

**Marymount Manhattan College
Theatre Arts Department
Student Handbook
2023-2024**

This handbook has been compiled to serve as a resource for information about the activities and policies of the Theatre Arts Department this academic year. The handbook should be used as a supplement to the *Marymount Manhattan College Catalogue* which is the prime authority for information about degree requirements and College policy.

Degrees in Theatre Arts

The Theatre Arts Department houses several distinctive degrees: the BA in Theatre Arts (with four concentrations) and BFAs in Acting, Musical Theatre, Stage & Production Management, and Theatre Design & Technology. All of these programs are designed to provide professional training combined with a strong liberal arts education.

Please note that the curriculum below only reflects the incoming class for Fall 2023. Please consult the course catalogue that pertains to your start date by visiting [this page](#) and selecting the catalog for the year you began at MMC.

Outlines of general semester-to-semester course plans for each degree can be found at this [link](#). Updated plans reflecting the 2023-2024 incoming class curriculum will be available in October when the advisement period begins. Please keep in mind that these plans are recommendations. Students meet with their faculty academic advisors to choose courses that will move them successfully toward graduation.

BA in Theatre Arts

The BA program offers students the opportunity to develop specific strengths in one or more concentrations, while acquiring a comprehensive theatre education. Each concentration is designed to provide progressive challenges over the course of four years. Below is a brief description of each concentration. Consult the MMC Catalogue for a complete list of all degree requirements. Your academic theatre advisor can fine-tune these choices with you.

Directing

Students in the Directing concentration study the history of directing and learn to analyze texts and make conceptual choices. Through a progressive sequence of courses from Elements of Directing through Directing III, the student acquires the ability to interpret and visualize texts, and develop an artistic voice. Experience as an assistant to the director for faculty and guest directed Mainstage or Studio productions offers opportunities to learn various approaches to directing and to gain practical knowledge. In addition to classroom work, directing students mount short plays for the Directing Projects and Playwriting Projects produced each semester, which are guided by a faculty mentor. For more information, contact David Mold (dmold@mmm.edu) coordinator of the Directing concentration.

Process for Assigning Assistants to the Director for Mainstage and Studio Productions

- When auditions are announced for *Theatre Production: Mainstage* (THTR 343) and *Theatre Production: Studio* (THTR 225) for the upcoming semester, students interested in serving as Assistants to the Director should send the Coordinator for Directing (Professor David Mold), their ranked choices for those productions.
- The Coordinator takes these rankings, along with knowledge of faculty/guest directors' directing styles, into consideration when making assignments. The goal is to provide an educational experience to each Assistant that fulfills and challenges their particular interests. If needed, the Coordinator may meet with students to determine those interests.

- Once these assignments are made, student Assistants meet with the faculty or guest director for that particular Mainstage or Studio production prior to the start of the rehearsal process to discuss the scope and goals of their work.

Process for Registering for THTR 406, Directing III

Since there are limited slots in the Directing III course each semester, and students in the Directing concentration often wish to take the class twice, the following procedure will be followed to ensure that we can manage and cycle the needs of students.

- A grade of B or higher in Directing II, THTR 385, is required. A student with a grade lower than B may petition to the coordinator of the Directing concentration for consideration.
- Consideration for registration will first be given to students in the Directing concentration.
- Students that are registering for Directing III, THTR 406, for the first time will be given priority for registering over students that have previously completed the course.
- Students with the greatest number of completed credit hours are given priority for registration.

Theatre & New Media

The Theatre & New Media concentration embraces cross-disciplinary opportunities to blend performance with multiple media. Students interested in video, music, the web, social media, writing and theatre will find opportunities to integrate these multiple media to create a range of work. Students will explore emerging media technologies and learn to work across media platforms to create their own content and individual modes of expression. Classes cover a range of theatre and media topics and include opportunities in theatre production, producing webisodes, working with mobile media, video memoirs, digital video activism, documentary and experimental film. This concentration prepares students to become part of the next generation of media and performance professionals skilled in the integration of media and theatre arts. Students in Theatre & New Media who wish to perform are encouraged to audition for Beginning and Advanced Video Projects, Webisodes, and projects generated from courses in this concentration. Once these students have completed the Intro to Acting for Majors (THTR 122) course, they may audition for the Playwriting Projects and the Directing Projects each semester. For more info, see Mary Fleischer (mfleischer@mmm.edu), coordinator of the Theatre & New Media concentration.

Theatre History & Performance Texts

The Theatre History & Performance Texts concentration affords students the opportunity to explore all aspects of dramatic literature, history and criticism, while taking advantage of the unique opportunities New York City provides for encountering a wide range of traditional and emerging performance styles. The program develops the student's dramaturgical abilities through writing and direct involvement with the process of creating theatre. Theatre History & Performance Texts leads into any humanistic study, but is particularly beneficial to students interested in careers in literary management, theatre and film criticism, dramaturgy, education, journalism, historical research, and directing. For more information, contact Jill Stevenson (jstevenson@mmm.edu), coordinator of the Theatre History & Performance Texts concentration.

Production Dramaturg Selection Criteria

Students in the Theatre History and Performance Texts concentration, as well as other BA/BFA Theatre majors who are interested in dramaturgy, may serve as the production dramaturg on a Mainstage or Studio Theatre Production. To be considered, students must have successfully completed THTR 230-1: Theatre Histories I and II. Preference will be given to students who have also completed THTR 345: Introduction to Dramaturgy and other upper-level courses on theatre history and dramatic literature. Students in the Theatre History and Performance Texts concentration who meet these requirements will receive priority.

Students who are interested in this opportunity should contact Professor Jill Stevenson to discuss their dramaturgical interests with respect to the skills they wish to develop and the kinds of material on which they want to work. Effort is made to pair students with material and directors that will help students achieve their professional and creative goals, while also challenging them to further develop their research, writing, and communication skills.

Dramaturgs are typically paired with productions before auditions and perhaps earlier; therefore, interested students are encouraged to contact Professor Stevenson even if they are still in the process of fulfilling the necessary course requirements.

Students selected to serve as a Theatre Production dramaturg enroll in a 3-credit practicum course. Customarily, students may not serve as a production dramaturg in the same semester they are working on a Mainstage or Studio Theatre Production in another capacity (e.g., actor, assistant director, stage manager, designer).

Writing for the Stage

The Writing for the Stage concentration focuses first and foremost on creating a community that is safe, inclusive, and encouraging. The program, while grounding the student's study of core dramatic elements, elevates respect and collaboration in order to empower writers to let their true voice land on the page and ultimately in front of an audience. To this end, the capstone experience of the concentration is a bare-bones production of each student's work in our Bordeaux Box Theatre. Writing for the Stage also maintains interdisciplinary connections with the Communication & Media Arts and Writing, Literature, and Language programs. Through individual advisement students may be guided towards courses that speak to a particular interest in writing for film, radio, television, or New Media. For more information, contact Kenny Finkle (kfinkle@mmm.edu), Coordinator of the Writing for the Stage concentration.

BFA in Acting

The BFA Acting program at MMC is unique in its design as a 60-credit program that combines professional theatre training with substantial work in the liberal arts. Because the BFA is an intensive four-year program, there are additional requirements and policies in place to ensure that students focus on their continued growth and development. For more information, contact Ellen Orenstein (eorenstein@mmm.edu), Acting Program Coordinator, or your acting teacher.

BFA Grade Point Average

All BFA students must maintain a 3.0 average in all their major (THTR) courses, and a 2.8 cumulative grade point average in all their College course work. Students who fall below these levels may be placed on probation from the BFA program. If the student has failed to raise their GPA to the required level, the student can be asked to withdraw from the BFA program. Seniors will not be allowed to graduate with a BFA degree if they have not maintained the required GPA. Note that scholarships carry additional GPA requirements.

Movement I & II: THTR 223-224

BFA Acting students are required to register for Movement I in the fall of their freshman year and complete Movement II in the spring of that same academic year. The student typically stays with the same instructor for both semesters. A request to change instructor mid-year will be considered only when a student communicates a substantial reason for it. In those cases, the student must contact their instructor and the Department chair about initiating the formal process for such a request.

Voice and Speech for the Actor: THTR 202-203

Voice and Speech is taught as a year-long course. Students register for Voice and Speech for the Actor: THTR 202 in the fall of the sophomore year and complete THTR 203 in the spring of that same academic year. The student typically stays with the same instructor for both semesters. A request to change instructor mid-year will be considered only when a student communicates a substantial reason for it. In those cases, the student must contact their instructor and the Department chair about initiating the formal process for such a request.

BFA in Musical Theatre

The BFA in Musical Theatre is an intensive 63 credit program focusing on performance technique in dance, song and spoken word. Prospective students for the BFA must not only satisfy the academic requirements for acceptance to the College but must also give strong evidence of professional promise as demonstrated through an interview and audition. The program necessitates a three-year residency at the College. Private Voice and Daily Dance Labs are attached to: Fundamentals of Musical Theatre, Musical Theatre Techniques I and II, Scene Into Song I and II, Musical Theatre Song Portfolio and Professional Preparation: Musical Theatre. These Labs support classroom and studio work with 12 voice lessons per semester and 12 weeks of Ballet, Theatre Dance and Tap. All BFA students are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.8 or better in all course work, and a 3.0 G.P.A. in the major.

The three components of the Musical Theatre curriculum are coordinated by the following faculty members: **Emily Clark** (Musical Theatre Coordinator for Core Course Sequence and Production); **Bethany Elkin** (Musical Theatre Coordinator for Daily Dance); and **Christine Riley** (Musical Theatre Coordinator for Private Voice). If you have questions or needs specific to courses, daily dance, or private voice, please contact the relevant coordinator.

Daily Dance and Private Voice Grading Policy

Daily Dance and Private Voice are component labs of the three-credit required courses in the Musical Theatre program. The labs were thoughtfully designed to train students in the skills necessary for a future in theatrical performance. At the close of each semester, grades from the Daily Dance and Private Voice teachers are reported to the instructors of Fundamentals of Musical Theatre, Musical Theatre Techniques, Scene into Song, Musical Theatre Song Portfolio and Professional Preparation: Musical Theatre, and are computed into the student's final grade (see course syllabus for further details). **Students must receive a passing grade in all three elements—Daily Dance, Private Voice, and the core course—to continue in the Musical Theatre course progression and to audition for department productions.** Should a student receive a failing grade in any of these elements, they are required to meet with a member of the full-time Musical Theatre faculty to determine if they can continue their progress in the program.

Typically, students remain with the same Private Voice teacher during their time at MMC. Ideally, the student and teacher adjust to each other's style and develop a productive working relationship. Occasionally, either the student or teacher reaches an impasse where true learning and growth are not happening. If this is the case, and open dialogue has not helped, the student may request a change of teacher. The student should speak to their voice teacher about their concerns, if possible, and then speak with Christine Riley, coordinator of Private Voice.

Attendance Policy: Private Voice

Students must follow the 24-48 hour cancellation policies of their individual studios. Read the policy of your individual studio carefully. If you are ill or need to miss a lesson, you must contact your voice teacher immediately by phone or email to reschedule. One missed absence is allowed for personal reasons. A doctor's note is required for any additional absences.

Attendance Policy: Daily Dance

Dance grades will be based 90% on attendance and 10% measuring work ethic, dance technique acquired, musicality, artistry and professionalism. Five unexcused absences are allowed per semester—then for every additional missed class the grade goes down one level. If students miss a dance class due to illness that requires medical attention—students MUST provide a note from their doctor. Please email doctors notes to Bethany Elkin belkin@mmm.edu (Daily Dance Coordinator) and your Daily Dance instructor.

Voice and Speech for the Actor: THTR 202-203

Voice and Speech is taught as a year-long course. Students register for Voice and Speech for the Actor: THTR 202 in the fall of the sophomore year and complete THTR 203 in the spring of that same academic year. The student typically stays with the same instructor for both semesters. A request to change instructor mid-year will be considered only when a student communicates a substantial reason for it. In those cases, the student must contact their instructor and the Department chair about initiating the formal process for such a request.

BFA in Stage and Production Management

The BFA in Stage and Production Management is a 60 credit program focusing on management theory and practical experience. It offers students a sequence of courses that prepares them for employment with theatres and arts organizations once they graduate. While this 60 credit program is highly structured, it allows students the flexibility to take electives or a minor in other areas based on individual interest. The inclusion of an internship is specifically designed to help students build connections to a career network. Prospective students for the BFA must not only satisfy the academic requirements for acceptance to the college, but must also show evidence of professional promise as demonstrated by an interview and portfolio presentation. The program is based on student progress and potential and usually requires a 3 year residency at the college. All BFA students are evaluated each year according to the following criteria:

- Maintenance of a 2.8 cumulative or better G.P.A. in all course work and a 3.0 G.P.A. in the major
- Participation in year-end review where overall progress is evaluated and individualized and constructive feedback is provided.
- Active participation in the program and stage management courses as well as the acquisition of leadership skills

For more info, see Lori Ann Zepp (lzepp@mmm.edu), Program Coordinator

Guidelines for Stage Management Mainstage Assignments

In order to be a Deck Stage Manager on the Mainstage students must:

1. Have a 3.0 or better GPA in the BFA program
2. Have an overall GPA of 2.8 or better
3. Complete THTR 110: Stagecraft
4. Complete THTR 256: Stage Management in Performance
 - a. Satisfactorily serve as a stage manager for either a Directing Project or a Playwriting Project
5. Possess the following qualities:

- a. Demonstrate knowledge of ASM responsibilities and know the basics of calling a performance
- b. Understand the commitment to the job requirements
- c. Demonstrate leadership qualities

In order to be a Production Stage Manager on the Mainstage you must:

1. Have a 3.0 or better GPA in the BFA program
2. Have an overall GPA of 2.8 or better
3. Complete THTR 110: Stagecraft
4. Complete THTR 256: Stage Management in Performance
 - a. Satisfactorily serve as a stage manager for either a Directing Project or a Playwriting Project
5. Complete THTR 338: Stage Management: Logistics and Collaboration
6. Satisfactorily serve as a Deck Stage Manager for a Mainstage or off-site production
7. Possess the following qualities
 - a. Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of Deck Stage Manager and PSM responsibilities and is proficient in cue calling
 - b. Understand the commitment to the job requirements
 - c. Demonstrate leadership qualities
 - d. Show diligence and is proactive in communication and problem solving
8. You may be a Deck Stage Manager twice before serving as PSM
9. You do not have to PSM to graduate. It is an earned opportunity.

Assignments at each level are based on scheduling, production needs and a student's performance at the previous level. Assignments are awarded after review by a panel of faculty members from stage management, design, and production. Individual directors do not make the assignments.

BFA Theatre Design & Technology

The BFA in Theatre Design and Technology is an intensive 60-credit program focusing on classroom theory and practical application. Students complete a track in one of six concentrations: Costume Design; Lighting Design; Scenic Design; Sound Design; Technical Production; Theatrical Media Design. Prospective students for the BFA must not only satisfy the academic requirements for acceptance to the college, but must give strong evidence of professional promise as demonstrated by an interview and portfolio presentation. The program usually requires a three-year residency at the college. Continuation in the BFA Theatre Design and Technology program is based on the student's progress and potential.

BFA students are evaluated each year according to the following criteria:

- Maintenance of a 2.8 cumulative or better G.P.A. in all course work and a 3.0 G.P.A. in the major.
- Participation in year-end portfolio reviews.
- Active participation that demonstrates leadership ability in all Design Practicum courses.

Guidelines for Designing on the Mainstage

- a. 3.0 or better G.P.A. in concentration

- b. Overall G.P.A. of 2.8
- c. Design students no longer have to take stagecraft instead they must take the 200 level technical course in their discipline. (i.e., Lighting Mechanics, Scenery and Prop Technology, Costume Construction) and do well in the lab hours before they can be a crew head.
- d. Must work as crew head -- THTR 240: Design Assistant Practicum
 - 1. Demonstrate leadership
 - 2. Show diligence
 - 3. Demonstrate understanding of production process and requirements
 - 4. Must have been a crew head before they can assistant design
- e. Must work as Assistant Designer (THTR 340: Assistant Design Practicum)
 - 1. Show understanding of design process
 - 2. Demonstrate commitment to work requirements
 - 3. Carry out responsibilities of assistant designer satisfactorily
 - 4. Must have been an assistant designer before they can design.
- f. Must have completed design courses in their track or by permission of design faculty.
- g. You do not have to design to graduate. It is a privilege to receive the opportunity to assist a designer and to design.

Theatre Arts related Minors

You can find detailed descriptions of the minors and curriculum requirements in the 2023-2024 academic catalogue.

Arts Management Minor

The Arts Management Minor is comprised of 18 credits and is designed to train students with arts and/or business backgrounds for positions with theatre, dance and opera companies, music ensembles, museums and galleries, arts foundations, and educational institutions. The courses cover cultural institution administration as well as the theoretical concepts and practical skills needed for a career in this field. For more information, contact Mary Fleischer (mfleischer@mmm.edu).

Drama Therapy Minor

The Drama Therapy Minor is comprised of 18 credits and integrates study in psychology, biology and theatre to give students insight into the field of drama therapy that supports the emotional and physical wellbeing of patients. The Drama Therapy minor prepares students for post-Baccalaureate programs in Drama Therapy or to pursue NADT accredited certification programs. For more info, contact Jill Stevenson (jstevenson@mmm.edu).

Arts for Communities Minor

The Arts for Communities Minor is comprised of 24 credits and prepares students of various backgrounds and disciplines to use creative tools to make a difference in a variety of communities and settings. Students study artistic and performative strategies, teaching methods, community building, and facilitation methods through course work, and engage in an off-campus internship with an arts, educational, or community service organization in New York City. For more info, contact Mary Fleischer (mfleischer@mmm.edu).

Music Minor

The Music Minor is comprised of 18 credits and is designed to promote musical knowledge and literacy and provide framework for creative opportunities for students with musical skills already at intermediate level. The credits are distributed among three areas of study: Music Scholarship (6-9 credits), Musicianship (3-9) and Creative Production (3-6) so that students can customize the minor to complement or expand their interests and abilities. For further info contact Andy Warshaw (awarshaw@mmm.edu) or Mary Fleischer (mfleischer@mmm.edu).

Music Industry Minor

The Music Industry minor prepares students to pursue careers in the contemporary music industry including music marketing, promotion and producing, music supervision, and the use of music in entertainment and media. The minor's core courses ensure that students are knowledgeable about the best practices of the industry, while elective courses invite students to follow aspects of the field in more depth. For further info contact Jonathan Finegold (jfinegold@mmm.edu) or Mary Fleischer (mfleischer@mmm.edu).

Fashion Studies Minor

Fashion Studies is an interdisciplinary minor that combines business, arts, media and culture. Students take four required and two elective courses that are drawn from the departments of Business, Communication & Media Arts, Theatre Arts and Art. Students are encouraged to explore their interests in the social, economic, cultural, artistic and historical aspects of fashion through projects and internships as well as course work. For further info contact Mary Fleischer (mfleischer@mmm.edu).

Success in Theatre Arts at MMC

A student's success at MMC is directly tied to the effort they put into their studies, the degree to which they interact with faculty and peers, and their ability to balance personal obligations with educational commitments. Students therefore have certain responsibilities that contribute to the quality of their educational experience. These responsibilities are to their peers, to their instructors, to staff members, and—importantly—to themselves.

Enrolling in a course represents a commitment to the work of that course. Inherent to that commitment is the expectation that students will assume responsibility for contributing to their own development and learning, and for supporting the development and learning of their peers. The collaborative nature of courses at MMC means that each student's work impacts the work of everyone else in the course, and the department's attendance policy was designed with that reality in mind. Attending class demonstrates respect for yourself, your instructor, and your peers.

All classes at MMC, including studio and performance classes, also require outside study and/or rehearsal. The general rule is that students should expect to spend at least 2 hours of outside homework time for every hour of class time per week. In addition, many MMC students need to work in order to support themselves and many also have family responsibilities; therefore, juggling the time demands of classes, work, and course preparation can be difficult. It usually takes longer than we think to complete assignments and tasks successfully. It is therefore critical to build a weekly schedule that includes time for classes, studying, rehearsal/studio/lab hours, outside jobs and responsibilities, and rest/socializing. This kind of careful time management is not only important to academic success, but it also supports individual mental and physical well-being.

If you are struggling in a course, in addition to speaking with your instructor, consider using the tutoring services provided by the Center for Academic Support and Tutoring (CAST), which is located around the corner from the Theatre Office in Nugent Hall 151F. CAST provides tutors in most subjects and can help with other forms of academic support. Sign up for a tutoring session as soon as you feel yourself slipping so that you get help early. You can find more details about tutoring times and options [here](#).

Students can also develop meaningful relationships with their peers and learn more about the art of theatre making through other opportunities on campus—volunteer in the scene shop or costume shop, audition for department shows, and join student clubs. We especially encourage students to look into non-theatre clubs at MMC in order to expand their knowledge of the world and to develop other interests that can feed into their theatre making.

Students may also be asked to participate in projects outside of MMC. While these can be valuable to building connections within the theatre community, they are often very difficult to balance with a student's existing responsibilities and requirements. It is therefore important that students consider *all* aspects of any opportunity before deciding to pursue it so that they are certain it supports their artistic development and will not negatively impact their academic progress. The full-time faculty in Theatre Arts are all working professionals and happy to talk with students about the genuine value of any opportunities they are considering.

Overall, our department's priorities are that students get the most out of the training they are paying for and that they graduate on schedule. However, faculty also know that students are learning how to manage time, balance priorities, and choose what opportunities will be most valuable. We therefore encourage students to reach out to their advisor or a full-time faculty member when they need support.

Finally, the commitments & policies below were developed to create a community that supports each student's individual growth as well as their successful progression toward earning their degree.

Department Commitments

Commitment to Equity and Transformative Justice

The Theatre Arts Department is committed to creating a culture and curriculum that are ethical and equitable. Theatre Arts faculty and staff pledge to develop and implement recruitment strategies, curriculum, pedagogy, and theatre production practices that are anti-racist, anti-sexist, gender, body, ability, national origin, and LGBTQIA+ inclusive. They will also engage and collaborate with students to eradicate biased structures. This departmental work is grounded in a commitment to Transformative Justice.

Transformative Justice is a collection of methods designed to give communities—in our case, classroom, studio, production, and department communities—autonomy over social systems. It asserts that we each experience harm on an interpersonal level largely due to systems that are not always visible. It is therefore a strategy for challenging systems of racism, sexism, and oppression that have historically silenced certain voices in academic & theatre spaces.

Theatre Arts faculty implement transformative justice practices in Theatre Arts courses as a way to build community in our classrooms, studios, and production spaces. Since these practices are meant to create community, they will be employed differently in each unique environment; while there are foundational skills and practices, students and faculty decide how these intersect with the work of each distinctive learning space. Moreover, while the foundational work happens during the first week of classes, the impact of Transformative Justice accumulates over time as students and instructors work together, applying and revisiting these practices throughout the semester. The hope is that these practices will help us to create new ways to listen, question, and respond to conflict/disagreement when it arises.

Discomfort and Boundaries in Theatre-making

Professional and academic work in Theatre is often physically, intellectually, and/or emotionally demanding. Building new skills and strengthening those you have will challenge preconceived notions you may have about your own capabilities. Discomfort is therefore a part of our work as we develop as artists.

Our Transformative Justice work helps establish basic community agreements about how each classroom and production community will respond when discomfort or conflict arise. In addition, we have embedded MMC Theatrical Intimacy practices throughout the Theatre Arts curriculum. These practices empower students to take responsibility for their own emotional and physical safety while engaging fully in the risky, challenging work of education and creation. Given the collaborative nature of our classrooms and productions, it is each student's responsibility to be aware of their own level of comfort/discomfort and to decide which personal boundaries to challenge on a given day. If a boundary needs to be revisited at a later time, students should communicate that need using the protocols established through a classroom's or production's community agreements.

Theatrical Intimacy Education at MMC

Theatrical intimacy Education (TIE) is embedded throughout MMC's Theatre Arts curriculum. We employ Intimacy Directors trained in TIE practices to work on all department productions and to lead intimacy education workshops/lectures in courses. This work involves creating consent-based spaces and processes that allow everyone involved in the course/production to take responsibility for themselves and articulate their own boundaries. The practices we teach and encourage are skills that students can then add to their own individual toolkit.

The department has adopted a Theatrical Intimacy Education approach in order to make sure that all voices in the room are valued and to recognize that while intimacy choreography is not new, the field of Theatrical Intimacy is rapidly developing. The TIE philosophy also acknowledges that MMC's Theatre department is not a professional theatre space; rather, it is an educational pre-professional environment. The specific needs of individual courses and productions will necessarily differ. We therefore use a range of skills and tools, rather than one particular method, in order to honor the fact that each course or production represents a distinctive community of individuals with unique needs.

Commitment to Production as Pedagogy

Productions at MMC are courses designed to provide students with a rigorous pedagogical experience in which process is privileged over product. These courses are structured to provide students with a learning experience that supports the transition from classroom/studio to performance-level technique. The department aims to give students access to a range of artistic approaches, both through the selection of material and by inviting guest directors to work with our student directors, stage managers, designers, dramaturgs, and performers. Rehearsal work integrates research assignments, readings, presentations, field trips, and other resources depending on the nature of the material. Mainstage and Studio productions are directed by faculty and performed for a public audience in a variety of campus or off-campus spaces.

Content Notes for MMC Theatre Arts productions

MMC's Theatre Arts Department is committed to creating production spaces in which all members of the community—on stage, backstage, in the booth, and in the audience—have autonomy to protect themselves from harm. To support that goal, the department makes every effort to inform students working on productions about potentially triggering content in advance. In addition, audiences at all department-sponsored productions receive content notes in ticketing information and in the playbill.

Our department's "Guide for Content Notes" can be found on the "Theatre Arts Community Work" section of the department's Brightspace page. Topics/material included in content notes for MMC's theatre productions include, but are not limited to, those listed on this guide. Content notes will also specify how the topics/material are presented in the production by using language such as "depictions of," "discussion of," "simulated," "themes of," and "brief references to."

While faculty cannot mandate that students provide content notes for productions that are not sponsored by the department—such as student club productions—it strongly encourages this practice. The department Chair and Assistant Chair for Production Pedagogy, as well as student club advisors, are happy to offer help in crafting these notes.

Body Talk

The Theatre Arts faculty want students to develop a positive relationship between nutrition, exercise, and their unique bodies. We also recognize that fostering that relationship will necessitate different things for different people. Advice that is beneficial to one student might prove detrimental to another. Therefore, in order to avoid unintentional harm, Theatre Arts faculty will not engage in conversations with students about diet, nutrition, or weight maintenance. Students who want information about these topics should seek advice from licensed professionals. Although the department does not endorse any specific individuals or organizations, Libby Parker has visited the department and students have felt empowered by her work: <https://notyouraveragenutritionist.com>

Department Policies & Procedures

Attendance and Participation Policy

It is in every student's best interest to attend class regularly and punctually. A key element of all theatre courses is collaboration; you are meant to learn not only from the work you complete, but by interacting and working with your peers as part of a learning community. Therefore, attendance means not only arriving to class on time and prepared, but participating actively in our work together.

It is almost impossible to earn a passing grade if you are repeatedly absent or late given course requirements and the amount of work you will miss. Furthermore, the more times you are absent, the less able you will be to participate in our ongoing work.

Finally, all MMC courses and degrees are approved by New York State Education Department (NYSED) guidelines, which are based on the U.S. Department of Education's definition of a credit hour. These guidelines require students to complete a minimum number of contact hours per course, and faculty must ensure that those contact hours are achieved.

In order to support students in achieving the learning goals and contact hour requirements for courses, the department has a unified policy on class attendance to which I will adhere:

- In classes that meet twice weekly, students are permitted to miss two classes without penalty. In classes that meet only once per week, students are permitted one absence without penalty.
- Further absences will lower a student's final grade by one level for each additional absence in a twice weekly course (i.e.: a B+ becomes a B) or by two levels for each additional absence in a once-a-week course (i.e.: a B+ becomes a B-).
- Lateness occurs when a student arrives for class up to 10 minutes later than the scheduled start time; arrival after 15 minutes can be counted as an absence. 2 instances of lateness equal 1 absence.
- The department makes no distinction regarding reasons for absences. It is up to students to be prudent and save their permitted absences for times when they may really need them, such as when they are ill. Doctor's notes and other documentation will not influence this policy.
- If a student must be absent for an additional or extended period of time for medical or personal reasons, they should talk with their instructors and be prepared to provide appropriate documentation. Instructors may speak with the student to discuss if, given the circumstances, they should remain in the course or withdraw in order to focus on their health and well-being.
- Requests for absences caused by a disability will be considered if a student has an approved accommodation for medical/disability absence consideration, as documented by the Office of Disability Services.
- Students will not be penalized for religious, pregnancy, or childbirth-related absences. Absences for these reasons will not be counted toward the permitted number of absences in this course. Please inform your instructor about absences related to pregnancy, childbirth, or religious observation.
- If a student enrolls in a course late during the drop/add period they are not penalized for any absences that result. However, students are responsible for contacting their instructor to learn about any information or assignments they may have missed.
- Finally, absences due to COVID-19 will be assessed based upon the College's current policies and safety protocols. While we do not want students to come to class sick or potentially expose others, faculty must maintain the integrity of their courses. Students should not abuse the flexibility faculty may offer as we continue to manage issues related to COVID-19.

Additional Participation Policies for Hybrid/Online courses

- In hybrid or online courses it is the student's responsibility to let professors know if they have unexpected technology-related issues in order to determine reasonable accommodations. Faculty will work with students on a case-by-case basis.
- Recording virtual class sessions without the permission of the faculty and students is strictly prohibited. If a faculty member has the class's permission to record a class, it will be on Brightspace and removed in a timeframe the professor deems appropriate. Downloading, sharing, posting recordings or still shots from class are strictly prohibited. See MMC's policy regarding the recording of classes.
- If you need help with the technical aspects of Zoom, in order make your online educational experience effective, MMC's IT Department has created a number of referenced resources to assist with Zoom difficulties. A Zoom webpage that answers almost all zoom related questions can be accessed here: <https://www.mmm.edu/offices/information-technology/zoom/>. YouTube videos are also provided for additional instruction.

Policy on Recording of Classes

Please be aware that audio recording or photographing online or in-person classes is strictly prohibited unless a student has received explicit permission from the instructor. An exception is made for students who have registered with the Office of Disability Services and have been granted prior approval to receive audio recordings, which can be provided by the course instructor. Students with approval to receive recordings must sign a contract agreeing to keep all recordings confidential, not share or disseminate them in any form, and to destroy all recordings after completing the course. Instructors are also required to inform students if they will be recording a class session.

Policy on Production Photography

Department productions are learning experiences in which students at different stages of artistic development collaborate and problem-solve together. During the rehearsal and tech period, the work of the creative team and cast unfolds on different timelines; some work will be in advanced stages, while other work is only just starting. Maintaining trust among everyone involved in the production is therefore critical to the integrity of the rehearsal process. Consequently, no personal images or recordings may be taken during rehearsal, technical rehearsals, or performances unless there is an explicit production need by a member of the creative team that is approved by the director and Assistant Chair for Production Pedagogy (e.g., a record for learning choreography; an image of the lighting to assist with focus). In those rare cases, the images and recordings must be destroyed after use, and may not be circulated or posted in any way.

The department hires a photographer to take photos of all Mainstage, Studio, and Box productions. Those images are made available to all members of the creative team and cast to download for professional use. This policy on production photography aligns with industry standards and is meant to reinforce our department's commitment to production as pedagogy.

Grade Requirements in Majors and Minors

It is MMC's policy that a student must earn a minimum of "C-" to receive credit in any course required in their major or minor. A "D" grade in the student's major/minor is equivalent to an "F" and is a failing grade. (There is no "D+" grade). Most Theatre Arts programs are structured as course sequences with strict prerequisites; therefore, to continue making progress in the program students must earn grades of at least "C-" or they will need to repeat courses. For example, a student who fails THTR 202: Voice & Speech I in the Fall cannot continue with THTR 203: Voice & Speech II in the Spring; instead, the student will need to restart the THTR 202-203 course sequence the following academic year. This can impact the student's progression to graduation. It is therefore important that students talk to their instructors when they begin to struggle in a course so that they can get support to successfully

complete degree requirements in a timely manner. In cases when students must repeat a course, they can petition to take advantage of the College's [grade waiver policy](#).

Audition Policy for Department Productions

Students in the BFA Acting and BFA Musical Theatre programs are not required to audition for department productions; however, they are encouraged to do so each semester in order to remain in the casting pool. Auditioning is a skill honed through practice and experience.

Since department productions are offered as courses, students must have completed the pre-requisites in order to audition. In order to audition for Studio or Mainstage productions (THTR 225: Theatre Production: Studio or THTR 343: Theatre Production Mainstage), students must be enrolled in or have completed THTR 211: Acting Process & Technique. Actors cast in Studio or Mainstage productions enroll in THTR 225 or THTR 343, a three-credit course that fulfills an acting elective.

In order to audition for Directing Projects or Playwriting Projects, students must be enrolled in or have completed THTR 122: Introduction to Acting for Majors or THTR 211: Acting Process & Technique. Students cast in these projects enroll in THTR 245: Acting Process Elective, a one-credit pass/fail course.

Theatre Arts Department casting policy

We believe in diverse casting that reflects the world we live in now. We truly welcome all actors to audition for our MMC productions. We look to audition Asian, Black, Latino/a/x, Middle Eastern, Multi-Racial, Native, Pacific Islander and White, Female-Identifying, Male-Identifying, and LGBTQIA+ performers of all body types and abilities. We are looking for actors who can play the age of the character; they do not need to be the actual age of the character. All roles are open to all actors except where the play necessitates specific gender, race, and/or ethnic casting. When that is the case, these requirements are specified in the casting breakdown. Casting decisions will take into consideration student GPA, previous production casting, and, for Musical Theatre majors, attendance and participation in Daily Dance and Private Voice.

Participation Policy for Student Clubs

The faculty aim to help student clubs maximize production opportunities for Theatre Arts students, while also supporting students in their academic progress. Therefore, any student cast in a Theatre Arts department production or holding a production position (i.e., director, assistant to the director or choreographer, stage manager or designer) for Mainstage or Studio productions, Directing Projects, Playwriting Projects, or Showcase is not permitted to perform or participate in MMC student club productions during that same semester without obtaining permission from the Department Chair or a Theatre Arts program coordinator. Students who violate this policy will be placed on probation with a second offense resulting in the loss of future department production opportunities.

Procedures for Reserving Space

To request studio space please fill out this [online form](#). Please note that rehearsal spaces are reserved for classwork and academic rehearsals. Rehearsals for Registered Student Organizations, rehearsals for outside events, and outside auditions are not approved during Fall or Spring semesters.

Requests may be made up to four days (96 hours) in advance and are only **approved during normal business hours (Monday-Friday from 11AM-4PM). If you need weekend rehearsal space please make sure you request it with enough time to approve the request by 4PM Friday.** We will not accept in-person reservations in the Theatre Office or via email. You must use the online form to request space. Reservation requests will be approved on a first submitted, first approved basis. No space reservation is to be considered final until user has received a confirmation email.

The form works best on a desktop/laptop computer. If you are using a mobile device please change your view settings to Desktop Site.

How to request a space:

1. Requests are limited to 90 minutes or less. Any requests more than 90 minutes will be declined and must be resubmitted. The requested space will not be held.
2. Enter your name and contact information, then choose your date and time by clicking "Add Meeting."
3. Within "Add Meeting" you must select a Single Meeting (Multiple Meetings and Recurring Meetings are not allowed. Any multiple meeting requests will be declined and must be resubmitted).
4. After you have selected your date and time (no more than 90 minutes per rehearsal), click "Assign Room" to select a studio.
5. Please list the class for which you will be rehearsing.

Studio Policies

- It is the responsibility of every user of a shared campus space to never remove any of the items from a space and to never move them to a different space.
- It is the responsibility of every user of any of the VPA spaces to reset the studio and restore the furnishings to their standard configuration in their labeled spaces before the end of their reservation time.
- It is the responsibility of every user to exit their space in a timely fashion and not delay the start of the next reservation, whether that is a class or another student rehearsal.
- It is the responsibility of every user of a shared campus space to respect the reservation system and to not enter/use any space, seat, or item that has not been previously reserved and for which said reservation has not been confirmed. The inability to adhere to this policy may result in the revocation of space usage privileges.
- All personal items found in studios must be turned into Campus Security's lost and found.
- Any broken furnishings or studio damage should be immediately reported to Operations Director Katie Meade at kmeade@mmm.edu.

Department Communication

Check your MMC Email frequently

College administrators and your professors will only use MMC email accounts to communicate with students. Please check your MMC email several times daily and stay ahead of deleting old emails so that your box will remain active.

Theatre Notes

A weekly email to Theatre Arts students and faculty, informing them of upcoming events and opportunities in the department, around NYC, and online.

Academic Advisement

Each semester, students schedule appointments during the College-wide Advisement period with their Theatre faculty advisors to discuss their academic progress and to plan their courses for the next semester. Advisors will circulate instructions via email about how they will hold appointments and how students should sign up for these appointments. Students are assigned advisors from the full-time Theatre faculty, but they can also request a particular advisor. To make a request, please complete this

form (<https://www.mmm.edu/live/files/495-faculty-advisor-change-request>) and send it to Barbara Tiernan (btiernan@mmm.edu). Students are encouraged to seek out their advisors as needs arise during the course of the semester.

Department Reporting Structure

If you have concerns about your work in a course, you have several ways to communicate these:

- The first step is to ask your professor after class or by email for an individual appointment. Faculty have office hours, but may also be available at different times to discuss classroom concerns. Speaking to your professor directly is almost always the best way to begin addressing classroom issues.
- If you have concerns about speaking to your professor directly, you can contact the Coordinator of your concentration/program or your Theatre Arts Academic Advisor. They can offer advice about ways to approach communication and problem-solving with your professor.
- You are also welcome to contact the Chair of the Theatre Department, Jill Stevenson (jstevenson@mmm.edu).

Courses with a production component typically have additional communication mechanisms and resources (e.g., Theatre Production Deputy; Intimacy Director; faculty mentors). Production reporting structures are reviewed at the beginning of the semester and posted in our performance spaces.

College-wide Policies Regarding Discrimination and Harassment

Marymount Manhattan College strives to create an academic environment that excludes all types of harassment and discrimination. We each have a responsibility to uphold these values. If you or someone you know has experienced bias, discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct, please use this [form](#) to file a report. You may also email Desiree Sholes, the College's Title IX Coordinator (dsholes@mmm.edu).

Please be aware that all MMC staff and faculty members are “responsible employees,” which means that if you share a situation involving an incident of bias, discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct, they **must** share that information with the Chief Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer or Title IX Coordinator. Although faculty and staff are obligated to share this information, you are in control of how to proceed with a reported incident, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to a confidential resource who is not obligated to report information shared, you can contact any of the following on-campus resources:

[Counseling and Wellness Center](#)

§ 212.774.0700

§ Nugent Building, Suite 352

[Dow Zanghi Health Center](#)

§ 212-759-5870

§ 231 E. 55th St. (in the 55th St. Residence Hall)

College-wide Policies Regarding Social Media and Cyberbullying

Marymount Manhattan College strives to foster a community that recognizes the varying beliefs and practices of others, promotes civility, and celebrates inclusiveness where students can develop an

appreciation of diversity in the community. Engaging online can be an easily accessible, convenient, educational, and fun way to connect with others in the MMC community.

Students are asked to adhere to the following guidelines regarding various social media platforms:

1. Marymount Manhattan College's identity, such name, colors, and emblems (logos, mascot, etc.) cannot be used without written permission from the Office of Institutional Advancement. Students cannot create or develop social media accounts, profiles, or initiatives bearing MMC's name or likeness unless written permission is obtained from the Office of Institutional Advancement.
2. Students are advised to be aware that the information they post/share online or is posted/shared online by others becomes public information that may be viewed by their relatives, faculty, future employers, etc. If the College receives information via social media/internet/online that the law or College policy has been violated/potentially violated by a student, such allegations will be investigated through the student conduct process as outlined in the Code of Conduct.
3. Be mindful of copyright and intellectual property rights of others and the College policies regarding those rights.
4. The College will not monitor student's personal accounts; however there are times when a report is received from a staff/faculty member/fellow student with concerns that must be addressed. When posting, please keep in mind:
 - a. MMC policies do extend to social media. We promote respectful, open dialogue and civil and fair treatment of others; while discouraging harassment, derogatory or insulting statements, threatening or intimidating comments/messages, fraudulent behavior, defamation, discriminatory speech and actions, prejudicial statements, and violent behavior.
 - b. Judicial action will be taken for comments, pictures, videos, posts, statements, information, or other items that reflect poor judgment, choices, or actions taken in contrast to what is expected of MMC students.
 - c. Evidence of violations within the residence halls will be referred to the Office of Residence Life.
 - d. Out of care and concern, postings that may demonstrate a need for mental health assistance or support will also be addressed.

MMC Engage

MMC Engage should be used for its intended purpose of having access to campus news, upcoming events, and networking with other students, MMC staff, and faculty right at your fingertips.

- **The Human Element:** It can be easy to forget that behind the screen are real people who view all the comments and photos posted. Before posting anything, ask yourself if it's appropriate, if you would have an issue if someone else had written it, and if you would have made the same comments face to face.
- **Check Yourself:** While social media can feel informal, MMC Engage is still a college-run platform. You should remain professional in your communication.
- **Respect People's Time:** While you might expect instant messaging to result in instant responses, keep in mind that not everyone has access to their MMC Engage app at all times. Some may be in classes or meetings and will need time to respond to messages.
- **Valuable Content:** Before you post, think about the value of your content. Is it beneficial? Would it be considered spam?
- **College Sponsored Space:** Violations of College policies on MMC Engage will be referred through the Code of Conduct.

Theatre Arts Faculty and Staff

Below is a list of current full-time faculty and staff in Theatre Arts. Please contact faculty members by email to schedule appointments. For full-time faculty and staff bios, visit this [website](#) and click on the individual's name.

You can find information about our distinguished and highly talented adjunct faculty [here](#). You can contact adjunct Theatre Arts Faculty through their MMC email accounts.

Barbara Adrian | Professor of Theatre Arts (currently on pre-retirement sabbatical)
badrian@mmm.edu

Emily Clark | Associate Professor of Theatre Arts | Musical Theatre Coordinator for Core Course Sequence and Production
eclark@mmm.edu

Emily (Millie) Cowan | Theatre Technician
ecowan@mmm.edu

Jesmille Darbouze-Smith | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts
jdarbouze-smith@mmm.edu

Cassandra Deveau | Costume Shop Supervisor
cdeveau@mmm.edu

Robert Dutiel | Associate Professor of Theatre Arts | Technical Director for Theatre
rdutiel@mmm.edu

Bethany Christine Elkin | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts | Musical Theatre Coordinator for Daily Dance
belkin@mmm.edu

Cecilia Feilla | Associate Professor of Theatre Arts & Associate Professor of Writing, Literature, and Language
cfeilla@mmm.edu

Kenneth Finkle | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts | Coordinator of Writing for the Stage concentration
kfinkle@mmm.edu

Mary Fleischer | Professor of Theatre Arts | Chair, Division of Visual and Performing Arts | Coordinator of Theatre and New Media concentration
mfleischer@mmm.edu

Aimé Donna Kelly | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts | Coordinator for Auditions and New Student Planning (formerly Faculty Recruiter)
akelly3@mmm.edu

Brandon Logan | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts
mlogan@mmm.edu

Vanessa Leuck | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts
vleuck@mmm.edu

Hannah Mason | Production Manager for Theatre Arts
mmason@mmm.edu

Katie Meade | Operations Director for Division of Visual and Performing Arts
kmeade@mmm.edu

Michael Mendez | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts
mmendez3@mmm.edu

David Mold | Professor of Theatre Arts | Coordinator of the Directing Concentration | Assistant Division Chair for Student Advisement & Recruitment, and Faculty Mentoring & Support, Division of Visual and Performing Arts
dmold@mmm.edu

Jeffrey A. Morrison | Associate Professor of Theatre Arts | Coordinator for Voice & Speech curriculum
jmorrison@mmm.edu

Ellen Orenstein | Associate Professor of Theatre Arts | Coordinator of the Acting program
eorenstein@mmm.edu

Kat Phifer | Assistant for Theatre Arts Operations and Production
kphifer@mmm.edu

Ray Recht | Professor of Theatre Arts | Coordinator BFA program in Theatre Design and Technology
rrecht@mmm.edu

Christine Riley | Associate Professor of Theatre Arts | Musical Theatre Coordinator for Private Voice | Coordinator for Auditions and New Student Planning (formerly Faculty Recruiter)
criley@mmm.edu

Mark Ringer | Professor of Theatre Arts
mringer@mmm.edu

Peter Romano | Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts
promano@mmm.edu

Courtney Ross | Assistant Technical Director for Theatre
cross@mmm.edu

Jill Stevenson | Professor of Theatre Arts | Chair, Department of Theatre Arts | Coordinator of Theatre History & Performance Texts Concentration
jstevenson@mmm.edu

Barbara Tiernan | Theatre Arts Administrator
btiernan@mmm.edu

Lori Ann Zepp | Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts | Assistant Chair for Production Pedagogy | Coordinator BFA program in Stage and Production Management
lzepp@mmm.edu