

Oakland University
Department of Music, Theatre and Dance



Brenda Bly: Teen Detective -- photo by Rick Smith

THEATRE
Student Handbook

Unless one is committed
there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back
always ineffectiveness.
Concerning all acts of initiative and creation
there is one elementary truth,
the ignorance of which kills countless ideas
and splendid plans:
That the moment when one definitely commits oneself
then Providence moves too.
All sort of things occur to help one
that would never otherwise have occurred.
A whole stream of events issue from the decision
raising in one's favor all matter
of unforeseen incidents and meetings
and material assistance
which no person could have dreamt
would have come his way.
Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.
Begin it now.
...Goethe

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Our Mission

Department of Music, Theatre and Dance

Within the setting of a liberal arts education, the mission of the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance is twofold:

- a) to provide students with depth of understanding and experience in one or more areas of specialization, and
- b) to provide the university community and general public with a breadth of arts experiences. This is to be accomplished in a curricular setting which stresses the interrelationships of the arts represented in the department. The department fulfills this mission through classroom and studio instruction and performance experiences. It considers these two functions (instruction and performance) as equally important in arts education at the university level.

Theatre

The mission of the Theatre Program within the department of Music, Theatre and Dance is to provide a dynamic educational environment that enables students to become:

- articulate interpreters of the theatrical art.
- skillful and creative practitioners in a chosen area of concentration.
- familiar with the historical and cultural dimensions of theatre.
- informed collaborators in the multi-disciplinary theatrical process.
- life-long learners and leaders in theatre.

The Theatre Program likewise aims to serve the broader community by:

- Offering courses of general interest to all university students that impart an appreciation for the ways in which theatre is created and the manner in which it mirrors and interprets the human condition.
- Presenting to the university and general audience theatrical performances of high artistic quality in a wide range of historical and cultural styles.
- Educating theatre artists and leaders who will serve and shape local, regional and national theatres in the future.

Theatre at Oakland University

The theatre program at Oakland thrives in the highly collaborative atmosphere within the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance. The hallways and classrooms are filled with actors, singers, dancers, designers, instrumentalists and music educators--students and faculty--creating a rich environment where students gain a broad perspective on the performing arts while at the same time pursuing mastery of their artistic disciplines. A distinguished faculty of educators and professional performers provides excellent teaching and personal mentoring for every student.

The University as a whole shares a long-standing commitment to quality education in the liberal arts, and the general education component of the curriculum assures that students are given many opportunities to expand their intellectual horizons through a wide range of academic explorations while participating in the life of the University.

For the student of theatre, one of the unique features of Oakland is the presence of the professional Meadow Brook Theatre on campus. Theatre students have opportunities to interact with Meadow Brook Theatre personnel in production and in the classroom.

Degree Programs

The **Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree** curriculum offers a platform for the study of Theatre within the framework of a broad-based, liberal arts curriculum. Students gain an understanding of fundamentals, as well as a fuller intellectual grasp of the performing arts. Small class sizes allow more interaction and personal feedback from theatre faculty.

The **Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)**, the initial professional Theatre degree, places primary emphasis on the development of skills, concepts and sensitivities essential to the theatre professional in three areas of concentration:

- **Acting**

The BFA in acting develops professional competency through performance, repertory, and theoretical studies for students whose primary interest lies in acting and directing. Training emphasizes a variety of acting skills and offers opportunities to perform and direct.

- **Musical Theatre**

The BFA in musical theatre is designed for students interested in acting, singing and dance. A variety of acting classes, individual vocal instruction and training in ballet, jazz and modern dance are available. Performance opportunities exist in musical theatre and opera, in both workshop settings and fully staged productions.

- Theatre Design & Technology

The BFA in design and technology serves students interested in theatrical design, technical production or stage management. Training in stagecraft, stage management and scenic. costume and lighting design may lead to advanced projects in these areas according to each student's interests and capabilities.

Performance/Production Opportunities

Each year the department presents a dynamic season of dramas, comedies, musicals and operas. Students have many opportunities to perform, direct, design, stage-manage and participate in the technical aspects of production. (See a list of recent seasons in the back of this handbook).

Summer Semester in Greece

Theatre students, singers, dancers and anyone interested in classical theatre are invited to audition for the chance to study and perform with the Classical Theatre Company. Dr. Arthur Beer, professor and associate director of the Theatre Company at the University of Detroit Mercy, started this program in 1974. It brings together professional actors, directors, designers, teachers and students for a month of on-site education in Greece.

Oakland University's theatre faculty, staff and students have been company members in recent years and traveled to Greece to take advantage of this unique learning experience. Now, Oakland students can audition for the company and, if accepted, get 6 hours of Oakland credit in the summer semester through departmental course THA 482.

Every Oakland student should plan to take advantage of this opportunity to study classical theatre where it all began. The company spends three weeks on the island of Spetses studying movement, voice and acting. Evenings bring rehearsals. The plays then open in the amphitheatre on Spetses and tour a number of open-air theatres in Greece. Along the way there are lectures at classical sites and museums and free time to explore the beautiful surroundings and people.

Auditions and interviews are typically in the beginning of the winter semester on campus. Students interested in acting will audition. Technicians and designers will be interviewed. Plan now, to take advantage of this incredible experience while earning elective credits at Oakland University.

American College Theatre Festival

The Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival is an organization of over 800 college and university theatres promoting excellence in theatre in higher education. Local responses, regional conferences and an annual festival of performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. provide venues for students and faculty from different theatre programs to see and respond to each other's work, and to participate in a variety of workshops, exhibitions and competitions. MTD's Theatre Program has been very

active and highly successful in participating in KC/ACTF with several recent appearances at the regional and national festivals.

Meadow Brook Theatre

The Meadow Brook Theatre, Michigan's largest professional theatre, resides on the Oakland University campus. Collaboration between the student and professional theatres takes place in many areas. Several of the professional staff, the Equity stage manager and actors from Meadow Brook teach courses in the department. An internship program allows advanced theatre students to earn course credit while working in a professional theatre setting, and many of our students have been employed on a part-time basis as actors and technicians at Meadow Brook.

Becoming a Theatre Major

Admission

Entrance Auditions: Students who wish to be admitted to Oakland University as theatre majors must audition or interview with the department's faculty. Contact the department for specific days and times.

Freshmen: Admission to Oakland University is discussed at length in the Undergraduate Catalogue. Applications for admission available from high school counselors or from the Office of Admissions (101 North Foundation Hall, 248-370-3360). They should be submitted early in the senior year of high school, particularly for consideration for university academic scholarships.

Transfer Students: Applicants for transfer admission should have maintained at least a 2.50 grade point average at their previous institution and submit a transcript of previous college work. See the Undergraduate Catalogue.

Scholarships

Auditions and interviews are held every winter for entering applicants who wish to compete for talent-based scholarships in performance and production. Contact the department office at (248) 370-2030 for information about dates, procedures and preparation. All departmental scholarships are for a specified period of time (such as one semester or an academic year). Some are renewable, but no scholarships are automatically renewed from year to year.

Each year the department accepts applications from interested, current students for new or renewal scholarships. The department considers the student's talent in conjunction with other factors: availability of funds, faculty opinion, classwork, contributions to the strength and/or betterment of the department, service to the program, etc. Renewals are considered before new scholarships.

Once a scholarship is awarded, a student has to enroll for at least 12 credits per semester, make consistent academic progress, and participate onstage or backstage in one of the major theatre productions each semester in order for the scholarship to be renewed. Generally, no student may receive a talent-based scholarship for more than a total of eight semesters.

Entering Pre-Theatre Majors

A student entering Oakland and declaring the intention of majoring in Theatre, will be classified as a pre-Theatre majors student. The student will follow the appropriate initial courses (see Recommended 1st-year Courses) in consultation with an advisor and will make application for formal admission to the degree program via a Major Standing audition/interview as outlined below.

Major Standing

In their third semester, the students wishing to pursue a major in the performing arts will make a formal application through the department office to audition/interview for Major Standing. Transfer students must apply for major standing in their second semester at Oakland. Oakland University Internal Transfers (current students who wish to change their major) must meet with a theatre advisor at once to discuss requirements for major standing. Students applying for major standing at any time after their sophomore year may have to extend their expected graduation date.

- Theatre Performance students will present a combination of two contrasting monologues, or a monologue and a scene with a partner
- Musical Theatre students will present two of the following—a monologue/scene, a song, a dance.
- Theatre Production students will present a resumé and portfolio.

The Major Standing audition/interview offers the faculty a chance to review the students' work and to offer them advice about their future course of study and growth. On some occasions a student may be denied major standing, deferred for another semester, or encouraged to pursue an alternative track in the program for which the student's strengths may be better suited.

Production Eligibility

Students majoring in Theatre must stay in good standing academically in the department and the university. If you attend all your classes regularly and maintain good grades, you are eligible for participation in faculty and student-directed productions. If your grades falter or attendance becomes irregular, in your interest, your participation in productions may be limited or suspended until you demonstrate satisfactory academic improvement.

Advising

It is the student's responsibility to assure that he or she is making academic progress. In order to do that, students are expected to meet with their advisor every semester.

Advising is particularly critical for entering students and for students on the verge of graduating. The following is a list of advisors for the various Theatre tracks:

Theatre Performance	Karen Sheridan	305 VAR	370-2045
Musical Theatre	Michael Gillespie	309 VAR	370-3023
Theatre Production	Kerro Knox 3	130A VAR	370-3025a

Permission of Instructor

Students interested in taking a class that requires the instructor's permission before being admitted, must contact the instructor to receive this permission. If permission is granted, the student adds the class on an add/drop form and asks the instructor to sign it. The student then brings this to registration. It is best to get permission before the first day of class, as the class may be filled by then. Occasionally, one of the department secretaries (Muriel or Deneen) may have permission from the instructor to sign the forms. In the case of a part-time instructor who is not always on campus, one of the full-time faculty may have that permission.

Recommended 1st-year Courses

Theatre Performance: THA 110 Acting: The Instrument
THA 120 Stagecraft
THA 121 Costume Craft
THA 124 Elements of Design

(Additional recommendations)

ENG 105 Shakespeare
THA 111 Acting: The Script
THA 220 Theatre Ensemble
DAN Dance Technique Classes
Theatre Production: THA 110 Acting: The Instrument
THA 120 Stagecraft
THA 121 Costume Craft
THA 124 Elements of Design
THA 222 Drafting or
THA 223 Rendering and Model-making

(Additional recommendations)

THA 122 Costume and Culture in America

THA 220 Theatre Ensemble
AH or SA Art History or Studio Art Classes
Music Theatre: THA 110 Acting: The Instrument
THA 120 or 121 Stagecraft or Costume Craft
THA 124 Elements of Design
MUT 110 Musical Form and Comprehension
MUT 111 Notation and Musical Ideas
MUA 160 Vocal Techniques
MUA 100 Voice

(Additional recommendations)
THA 220 Theatre Ensemble
DAN Dance Technique Classes

Requirements

124 minimum total credits for the bachelor's degree

General Education

Students in the Theatre program must fulfill all general requirements of the University and the College of Arts and Sciences as listed in the University Undergraduate Catalog. These include:

- writing proficiency
- 32 credits of General Education Courses
- 16 credits of College Distribution Courses
- 32 credits at the 300 level or above
- 4 credits in Ethnic Diversity (may be double-counted)

Theatre Curricula

52 credits in theatre and related courses are required for the degree. Please refer to the copy of the degree checklist your theatre advisor will provide for the specific requirements of each degree track.

Performance/Production

During the course of studies at Oakland, each student is required to be an active participant, onstage or backstage, in six of the major theatre and/or music theatre productions of the department. At least one of these must be in a technical capacity other than stage management. All Theatre students should sign up for THA 220 Theatre Ensemble every semester for either 2 or 0 credits.

Events Attendance

Students majoring in theatre are required to complete four Events Attendance Cards while at Oakland. For transfer students who will be enrolled in fewer than four academic semesters, the requirement is one Events Attendance Card for each full or partial year enrolled. Each card has room for ten events. At least one event must be in music,

one in theatre, and one in dance. You may obtain the cards from the department office (211 Varner). When completed, the cards should be returned to the department secretary.

Senior Interview

Immediately prior to graduation, the student will meet with the faculty to review the student's training and achievements at Oakland and discuss the student's plans for the future.

Theatre Minor

To earn a minor in theatre, students must complete a minimum of 20 credits that are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Standards of Conduct at Oakland University

The possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and the unlawful use of alcohol by students or employees on university property or as part of a university activity is specifically prohibited by Oakland University Ordinances and/or by state or federal law. In accordance with the policies set forth by the University, the State and Federal laws, the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance's Theatre Area prohibits and will not tolerate the use of drugs or alcohol in any amount while participating in departmental activities. Such activities include but are not limited to: classes, rehearsals, performances (in either acting or technical capacities), production work in the theatre or shops, strikes, photo calls and off campus departmental activities.

Theatre Full-time Faculty:

Pavlo Bosyy, MFA Ohio University School of Theatre

Theatre history, Technology and Design

Michael Gillespie, PhD Stanford University

Acting, Directing, Alexander Technique

Kerro Knox 3, MFA Yale School of Drama

Scenic and Lighting Design, History, Directing, Production

Coordinator, Theatre Area

Fred Love, MM University of Arizona

Musical Theatre program coordinator

Karen Sheridan, MFA Goodman School of Drama

Acting, Auditions, Dialects, Directing, Movement, Styles

Thomas Suda, MFA Wayne State University

Acting, Intro to Theatre

Theatre Adjunct Faculty:

Donna Buckley, BA Oakland University

Costume Craft, Costume Shop Supervisor

Terry Carpenter, BS State University of New York-Brooklyn

Stage Management

Rick Carver, BA Oakland University

Acting, Mime

Kitty Dubin, MA Wayne State University

Playwriting

Mila Govich, MFA Ohio University

Acting

Lynnae Lehfeldt, MFA Wayne State University

Stage Voice, Acting

Leslie Littell, MA Rutgers University

Costume Design

Thomas Mahard, BA Bates College

Acting

John Michael Manfredi, Goodman School of Drama

Certified Fight Choreographer, Stage Combat

Dennis North, MFA Wayne State University

Company Class, On-camera acting

Brent Wrobel, BA University of Michigan-Flint

Stagecraft, Technical Director, Scene Shop Supervisor

Voice Full-time Faculty

Michael Mitchell, DMA Choral Conducting, University of Missouri-Kansas City University

Director of Choral Activities

John Paul White, Diploma in Opera Performance, Curtis Institute of Music

Music Program Director

Voice Adjunct Faculty

Jan Albright

Barbara Bland

Candace de Lattre

Edith Diggory

Dance Full-time Faculty

Laurie Eisenhower, MFA Arizona State University

Choreography, Modern Dance

Artistic Director, Eisenhower Dance Ensemble

Gregory Patterson, MFA University of Michigan

Artistic Director, Patterson Rhythm Pace

Conditioning, Jazz, Modern Dance, Musical Theatre Dance

Debra Bernstein-Siegel, MA Ohio State University

Historical dance, Baroque technique

Recent Theatre Seasons

2007-2008

Crumbs from the Table of Joy
Steel Pier
Chekhov in Yalta
Drat! The Cat!
Brenda Bly: Teen Detective

2006-2007

The Lesson (Professional Artist Series)
The Cripple of Inishmaan
By Jupiter
The Rimers of Eldritch
A Flea in Her Ear
A Year with Frog & Toad

2005-2006

The Waiting Room
Urinetown
Blue Window
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Honk!

2004-2005

The Laramie Project
She Stoops to Conquer
The Mikado
The White Rose
Opal

2003-2004

Great Expectations
Starting Here, Starting Now
Love Letters (Professional Artist Series)
The Miss Firecracker Contest
Into the Woods
Serengeti Tales

2002-2003

Picnic
Les Blancs (with University of Michigan-Flint)
Zastrozzi
for colored girls...
Anything Goes
You're a Good Man Charlie Brown

2001-2002

How Many Clowns Fit in a Volkswagen? (Professional Artist Series)
Romeo and Juliet
And Neither Have I Wings to Fly
Lucky Stiff
Too Many Sopranos



Crumbs from the Table of Joy --photo by Rick Smith

Contact Information

Department Office: 248-370-2030

Box Office: 248-370-3013

Website: www.oakland.edu/mtd

E-mail: mtd@oakland.edu