

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA**

**Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) Actor Training Program**

The purpose of the BFA acting training program is to provide professionally oriented, conservatory style training within a liberal arts framework to undergraduate students who wish to make acting their career. This is accomplished through an integrated, synthesized curriculum of specialized acting, voice, and movement laboratories. At the heart of the training are three goals:

1. To infuse in student artists an appreciation for and knowledge of past and present cultures, civilizations, and philosophies found in dramatic literature and performing arts, which can inform and expand the potential for artistic choices in their creative work, as well as enable them to grow as intelligent, feeling, humane individuals and theater artists;
2. To create a sense of joy and integrity in the performing arts and engender respect for the art and craft of theater;
3. To assist the student artist in the process of discovering wider ranges of emotional and physical truth, revealing the rich inner resources of the human spirit, and to encourage the student to understand that the exploration and development of these resources are the artist's callings.

The BFA differs from the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, also offered by the department. The BA is a more broadly-based degree with a liberal arts orientation not focused toward the acting profession (see University General Catalog for details). Students with a general (rather than career) interest in acting would not enter the BFA program, but take such courses as THTR 5, 90, 111D, 113E, 140A-B, 143, 144A-B, and 145 as part of their BA degree.

The BFA program in acting is highly selective. It prepares exceptionally committed, disciplined and talented students to the level at which they might gain entry into leading graduate conservatory training programs and/or regional theaters with excellent internship programs, or begin to audition within the profession, or endeavor to create their own work.

The program is essentially geared to the stage actor, and gives the student an understanding of and practice in a wide range of styles and techniques. The core training consists of a comprehensive series of acting, voice, and movement classes culminating in projects of both text-based and devised work. In addition, students gain opportunities to consolidate their training in the yearly departmental repertory of productions comprised of an eclectic mix of

classics, modern world drama, and new plays. The BFA Acting Faculty sees production work as an extension of the process training that is conducted in the classroom.

Students who are accepted into the final year of the program enroll in an audition course focused toward national auditions for advanced professional theater training programs and/or acting companies.

The BFA Acting Program is intended to attract students who are committed to finishing the entire training process. Entry to the program is by audition, and the completion of the course depends upon successful progress and recommendation by the faculty. The faculty believes that it has a responsibility to discourage students who, in its judgment, have not maintained the expected professional standards or whose growth is not in sync with the pace of the program. The concentrations of study within the Department are so designed that students who enter, but do not complete the BFA program in acting due to dismissal or a change in concentration, may graduate with a BA degree in their four-year undergraduate period.

#### **BFA ACTING FACULTY**

Irwin Appel – Acting/Directing

Risa Brainin – Acting/Directing

Jeff Mills-Movement/Performance

Michael Morgan – Voice/Speech/Acting

Anne Torsiglieri – Acting/Directing

Tom Whitaker – Acting/Directing

## REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BFA DEGREE IN ACTING

### **GENERAL EDUCATION**

The General Education requirements for the BFA degree are somewhat different from those for the BA degree. YOU are ultimately responsible for following the correct G.E. requirements and completing appropriate courses. Seek out advisors in the College of Letters and Science Office and here within the department; ask questions, be sure you understand, and keep track of your progress. PLEASE NOTE: Dramatic literature courses do NOT satisfy GE Area G - Literature.

### **CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR MAJOR** (Same as for BA Degree)

THTR 1 - Play Analysis [Fall Quarter, Freshman year]

THTR 5 - Introduction to Acting [Freshman year]

#### **One from:**

THTR 2 A-B-C-D – Performance in Global Contexts: Africa and the Caribbean, Asia, Europe, Latin America (respectively)

THTR 29D – Run Crew Practicum – 1 unit

#### **Two from:**

THTR 29A-B-C - Scenic, Lighting, Costume Practicums – [1 unit each]

THTR 49/149 - Theatre Workshop - 4 units [25 unit max]

### **LITERATURE REQUIREMENTS**

THTR 188S [Sophomore year, Winter or Spring Quarter-as offered]

#### **One course from:**

THTR 180-A-B-C

#### **One course from:**

THTR 182AA-ZZ

#### **Two courses from:**

THTR 180D-E-F-G

THTR 181 AA-ZZ

THTR 183AA-ZZ

THTR 184AA-ZZ

THTR 194L

Or additional courses not used above; or one from: Asian American Studies 125, Chinese 137, Japanese 149

**Requirements for the BFA Degree in Acting: (continued)**

**BFA REQUIREMENTS IN ACTING**

**Sophomore** THTR 10A-B-C Movement for the Stage  
**Year:** THTR 11A-B-C Voice Laboratory  
THTR 15A-B-C Fundamentals of Acting

Two courses from:

Dance 44A-B-C-D-E-F Elementary Modern Dance

**[also complete THTR 188S: Shakespeare - Core requirement; previous page]**

**Junior** THTR 110A-B-C Advanced Movement for the Stage  
**Year:** THTR 111A-B-C Advanced Voice Laboratory  
THTR 151A-B-C Advanced Acting

**Senior** THTR 110D Advanced Performance Projects  
**Year:** THTR 112 Senior Voice Laboratory  
THTR 151D Advanced Acting - Modern Trends  
THTR 151F Senior Auditions  
THTR 151G Alternate Acting Styles

**and throughout** THTR 149 Theatre Workshop - performance, including  
**BFA program:** Senior Production (6 units beyond Core)

Sub total: 68-70 Upper Division Units

Recommended elective courses:

THTR 144A/B Shakespeare Production  
THTR 145 Oregon Shakespeare Festival Tour  
THTR 151S Senior One-Person Shows  
Dance 145AA-ZZ Dance History Series  
Plus Dramatic Literature electives (See General Catalog)

## BFA IN ACTING - GENERAL REGULATIONS

### Progress Through the Program:

1. THTR 1, Play Analysis, is taken in the Fall Quarter of Freshman year. THTR 5, Beginning Acting, must be taken in the Freshman year in Fall, Winter, or Spring Quarter.
2. To enter THTR 15A, students must successfully pass an audition with the Acting Faculty, either at the end of Spring Quarter or in September, prior to the beginning of Fall Quarter. (See next section on transfer students.)
3. Students formally enter the BFA program upon successful progress to THTR 15B. At that time, they must petition to change their major to Theater, B.F.A., Acting Emphasis.
4. Students in THTR 15A will not audition or perform in departmental productions during the first quarter (Fall) of their training. The Acting Faculty believes that the serious acting student needs laboratory and workshop time to develop the skills and maturity necessary to build a solid foundation and discipline to meet the demands of professional level work. It is felt that after one quarter of intensive voice, movement and acting process training, Sophomore BFAs will be better prepared to audition for and accept roles in departmental productions. At that point, auditioning for departmental productions, including student directed one-acts, becomes mandatory and continues to be so during each quarter of the student's training. (See below, "Production Work and Auditioning," for further details)
5. To enter THTR 151A, students must have completed not only all **lower division performance class** requirements, but also **THTR 1, and 188S**. They must also have completed **all crew and practicum requirements in the THTR 29 series**. Students are strongly advised to complete crew requirements during the Freshman year and the first quarter of Sophomore year. (Exception will be made for Junior transfer students; they will be expected to make up these requirements before the completion of THTR 151C.)
6. Progress through the BFA program depends upon successful completion of all courses at each level, and recommendation by all BFA faculty. Students are regularly counseled by the BFA faculty as to their progress and status. No student will be dismissed from the program without first being placed on probationary status prior to the end of a quarter. All sophomore students are considered to be on probation for the entire first year of training.
7. There may be probationary status or dismissal after 151B in extreme or unusual circumstances. \*
8. Students who are at any time discouraged from continuing the BFA program will be able to complete a BA degree in one of the other departmental programs in the normal undergraduate time span.

## **Transfer Students:**

1. Transfer students must provide two letters of recommendation from former instructors or directors and verification that they have received grades no lower than “B” in previous acting classes.
2. Candidates will participate in a workshop audition for acceptance in the BFA Acting Program. The audition for transfer students is held at the beginning of each Fall quarter. It is possible to participate in an earlier audition held each Spring, or at other times by special arrangement with the Department. Audition candidates should prepare two contrasting monologues, each not to exceed one minute, selected from contemporary plays.
3. Transfer students will be placed in THTR 15A upon successfully auditioning. Students entering at the THTR 15 level must understand that they must complete the full three year program to obtain the BFA degree, irrespective of their current class standing.
4. Upon acceptance into the program, students should immediately seek counseling with the department Undergraduate Advisor as to requirements and progress toward program completion.

## **Production Work and Auditioning:**

Students who wish to make acting a career should gain as much performance experience as possible. The BFA Faculty is concerned that the performance work should take place in a supervised environment with good artistic values. For this reason, all students in the BFA program, with the exception of first-quarter Sophomores, must audition each quarter for all Mainstage and One Act productions until cast. Outside performance work may be allowed if all audition requirements have been met, the student has not been cast, and outside rehearsal and production schedules do not conflict with future departmental schedules. Through both classes and the productions that support their work, the Department wishes to inculcate in students a valid sense of professionalism that will stand them in good stead when they embark upon their career.

All students must make themselves available for all auditions, rehearsals, and performances.

\*Failure to audition, attend rehearsals, or meet production responsibilities may be cause for dismissal from the program without prior probationary status. Failure to follow these audition procedures is a cause for dismissal from the program.

Requests for exceptions to any of the procedures must be made in the form of a written petition to the Director of the BFA Acting program.

Students are advised to consult the University General Catalog for further information, or to inquire at the Theater and Dance Office.

## **BFA ACTING STUDENT SUPPLIES**

Students who enter the BFA Acting Training Program should have the following items for use in rehearsals, workshops, classes, and performance work:

### **MEN:**

Rehearsal sports coat  
Rehearsal dress pants (not jeans)  
Hard-soled dress shoes or character shoes  
Hat (not baseball cap)  
Knee pads  
Make-up kit  
Plain, black, soft rehearsal/studio clothing; i.e. sweats, t-shirts, etc.  
Other items as they become specifically required for voice, movement or acting (such as Zafu, yoga mats, stage combat equipment, etc.)

### **WOMEN:**

Hair bands and bobby pins  
Character shoes with heels  
Character shoes – flats  
Long, full (not tight) rehearsal skirt  
Knee length rehearsal skirt  
Make-up kit  
Plain, black, soft rehearsal/studio clothing; i.e. sweats, t-shirts, etc.  
Other items as they become specifically required for voice, movement or acting (such as Zafu, yoga mats, stage combat equipment, etc.)

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

Professionalism is the discipline of treating your colleagues (the people with whom you work) with respect. In the theater business your colleagues are your fellow actors, your directors, production staff, designers, technicians, support staff, funders and anyone else who work hard to put your show up in front of an audience. Faculty, administrative staff, guest artists and fellow students are added to this list while training in school.

Professionalism is important for many reasons; treating people with respect is obviously a decent, human thing to do. But most importantly, professional behavior signifies a deep regard for one's self as an artist and the art of theater in general.

Professionalism is also important because of the competition factor. There are thousands and thousands of very talented actors (as good or better than you) who want your job! Producers, directors and casting directors have the pick of the litter and do not want to waste time and money with an actor who has a reputation for being unprofessional. Given the choice they will

hire the person with a good professional reputation. And remember, you are building your reputation right now! The theater business is a small one. Everybody knows everybody and many, many theater professionals still work with their former college classmates (even after twenty and thirty years!)

Like any discipline, professionalism takes practice and there's no better time to engage in this practice than while you are "in training." So here are some guidelines for professional behavior:

1. **BE THERE. BE ON TIME.**

Missing rehearsal or class is unacceptable. Unless you are ill or have made clear arrangements well in advance with your teacher, stage manager or director, **BE THERE** and **BE ON TIME!** Live by the maxim "If you're not early, you're late and if you're late, you're fired!" In other words, if rehearsal or class starts at 1:00 PM, show up **EARLY** so you are ready to **START WORKING** at 1pm. Just arriving at 1:00 PM means **YOU ARE LATE!** This includes all second stage, scene study and project rehearsals with your classmates. **NEVER BLOW OFF YOUR CLASSMATES!** Remember, they deserve as much respect as your teachers and directors. If you are routinely late or unreliable, word will spread among your class and to the faculty and your reputation will be damaged!

2. **BE PREPARED**

There is nothing more frustrating to a director or teacher than working with an actor who is not prepared. There is no acting without preparation. Memorizing lines, doing research, creating character history, experimenting with physicality, reviewing blocking, devising choices etc. are all **PREPARATION** for rehearsal and need to be done at home (**HOMEWORK!**) An actor who is not making choices in rehearsal (or making vague, ill-informed choices) has invariably not done his or her homework. A good rule of thumb is to come to every rehearsal with at least one idea or choice that has been generated by your preparatory work.

Being prepared also means coming to rehearsal in the correct attire. As an actor it is your responsibility to approximate your character's costume for rehearsal. If your character wears a dress and high heels in the show, you need to wear a dress and high heels in rehearsal. If your character wears a fedora, suit and tie in the show you must wear the same in rehearsal. This is the only way to begin to live and breathe as your character. If you wait until the performance to introduce costume items, you won't be used to them and the performance will come off false and awkward. While working on a production, you should wear your rehearsal costumes from the first blocking rehearsals until you get your actual costumes from the designer, unless otherwise instructed by the director. For scene work and projects you should begin wearing your character costume in rehearsal as soon as you possibly can. Actors need to own their own collection of rehearsal clothing as producing theaters can rarely provide them. So start collecting now! Thrift stores are great places to buy cheap costume items. (See attached list of required costume items.)

3. DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU'RE GOING TO DO/FOLLOW THROUGH

This is a cardinal rule for success in any field but especially helpful in ours. If you make an appointment, keep it. If you say you're going to do a specific task at a specific time, do it. Manage your time well. Know what you can handle and don't make promises you can't keep. Be proactive about following through on your task and keep your colleagues updated about your progress.

4. RESPECT THE PROCESS

Acting students should be ready and willing to fully engage in whatever process or exercise their teachers/directors lead them through. 100% commitment to the process is vital to gaining knowledge and understanding of the craft. Certainly not every method, technique or process works for every actor but there is no way of knowing what works until you try. Resisting or complaining about the process comes off as arrogance and usually means there is a lack of artistic courage and curiosity. There is always something to be learned so dive in head first!

5. COMMUNICATE

Be proactive in your communication. If you cannot meet your obligations, clearly communicate the problem as early as possible so all parties involved have time to help you resolve the issue. Ask for help if you need it. So many "insurmountable" problems are easily solved when a teacher or fellow student provides a fresh perspective. During a production, your stage manager is your first point of contact. Don't bother the director with the problem if you can help it. The SM will facilitate all communication unless otherwise stated by the director. If there is a problem in class, feel free to contact your professor immediately.

It is considered bad form and unprofessional to seek artistic advice or vent complaints with directors or teachers outside your production or class. It is important to communicate with your own teacher/director first and then seek outside advice if your teacher/director gives you permission.

6. TREAT PROPERTY WITH CARE

At UCSB, we have outstanding facilities that need to be treated with respect. Remember, these wonderful rehearsal rooms and theaters are WORK spaces not your living room/dining room! Please keep them clean and tidy so the next person doesn't have to work in your mess. If you pack it in, pack it out! If you make a mess, clean it up. Leave the rooms better than you found them. Please also be extra careful with rehearsal furniture, props and set pieces. We seem to have an embarrassment of riches, but due to the recent budget cuts our resources are actually very limited. Broken or beat up items like door units and tumbling mats probably can't be replaced!

7. TREAT YOUR INSTRUMENT WITH RESPECT

As an actor, your body is your instrument. Take care of it. If you were a violin player you would never leave your \$1,000,000 Stradivarius out in the hot sun or freezing rain! This program is extremely demanding and requires a great deal of mental and physical

stamina. Proper sleep and nutrition are vital to peak performance. Celebration is an important part of the human experience (and vital to theater artists!) but ceaseless partying and overindulgent drug and alcohol consumption are detrimental to your training! Moderation is key! Eat well and stay hydrated. For good health tips and nutritional advice, ask a faculty member. If they can't answer your question, they can refer you to someone who can. Also be careful about putting yourself in harm's way. Stay away from dangerous sports or risky activities. Accidents happen but injuries that result from careless behavior are maddening. If you are hurt and cannot perform or rehearse, it always causes unnecessary stress and work for your colleagues. So please take care of yourself.

Follow these simple guidelines and you will be well equipped to begin building your reputation as a reliable, collaborative artist. If you have any questions at all about this concept of professionalism please don't hesitate to contact a BFA faculty member and we'll be happy to talk it through with you!

## **B.F.A ACTING PROGRAM STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

To be signed by the student at the beginning of the first quarter of the program.

1. I understand that progress through the BFA program depends upon successful completion of all courses at each level, and recommendation by all BFA faculty. Students are regularly counseled by the BFA faculty as to their progress and status. No student will be dismissed from the program without first being placed on probationary status prior to the end of a quarter. All students are on probation the first three quarters of the program.

2. I understand that I am required to complete the following Theater Core classes in order to be **eligible for enrollment in the Junior level acting courses THTR 151A-B-C:**

THTR 1 – Play Analysis  
THTR 5 – Introduction to Acting  
THTR 29A - Scenic Practicum  
THTR 29B - Lighting Practicum  
THTR 29C - Costume Practicum  
THTR 29D - Run Crew Practicum  
THTR 188S - Shakespeare

3. I also understand that I must complete the Acting Program prerequisites prior to enrolling in THTR 151A-B-C:

THTR 10A-B-C - Sophomore Movement for the Stage  
THTR 11A-B-C - Sophomore Voice Laboratory  
THTR 15A-B-C - Sophomore Fundamentals of Acting

4. I agree to abide by departmental audition policies stated in the BFA green sheets.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_