit for a production. Analyze the story, research into prior productions and historical context, prepare notes for the director, advise the director and cast, and write the audience guide to the play. Resident dramaturg or literary manager: perform ongoing duties with the theatre company, such as review and selection of scripts.

Hairstylist and Make-up Artist

Use cosmetics, pencils, greasepaints, brushes, and other materials to make the actors look like the characters they play; incorporate hair, clay, or plastics to create wrinkles, warts, bald heads, tooth changes, burns, or scars.

Lighting Designer

Use lighting fixtures, patterns, color filters, and dimmers to create lighting effects; decide where to place each piece of equipment; work with the master electrician to plan the electric circuits for the equipment.

Production Director

Coordinate all aspects of the production to give it a unified look and feel. Guide actors in their speech and physical movements.

Professional Dancer

Perform in a group, or less commonly, solo, presenting any of a number of musical styles including folk, ethnic, tap, jazz and other popular kinds of dance. Perform in settings, such as opera, musical theater, television, movies, music videos, and commercials.

Set Designer

Responsible for the physical environment of the play; research the time and place of the play and typical architecture for the play's time and place, make sketches and models of possible sets and present them to the director for approval; make exact scale drawings and models using cardboard, wood, plastic, clay or other materials; show ways to prepare and move the pieces quickly and safely and how to store sets between scenes; work with the director on the budget for the sets; accept bids and oversee set construction.

Stage Manager

Schedule and plan rehearsals, update the script as changes are made; block the show; and call cues during the run of the show.

Technical Director

Coordinate all the work of the designers and their crews; make sure that all work stays on schedule and that everything fits together properly. When on tour, assist with making adjustments to fit the space and layouts of different theatres.

Voice-Over Artist

Read from a script under the direction of a producer or copywriter for radio and television commercials and industrial films and tapes.

MORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

This section lists other opportunities that may be available to all fine arts majors. Entry into these careers usually requires internship or volunteer experience or relevant coursework in addition to a theatre and dance degree. This is a sampling of job opportunities; for more options and ideas, please visit the CSA&CC career information library.

ADVERTISING/MARKETING/SALES

Advertising and Promotions Manager

Plan and direct advertising policies and programs or produces collateral materials, such as posters, contests, coupons, or give-aways, to create extra interest in the purchase of a product or service for a department, an entire organization, or on an account basis.

Art Buyer

Research and solicit artwork used in advertising projects. Evaluate portfolios, negotiate fees and usage terms, and present estimates to art director. Coordinate photo shoots and retouching work.

Display Designer

Design and install displays of clothing, accessories, furniture, and other products to attract customers. Collaborate with other marketing professionals to develop product campaigns and branding concepts.

Stylist

Work with photographers to create a certain “look” or image in the print advertising industry or for film and commercial shoots. Can specialize in areas such as food, home, furnishings, or casting and research trends in these areas.

Survey Researcher

Design or conduct surveys. May supervise interviewers who conduct the survey in person or over the telephone. May present survey results to client.

BUSINESS

Artist Agent

Represent freelance artists, photographers, musicians, actors, and dancers and connects them with work opportunities. Negotiate prices, deadlines, and copyright issues and collect and distributes payment. Typically work on a freelance, commission basis.

Auction Gallery Assistant

Work for a particular department within an auction gallery, such as prints or contemporary art. Acquire works for sale, perform appraisals, write catalogues, and organize auctions. Interact with art dealers, collectors, and administrators of trusts and estates.

Corporate Recruiter

Maintain contacts in the community and travel, often to college campuses, to seek qualified job applicants. Screen and interview applicants and makes job offers. Stay up-to-date on organizational hiring policies, equal employment opportunity, and affirmative action guidelines. Work for companies, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.

Management Consultant Analyst

Analyze business problems by collecting information from both internal and external sources, developing possible solutions, and then making recommendations to management team. Usually work for consulting firms, who hire recent college graduates for 2-3 year analyst positions.

Retail Manager

Oversee profitable operation of retail stores (example music store or art supply company), including hiring and supervising employees, managing inventory, and managing the budget. May be responsible for merchandise promotions and advertising.

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Meeting and Convention Planner

Coordinate all aspects of group meetings and conventions, including speakers, location, audio-visual equipment, and publicity. Work for nonprofit organizations, professional associations, hotels, corporations, and government agencies.

Public Relations Specialist

Write articles for internal publications, write press releases, assemble press kits, arrange speaking engagements, assist in fundraising activities. Work in a variety of settings: business, government, non-profit, and education.

Special Event Planner

Plan, organize, and implement special events for corporations, non-profit agencies, or individuals. Consult with client, manage budget, supervise vendors, and perform follow-up assessment. Examples of special events include corporate open houses, anniversaries or weddings, charity fundraisers, political rallies, concerts, and festivals.

Technical Writer

Write technical materials that communicate scientific and technical information to readers with little technical background, such as equipment manuals, appendices, or operating and maintenance instructions. May assist in layout work.

Web Designer

Use knowledge of computer applications to translate client needs into artistically appealing website. Select color, text, and artwork and update/maintain site as needed.

EDUCATION

College Admissions Officer

Evaluate freshman and transfer applicants; counsel and advise the general public including, but not limited to, prospective applicants, parents, faculty, and administration on admission-related issues; and participate in various recruitment and yield activities.

Corporate Trainer

Develop and conduct individual, group, and classroom training for employees on a wide variety of subjects. Develop training manuals, handouts, procedures, and supplemental training materials. Other duties involve test creation and administration for the advancement of employees.

Disability Services Coordinator

Serve as an advocate for students with disabilities. Work with faculty to understand and provide reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Promote disability awareness on campus.

Elementary School Teacher

Teach pupils in public or private schools at the elementary level basic academic, social, and other formative skills. Public schools require teacher certification, but private schools do not.

Residence Life Coordinator

Supervise undergraduate and/or graduate staff, develop residence hall community, respond to student concerns, manage administration and facilities, and participate in department initiatives and campus life.

ENVIRONMENT AND OUTDOOR

Environmental Education Specialist

Plan, develop, and conduct programs to inform public of historical, natural, and scientific features of national, state, or local parks.

Landscape Architect

Design topography, vegetation, walkways, and other decorative features for businesses, parks, and residential areas. Confer with client, analyze site data, and prepare plans, drawings, and cost estimates. May require coursework in landscape architecture.

Recreation Program Manager

Plan, organize, and evaluate citywide recreation programs, including sports, games, hobbies, arts & crafts, and special events.

Recycling Coordinator

Design and implement curbside and drop-off recycling and hazardous waste programs through city governments or private firms. Conduct public outreach campaigns to educate people about the advantages of recycling. May ensure compliance with ordinances or apply for grants.

GOVERNMENT

Grants Specialist

Plan, manage, and represent government agencies that fund research or cultural programs. Oversee budget and organize panelists who review grant applications. Supervise disbursement of funds and monitor usage of grant monies.

Legal Assistant

Assist lawyers by researching legal precedent, investigating facts, or preparing legal documents. Conduct research to support a legal proceeding, to formulate a defense, or to initiate legal action.

Legislative Analyst

Perform quantitative and qualitative analysis of information needed by legislators and other government officials. Evaluate policy issues and options, write reports, conduct briefing meetings, and respond to inquiries.

Legislative Assistant

Meet with lobbyists, arrange committee and subcommittee hearings, assist in developing legislation and amendments. Respond to requests for information, prepare memos and reports based on completed research for legislators.

Lobbying Organizer

Distribute information about a particular issue or organization (such as funding for the arts), recruit volunteers, solicit funds, and organize such efforts as rallies, letter-writing campaigns, and voter registrations drives. Work for special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

HUMAN SERVICES

Americorps Volunteer

Serve full-time for a year in organizations and agencies throughout the country, work to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, increase housing opportunities, or bridge the digital divide. Benefits include an Education Award or an end-of-service stipend.

Community Organizer

Establish and organize community groups to solve social problems in the community. Assess strengths and weaknesses of existing resources and propose changes. Promote cooperation and coordination among government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other community groups. Conduct research, prepare budgets, and assist in fundraising.

Social Service Caseworker

Help families and individuals secure assistance from social service agencies. Interview clients to understand degree and nature of problems and refer to appropriate community resources. May determine eligibility for financial assistance and/or advocate on clients' behalf to government or nonprofit agencies.

Volunteer Coordinator

Recruit, train, schedule and provide supervision to volunteers at non-profit organizations. Arrange for on-the-job and other required training, supervision and evaluation of volunteers. Serve as liaison between administration, staff, and volunteers.

Youth Organizer

Manage and administer youth and community projects and resources; conduct needs assessment and plan and deliver relevant programs of personal and social education via discussions, arts-based activities, community/environmental projects, residential activities, and outdoor/sports activities.

INTERNATIONAL

Cultural Tour Guide

Plan and organize themed trips that encompass sites and experiences related to the fine arts. Educate travelers, handles special needs, and coordinate transportation. Work for tour company or on freelance basis.

ESL/ESOL Teacher

Provide rigorous and appropriate instruction to international students that supports the acceleration of English and appropriate academic content. Also, serve as a liaison between the student, his/her family and the school, by providing cross-cultural information to all parties that foster positive relationships.

Foreign Service Officer

Analyze and report on political and economic developments, including agricultural trends, humanitarian and social conditions. Identify export markets, negotiate international agreements, and interpret US policies and interests for foreign governments, opinion leaders and publics. Issue visas to foreign nationals, provide development assistance, and arrange cultural exchanges.

Intelligence Officer

A member of the armed forces, police officer or civilian intelligence agency who specializes in the gathering, fusion and analysis of information and intelligence in order to provide advice to their government or another organization.

Peace Corps Volunteer

Peace Corps Volunteers work internationally in the following areas: education, youth outreach, and community development; health and HIV/AIDS; agriculture and environment; business development; and information technology. Within these areas, the specific duties and responsibilities of each Volunteer can vary widely.

MEDIA/PUBLISHING**Copy Editor**

Act as liaison between author, editor, and proofreader. Review manuscripts for grammar and style usage. May develop in-house style guide, supervise freelance staff, and handle author queries.

Copywriter

Write articles, bulletins, sales letters, speeches, and other related informative, marketing and promotional material for use by publication or broadcast media to promote sale of goods and services.

Grant Writer

Write and develop grant proposals, which includes conducting needs assessments and matching product needs with available funding. Write progress reports to organization funding the grant. Work for government or non-profit agencies.

Staff Writer

Research and write articles for fine arts magazine. May write article promos, short features, author bios, or photo captions. May work on freelance basis or for one particular magazine.

Travel Writer

Write features with detailed, accurate, timely and up-to-date information regarding destinations, hotels, restaurants, tours, activities, etc, using a variety of sources of information. Involves thorough research and travel.

RESEARCH

Information Broker

Perform research for clients in business, healthcare, government, law, and science. Use Internet, database, and library resources to find specific information. May also analyze information, write reports, and train clients in information retrieval. Often work for consulting firms or on freelance basis.

Institutional Researcher

Write institutional and policy histories; research and report on current issues and long-range trends; edit records; manage archives. Work for government agencies, private corporations, public archives and libraries.

Market Research Analyst

Research market conditions in local, regional, or national areas to determine potential sales of a product or service. May gather information on competitors, prices, sales, and methods of marketing and distribution. May use survey results to create a marketing campaign based on regional preferences and buying habits.

Preservation/Restoration Assistant

Conduct architectural, art, and urban historical research; apply technological and artistic conservations skills; research-related laws and tax issues. Work for specialized preservation services firms.

Social Science Research Assistant

Assist social scientists in laboratory, survey, and other social research. May perform publication activities, laboratory analysis, quality control, or data management.

SOURCES

Great Jobs for Theatre Majors by Jan Goldberg. McGraw Hill, 2005.

Opportunities in Acting Careers by Dick Moore. McGraw Hill, 2005.

UT Fine Arts Career Services: *www.utexas.edu/cofa/career*