

***Department of Theatre and Dance
The University of Texas at Austin***

***Student Guide
To the Doctor of Philosophy Degree***

Revised September 2003

Admission to the Program

All applicants for admission to the doctoral program must provide evidence of aptitude for and interest in research (either for publication or production), writing, and teaching, the primary emphases of the program, which focuses heavily on performance as public practice.

Admission to the doctoral program is based on several criteria:

- 1) *Graduate Record Examination scores.* The University requires a minimum combined verbal and quantitative score of 1000. The Graduate Studies Committee of Theatre and Dance has found that students who do not have a verbal score considerably higher than 500 do not perform well in the doctoral program. Since the GRE scores are only part of the criteria considered, however, there is no minimum verbal score.
- 2) *Grade point average.* Applicants must submit transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The University specifies a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) on all work taken after the first two years of college-level work. The program gives preference to those students with GPAs considerably higher than the minimum.
- 3) *Degrees.* Applicants are expected to have completed a master's degree before beginning work on the doctorate. In rare cases, applicants without a master's degree may be admitted, but will be expected to make up deficiencies. Previous training and experience other than coursework will be considered.
- 4) *Recommendations.* At least three letters of recommendation are required. To be most helpful, letters should be from people qualified to judge the student's work in the doctoral program, and should comment specifically on the student's aptitude for advanced work in their areas of interest. Professors who have previous experience with the student are often the best recommenders.
- 5) *Writing samples.* Applicants should submit at least two samples of writing that demonstrate their ability to conduct research and to write. We prefer samples of 5-15 pages each; papers written for undergraduate or MA degree research or essays written for non-academic settings are appropriate.
- 6) *Other materials.* Applicants may submit other evidence of training, experience, aptitude, and motivation, although the criteria listed above are most pertinent to the Program's deliberations.

Decisions on admission cannot be made until all the required documentation has been received. The deadline for applications is *December 1*.

Organization of Graduate Studies in Theatre

The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), consisting of the tenure-track and tenured faculty in the department, establishes the policies and requirements for all graduate programs offered by the department. They have delegated to the Graduate Studies Executive Committee (XCOM) the administration of those policies. Students communicate with the GSC and XCOM through the Graduate Advisor.

Field of Study

The Doctoral Program in Theatre and Dance at UT permits considerable latitude. The Program focuses on the historical development, cultural and theoretical contexts, and artistic significance of theatre and dance as institutions, as well as with each of the theatre arts and their interrelationships. The program is also highly influenced by interdisciplinary work in performance studies, defining performance in varied and wide cultural contexts. Students are expected to give primary attention to an area of expertise of their choice, while training in the broader theoretical, critical, and historical contexts of the field.

The PhD program's emphasis in Performance as Public Practice aims to graduate the next generation of leaders in the arts and academia. Our faculty defines "public practice" as activities that include:

- working as an academic (a professor who melds theory and practice in his/her teaching, scholarship, production, and service)
- producing and distributing research and scholarship
- writing performance criticism
- generating think pieces and op-ed essays for trade and popular publications
- working as a dramaturg and outreach director
- arts administration
- working in public programming with foundations and non-profits
- establishing public policy
- writing grants
- using applied theatre methods and theories
- teaching in universities, colleges, high schools, and community centers
- using performance as a tool for understanding communities and difference
- theorizing performance as a site of civic engagement and often dissent
- redefining and recontextualizing the role of performance in culture
- promoting arts-based civic dialogue
- case-making and agenda-setting for public culture.

Graduates will contribute to the public practice of performance through:

- writing
- public speaking
- teaching
- publishing research and scholarship
- arts programming
- arts policy making
- consulting
- formal and informal theatre-making both on campus and in the Austin community
- creating community-based theatre work

The program offers students a broad spectrum of approaches, methods, and disciplines. It prepares graduates to:

- Make clear and cogent arguments
- Manage and complete complex projects
- Integrate performance history, theory and practice
- Address a range of audiences, from scholarly to popular
- Research performance histories, theories, practices, criticism, and literature
- Forge connections among performance, communications, media, television and film studies, anthropology, cultural studies, popular culture, literary studies, and other fields and subfields
- Analyze written texts and live performance
- Work as a production dramaturg and outreach director, collaborating with playwrights, directors, production teams, and audiences

- Interpret and develop performance as a public practice in commercial theatre, activist theatre, theatre of the oppressed, and more
- Use a second language for research and communication
- Teach courses ranging from large introductory lectures to specialized courses for majors and non-majors, in university and community settings
- Create and implement outreach strategies that expand the meanings of performance to various audiences
- Develop research and teaching specialties within the field, such as
 1. African-American performance
 2. Latino/a and Latin American performance
 3. Feminist theories and performance
 4. Queer theatre and performance
 5. Cultural policy
 6. Arts writing
 7. Arts criticism
 8. Historiography
 9. Theories of pedagogy
 10. Community-based theatre
 11. Applied theatre practices
 12. Musical theatre
 13. Contemporary performance
 14. Text into performance
 15. American dance
 16. Performance Ethnography
 17. Performance of the Americas

Required Courses:

Note: These are skills-based courses meant to be useful across a range of performance practices.

Proseminar in Performance as Public Practice

Research and Methods

Pedagogy

At least nine credits of coursework in the core curriculum, including:

- Historiography
- Dramaturgy
- Contemporary Theory
- Performance Ethnography
- Performance and Activism
- Writing and Performance Art
- Cultural Policy
- Performance Analysis
- Historical Case Studies
- Space and Place Theory
- Performance and Public Intellectuals
- Scholarship Reconsidered
- Outreach
- Performative Criticism
- Adaptation for Stage and Screen
- Applied Drama and Theatre
- Outreach Methods
- Racialized Bodies in Performance
- Performing Citizenship
- Internship: PhDs Outside the Academy

Content-based courses outside the core curriculum, taught through a commitment to our program's goals:

- Oral Tradition: Then and Now
- Feminist Theories and Performance
- Performance on Exhibit
- Queer Theories and Performance
- American Musical Theatre
- Performances of the Americas
- Latina/o Performance
- Performance and the Practice of Memory
- Dramatic Literature (of various styles, periods, nations)
- Performance Studies/Performance Art
- Women in Dance
- World Theatre History
- Performance and Politics in the 1960s
- Nigerian Theatre
- African-American Theatre History (Pre-colonial to 1950, and 1950 to the Present)
- Black Feminisms
- Performing Race
- Performing Autobiography
- Reception Theories
- Drama in Education

Advising

When a student enrolls in the Doctoral Program, he/she is assigned to a faculty advisor (one of the faculty who teach in the PPP area of the department). With this advisor, they plan their courses each semester, preparing the Program of Study that guides their coursework and other requirements for the degree. The faculty advisor helps the student decide how to meet the language requirement; the practicum; core courses in performance as public practice; content courses in the major field of study; and supporting courses in other departments. A student may change their advisor by consulting with the Head of the PhD Program. The faculty presumes that as a student continues his/her progress toward the degree, the faculty person with whom they work will eventually become their master's project advisor and/or dissertation director. The Department Graduate Advisor signs off on all the student's paperwork.

Coursework and Program of Study

By *March 15* of their second semester in residence, students must submit for approval to the Head of the PhD Program a Program of Study. The Program should be completed on the form provided by the Graduate Coordinator, and discussed with the student's faculty advisor in some detail before it is submitted. The Program will be discussed and approved by the faculty in the History/Criticism/Theory area. The Program generally includes:

- 1) *Required Courses (9 credits)*. These include three courses, in Research Methods, Supervised Teaching in Drama (Pedagogy), and Proseminar in Performance as Public Practice.
- 2) *Practicum (3 credits)*. This is specific to each student, and needs to be described in detail, after consultation with the student's faculty advisor. The project should bear some relation, where possible, to the student's research interests, and should be a substantial project with appropriate supervision.
- 3) *Languages*. The Program requires fluency in one language, or reading competency in two. Students should make their choices according to their research and career objectives, and should consult their faculty advisor while making these decisions. The language requirement can be fulfilled in a number of ways. For reading knowledge of the most common Western European languages, UT offers reading competency courses for graduate students on a pass/fail basis. Passing these courses fulfills the language requirement. (Credits spent toward filling the

- requirement do not count toward the PhD degree.) Possibilities for achieving fluency include satisfactory completion of one or more advanced courses in which a substantial part of the course depends on knowledge of the language (or transcript evaluation in cases where a student has completed advanced courses in a foreign language elsewhere). Other means of completing the language requirement may be discussed with the Head of the PhD Program.
- 4) *Courses in Theatrical Production.* The Program believes that practical experience in theatre is an important part of a student's preparedness for the academic and professional job markets. While no courses in theatrical production are required, the Program strongly encourages students to demonstrate their facility with some aspect of theatre practice, either by taking courses in production or by narrating prior curricular and future extracurricular experience.
 - 5) *Courses in Major Area: Theatre History/Criticism/Theory/Text (approximately 36 credits).* These courses should comprise the bulk of the student's Program of Study at UT.
 - 6) *Supporting Courses (12 credits).* These courses are taken outside the Department of Theatre and Dance in other disciplines at UT. They provide depth and breadth in interdisciplinary work.
 - 7) *Dissertation Course Hours (minimum 18 credits).* These credits are accumulated when the student has completed coursework and is writing the dissertation.

Continuing in the Doctoral Program

Student progress is reviewed each semester by the PPP faculty and by the Graduate Studies Committee XCOM. Continuing in the Program depends on satisfactory progress, as determined by the Graduate School policies in the most current bulletin. The PPP faculty expects a consistent grade point average of at least 3.0, and no record of lingering incompletes.

Qualifying Examinations

The University requires that each doctoral student pass qualifying examinations to be admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree. Qualifying exams cannot be taken until the student has completed the language requirements. Students must notify the area head in writing of their intention to take the qualifying exams by mid-September in the fall semester and by mid-February in the spring semester. The qualifying examination in Theatre and Dance is divided into two parts. The first part must be completed satisfactorily before the second part can be taken.

First Qualifying Exam.

This is a take-home exam; students may pick up their questions from the Graduate Coordinator any time after 9 a.m. on the Friday of the exam weekend, and must return their answers by 4 p.m. on the following Monday. The faculty expects the exam answers to be well referenced and well synthesized, well written and well-structured, and to show evidence of the student's knowledge of the field and its literature.

To prepare for the first qualifying exam, students should compile a bibliography of materials studied in his/her coursework to date. The examination will demonstrate the student's ability to synthesize knowledge under the "performance as public practice" rubric. This bibliography will serve as the student's reading list for the examination. Working with his/her advisor, the student will synthesize three topic areas based on his/her reading list. These topic areas will allow the student to draw connections among his/her bases of knowledge, and to critically engage his/her own broadly defined "canon." The topic area lists should indicate a healthy balance of specialist and generalist knowledge in the field, and a good spread of methodological inquiry (i.e., ethnography, critical analysis, dramaturgy, teaching, etc.).

Once three topic areas are clearly defined, students will write four questions of their own which, in the writing of their answers, will allow them to demonstrate how they synthesize knowledge in performance as

public practice. The faculty advisor will review the student's questions before they're submitted to the Examination Committee.

A faculty Examination Committee, comprised of four faculty, each serving staggered two-year terms, will read the student's questions. Of the four questions, the committee will select three, from which students will choose two on which to write over the long weekend.

Students will write two ten-page (exclusive of endnotes), double-spaced essays that answer the questions posed. The faculty Examination Committee will read and evaluate the answers.

At certain times, other members of the Graduate Studies Committee may be asked to participate on the student's First Qualifying Examination as necessary and appropriate. An oral examination may be given after the First Qualifying Exam has been completed and evaluated. The oral exam may be waived if the student is judged to have done well on the written exam. The assessment of the student's performance will be sent in writing to the Graduate Advisor. In case of failure, the student may repeat this part of the Qualifying Examinations no more than once.

Second Qualifying Exam

This part of the qualifying exam can be completed only after the first part has been judged satisfactory. The second qualifying exam presents the dissertation proposal for faculty review and approval. The proposal should be presented within one week of formally passing the first qualifying exam.

The dissertation proposal should:

- a) Survey the literature in the field represented by the proposed dissertation;
- b) Provide a narrative description of the project followed by brief chapter outlines;
- c) Outline the research focus and argument of the proposed dissertation;
- d) Indicate how the dissertation will expand or revise existing scholarship on the subject;
- e) Discuss the methodology to be used and a outline specific approach to the analysis of evidence.

This proposal (15 or no more than 20 double-spaced pages, not including bibliography) must be submitted to the PPP faculty Dissertation Proposal Committee for approval by the designated deadline each semester. The committee of four, who serve staggered two-year terms, may accept the proposal, request revisions, or reject it. If the faculty judges the proposal unsatisfactory, after initial revisions, the student may be permitted a second chance to submit a satisfactory proposal. No more than two attempts are allowed.

Once the faculty committee has read the written proposal, the student will prepare an oral defense, at which faculty can provide feedback on the dissertation topic and structure. At the end of this oral, the faculty committee will approve or fail the dissertation proposal. The student may not be admitted to candidacy until the proposal is judged satisfactory. The assessment of the Second Qualifying Exam will be sent in writing to the Graduate Advisor.

Admission to Candidacy

After fulfilling the language requirement and passing both Qualifying Exams, the student is nominated to the Graduate School for Admission to Candidacy. The student is formally admitted to candidacy when the Program of Study is approved by the Dean of the Graduate School, and a dissertation committee is appointed. To be admitted to candidacy, the Program must list, and the Graduate Advisor must approve, courses the student has taken, dissertation hours to be taken, the proposed dissertation title, a brief outline of the project, and a proposed dissertation committee.

All completed coursework included in the Program of Study at the time of admission to candidacy must have been taken within the previous six years (exclusive of a maximum of three years of military service). Once admitted to candidacy, the student must register for nine credits of dissertation hours for at least two

semesters (18 hours). The student must register each semester (exclusive of summer sessions) until the degree is completed.

If students have not completed the dissertation within three years from the date of admission to candidacy, the GSC and History/Theory/Criticism faculty will review their progress. The GSC may recommend that the student meet new requirements that may have been adopted in the interim, or may require the student to take additional courses. The committee might recommend that the student's candidacy be extended one or two semesters, or that the student's candidacy be terminated. After three years have passed in candidacy without completing the degree, the candidate will be reviewed annually. Recommendations made by the GSC must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Dissertation

Each student must select a dissertation supervisor and four committee members, one of whom must be from outside of the Department of Theatre and Dance. The dissertation supervisor should be selected with guidance from the student's faculty advisor; the Head of the PhD Program must be informed of the student's choice of supervisor.

Students normally work with their supervisor until the dissertation research and writing has reached an advanced stage. Students should clarify with each member of their committee when they'd like to engage in the process of reviewing the dissertation writing. A final oral examination date must be set that conforms to the Graduate School's deadlines. The dissertation committee needs to review the dissertation at least one month prior to the oral defense date. All members of the dissertation committee must sign their approval of the dissertation before the Graduate School can accept it.

Final Oral Examination

A satisfactory oral examination is required for the approval of the dissertation. A request to hold the final oral exam must be formally submitted to the Graduate School at least two weeks in advance of the proposed exam date. The request signifies the acceptance of the dissertation for the purpose of giving the exam. The committee's decision to examine a dissertation must be unanimous.

The examination will cover the dissertation and its general field, and such other parts of the student's Program of Study as the committee determines. If all the examiners are satisfied that the student passed all examinations required by the Department, including the final oral; completed a dissertation that is an independent investigation in the major field, and that constitutes a contribution to knowledge; and submitted for publication in *Dissertation Abstracts International* an abstract which meets the approval of the committee, then the committee approves the doctoral dissertation and makes an official recommendation to the Graduate School.

Successful completion of the oral exam and the committee's certification are the final steps in the degree program. In addition to the dissertation copies required by the Graduate School, one copy, unbound, will be submitted to the Department's Graduate Coordinator.