Theater and Performance Studies

Department Website: http://taps.uchicago.edu

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM OF STUDY

Theater and Performance Studies (TAPS) seeks to animate the intersection of practice and theory in the arts. TAPS offers studio classes, seminars, and studio-seminars, which combine academic and practice-based inquiry. TAPS courses are taught by distinguished faculty as well as professional artists from Chicago’s vibrant theater community.

Students work closely with the Director of Undergraduate Studies and faculty advisors to shape an individual course of study that reflects the student’s interests while fulfilling the program’s requirements. Each student’s coursework may be organized around one or more clusters, including, for example, acting, dance, devising and writing (across media), design, directing, dramaturgy, media arts, performance studies, theater history, or some combination of the above.

Students majoring in other fields of study may double major or complete a minor in TAPS.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR

The major requires a total of 13 courses, comprising 11 elective courses and a capstone BA project. At least seven of the elective courses counted toward the major must have a TAPS course number. Course selection is subject to the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. It is generally expected that courses in the major will be at the 20000-level or higher; 10000-level courses will be approved sparingly. Coursework includes:

1. TAPS 22900 Introduction to Theater & Performance Studies, designed to introduce students to foundational ideas and critical skills relevant to the study of theater and performance.
2. Four elective courses in theater and/or performance theory, considered broadly to include history, theory, aesthetics, or analysis. Theory courses may be selected from the TAPS course offerings below or from related course offerings in the College. At least two of these courses will have a TAPS course number.
3. Four elective courses in artistic practice. Artistic practice courses may be selected from the TAPS course offerings below or from related course offerings in the College, including Cinema and Media Studies, Creative Writing, Media Arts and Design, Music, or Visual Arts. At least two of these courses will have a TAPS course number.
4. Three other elective courses selected from the TAPS course offerings listed below or from related course offerings in the College.
5. TAPS 29800 Theater and Performance Studies BA Colloquium, to be taken in the student’s fourth year, is devoted to the preparation of the BA project. Although TAPS 29800 extends over two quarters, students register for the course in only Autumn or Winter Quarter, receiving 100 units of credit and one grade for the course.

BA PROJECT

The TAPS BA project marks the culmination of a student’s studies in TAPS and is typically presented during Spring Quarter of the student’s fourth year. There are two project formats from which to choose: (1) an original artistic work (e.g., staged reading, site-specific installation, solo performance, choreography) with an accompanying critical piece of writing, OR (2) a written academic thesis with an accompanying presentation (in the form of a talk or performative component).

With the support of the Director of Undergraduate Studies and other TAPS faculty, students will select a faculty advisor for their BA project, develop the project proposal, and submit a BA Project Statement during Spring Quarter of the third year. Proposals are subject to the approval of the Chair of Theater and Performance Studies.

In the fourth year, students will enroll in TAPS 29800 Theater and Performance Studies BA Colloquium, which offers a weekly forum in Autumn and Winter Quarters to develop the BA project in collaboration with peers and in accordance with a carefully designed set of deadlines. During Spring Quarter of the fourth year, students will present their artistic work(s) and submit their final complete project by Friday of fifth week for honors consideration, or by Friday of the eighth week for the completion of the major. Students graduating in any quarter other than Spring should consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies about an appropriate timeline.

HONORS

Eligibility for honors requires an overall cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher, a GPA of 3.5 or higher in the TAPS major, and a BA project that is judged by the designated advisors to display exceptional intellectual and creative merit. If the faculty advisors recommend the project for honors, the Chair of TAPS in consultation with the TAPS faculty will issue a recommendation to the Associate Dean and Master of the Humanities Collegiate Division, who makes the ultimate decision.
**SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAPS 22900 Introduction to Theater &amp; Performance Studies</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four (4) theory and analysis courses</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four (4) artistic practice courses</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three (3) elective courses</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAPS 29800 Theater and Performance Studies BA Colloquium</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of the TAPS BA project for majors</td>
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</table>

**Total Units**: 1300

**APPLICATION TO THE MAJOR**

Students interested in joining the program are encouraged to consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Spring Quarter of their first year or as soon as possible thereafter. Students who have decided to join the program should file an Application to the Major form with the Director of Undergraduate Studies by the beginning of Spring Quarter of their second year or no later than the end of Autumn Quarter of their third year.

Students must formalize their declaration on my.uchicago.edu (http://my.uchicago.edu/) and regularly provide documentation to their College advisor of any approvals for the major.

**GRADING**

All courses in the major or minor must be taken for a quality grade.

**MINOR PROGRAM IN THEATER AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES**

Students interested in joining the minor program are encouraged to consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Spring Quarter of their second year or as soon as possible thereafter. Students who have decided to join the program should file an Application to the Minor form with the Director of Undergraduate Studies by the beginning of Spring Quarter in their third year. The signed form must be submitted to the student’s College advisor.

The TAPS minor requires a total of six courses plus an original artistic work (e.g., staged reading, site-specific installation, solo performance piece, choreography). Required courses include: TAPS 22900 Introduction to Theater & Performance Studies, two (2) TAPS courses and two (2) arts elective courses. Course selection is subject to the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. It is generally expected that courses in the minor will be at the 20000-level; 10000-level courses will be approved sparingly. Many of these courses will be found in the course offerings listed below, as well as the course offerings in Cinema and Media Studies, Creative Writing, Media Arts and Design, Visual Arts, and Music.

In addition, all those minoring in TAPS must register for TAPS 29800 Theater and Performance Studies BA Colloquium. The focus of this course will be the development of the student’s artistic project, as described above, to be presented in Spring Quarter of the fourth year. Each student must also submit a brief critical reflection on the project by eighth week of the graduating quarter.

Courses counted toward the minor may not also be counted toward the student’s major(s), toward other minors, or toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for a quality grade, and more than half of the courses for the minor must bear University of Chicago course numbers.

**SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAPS 22900 Introduction to Theater &amp; Performance Studies</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two TAPS courses</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two arts electives</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAPS 29800 Theater and Performance Studies BA Colloquium</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completion of the TAPS BA project for minors</td>
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**Total Units**: 600

**THEATER AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES COURSES**

**TAPS 10100. Drama: Embodiment and Transformation. 100 Units.**

This course introduces students to a range of theatrical concepts and techniques, including script analysis and its application to staging, design and acting. Throughout, we investigate how theater - as a collaborative art form - tells stories. Students will act, direct, and design. In doing so, they will gain an understanding of a variety of processes by which scripts are realized in the theater, with an emphasis on the text’s role in production rather than as literature.

Instructor(s): D. New, P. Pascoe, S. Bockley, L. Danzig, D. Dir, S. Murray Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter

Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts. Waitlists for TAPS core courses open after resolution for that quarter is complete. To be considered for
Theater and Performance Studies

TAPS 10200. Acting Fundamentals. 100 Units.
This course introduces fundamental concepts of performance in the theater with emphasis on the development of creative faculties and techniques of observation, as well as vocal and physical interpretation. Concepts are introduced through directed reading, improvisation, and scene study.
Instructor(s): L. Danzig, G. Pasculli, D. DeMayo, H. Coleman, P. Pascoe Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts. Waitlists for TAPS core courses open after resolution for that quarter is complete. To be considered for the waitlist you must sign up here: https://forms.gle/G62skjnAZFmhHcL88 (do NOT send a consent request to the instructor).

TAPS 10300 through 10699. Text and Performance.
Experience in dramatic analysis or performance not required.
Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory. Each of these courses meets the general education requirement in the arts.
Workshops in dramatic technique and attendance at performances at Chicago theaters, in addition to class time, are required.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>TAPS 10300</td>
<td>Text and Performance</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAPS 10500</td>
<td>Staging Terror</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAPS 10600</td>
<td>Staging Desire</td>
<td>100</td>
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TAPS 10300. Text and Performance. 100 Units.
This course offers an introduction to a number of significant dramatic works and seminal figures in the theorization of theater and performance. But the course’s aspirations go much further: we will be concentrating upon the intersection of interpretation and enactment, asking how these pieces appear on stage and why. This will not be merely descriptive work, but crucially it will be interpretive and physical work. Students will prepare and present applied interpretations—that is, interpretations that enable conceptual insights to take artistic form. Throughout, we will be searching for that elusive combination of philological rigor, theoretical sophistication, and creative inspiration—probing the theoretical stakes of creativity and testing the creative implications of analytic insights.
Instructor(s): S. Murray, J. Muse, H. Coleman, L. Kruger, N. Ndiaye, J. Zeitlin Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts. Waitlists for TAPS core courses open after resolution for that quarter is complete. To be considered for the waitlist you must sign up here: https://forms.gle/G62skjnAZFmhHcL88 (do NOT send a consent request to the instructor).

TAPS 10700. Introduction to Stage Design. 100 Units.
Approaching theatrical design as a visual art, we will achieve a basic understanding of the theory, methodology and artistic expression fundamental to each area of design for the stage-scenic, costume, lighting and sound. We will learn how each discipline approaches and executes visual (aural in the case of sound) communication involved in the design process. Students will learn the professional design process, from contracting through production. Projects for this course will be completed using a combination of mediums and materials. If students are away from campus, there will be discussions of what materials may suit each student best based on available resources. Creativity in execution of visual communication will be of great importance. Students will learn to show collaborators ideas instead of talking about them.
Instructor(s): J. Wardell Terms Offered: Autumn Spring
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts. Waitlists for TAPS core courses open after resolution for that quarter is complete. To be considered for the waitlist you must sign up here: https://forms.gle/G62skjnAZFmhHcL88 (do NOT send a consent request to the instructor).

TAPS 10800. Contemporary Dance Practices. 100 Units.
This hybrid studio/seminar course offers an overview of the formal techniques, cultural contexts, and social trends that shape current dance practices. Through both scholarly and practical approaches to course content, students will gain a working knowledge of a wide range of formal and aesthetic approaches to dance. Other topics include the influence of pop culture, the role of cultural appropriation, and the privileging of Western-based perspectives within dance presentation, education, scholarship, and criticism. Selected readings and viewings will supplement movement practice. No previous experience with dance or performance is required. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts.
Instructor(s): J. Rhoads, E. Leopold, staff Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts. Wait list requests for TAPS core courses are due several weeks before the quarter begins. Sign up for the wait list at https://forms.gle/G62skjnAZFmhHcL88
TAPS 10900. Moving and Thinking / Thinking and Moving. 100 Units.
Though we often imagine a divide between the physical practice of dance and the intellectual practice of dance history and theorization, in reality they overlap: movement training is embodied research and a form of intellectual labor, while dance theorization and scholarship is deeply connected to the physicality of thought. This course offers an introduction to dance with an integrated approach to thinking and doing. Students will explore a range of embodied research methodologies that draw from improvisational forms, codified techniques, and social and cultural dance practices. No prior dance experience is required for this hybrid seminar/studio course.
Instructor(s): T. Post Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts. For questions regarding this class please contact Vicki Walden, vwalden@uchicago.edu. Waitlists for TAPS core courses open after resolution for that quarter is complete. To be considered for the waitlist, you must sign up here: https://forms.gle/G62skjnAZFmhHcL88 (do NOT send a consent request to the instructor).

TAPS 15500. Beginning Screenwriting. 100 Units.
This course introduces the basic elements of a literate screenplay, including format, exposition, characterization, dialog, voice-over, adaptation, and the vagaries of the three-act structure. Weekly meetings include a brief lecture period, screenings of scenes from selected films, extended discussion, and assorted readings of class assignments. Because this is primarily a writing class, students write a four- to five-page weekly assignment related to the script topic of the week. Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 27102
Instructor(s): P. Wimp Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 15500, MAAD 25500

TAPS 19300. Introduction to Drama. 100 Units.
This course explores the unique challenges of experiencing performance through the page. Students will read plays and performances closely, taking into account not only form, character, plot, and genre, but also theatrical considerations like staging, acting, spectatorship, and historical conventions. We will also consider how various agents-playwrights, readers, directors, actors, and audiences-generate plays and give them meaning. While the course is not intended as a survey of dramatic literature or theater history, students will be introduced to a variety of essential plays from across the dramatic tradition. The course culminates in a scene project assignment that allows students put their skills of interpretation and adaptation into practice. No experience with theater is expected. (Gateway, Drama)
Instructor(s): John Muse Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 10600, CMLT 20601

TAPS 20120. 21st Century American Drama. 100 Units.
This hybrid seminar focuses on American contemporary playwrights who have made a significant and commercial impact with regard to dramatic form in the past 20 years. Playwrights will include, Tracy Letts, Annie Baker, Lynn Nottage, Quiara Alegria Hudes, Ayad Akhtar, and Amy Herzog. Textual analysis is consistently oriented towards staging, design, and cultural relevancies. Work for the course will include research papers, presentations, and scene work.
Instructor(s): K. Walsh Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Attendance at the first class session is mandatory. Questions: contact vwalden@uchicago.edu.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 27583

TAPS 20240. Performing the U.S. Supreme Court. 100 Units.
How do American Supreme Court justices engage with performance? How do performing artists engage with the United States Supreme Court? This class explores the intersections between music, theater, dance, and “the highest court of the land.” We will discuss how the court has defined “performance” in various intellectual property and arts-related opinions. We will analyze recent justices’ own performances in the courtroom, at the Washington National Opera, and on the salsa dance floor. And we will watch, listen to, and interpret songs, operas, plays, and films that set the text of Supreme Court opinions. By the end of the quarter, students should understand how performance shapes the making and the memory of American law, and how law shapes the concept and the content of artistic performance. Weekly readings and screenings will include excerpts from secondary sources, Supreme Court oral arguments and opinions, and musical and theatrical performances. To gain experience both reading law and presenting in public, students will perform a short spoken, danced, and/or musical setting of a Supreme Court opinion (this can be an existing artistic setting or one of students’ own devising), and will write a five-page paper analyzing how their chosen artistic setting reflects the judicial rhetoric of the opinion.
Instructor(s): C. Dowd Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 23622

TAPS 20550. (Re)Orienting Performance Studies: East Asia as Method. 100 Units.
This course will introduce students to theories and practices of performance that center East Asian forms and experiences. We will engage with East Asian performance not as essentialized and static cultural displays, but as sites for disciplinary intervention and innovation that can motivate more capacious theories of performance. The course will feature several guest scholars and practitioners who will introduce forms such as noh, kabuki, Kun opera, pansori, butoh, and K-pop through guided discussions and workshops. No background required, all readings in English.
Instructor(s): Ariel Fox & Melissa Van Wyk Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Enrollment limit: 18
Equivalent Course(s): CDIN 20550, EALC 20550

TAPS 20755. Making "I'll Take You There: The Life of Mavis Staples" at Court Theatre. 100 Units.
Court Theatre has acquired the rights to Greg Kot’s 2014 biography of Chicago-born music legend Mavis Staples, I’ll Take You There: Mavis Staples, the Staple Singers, and the Music that Shaped the Civil Rights Era. Kot is the former music critic for the Chicago Tribune, editorial director of the music platform the Coda Collection, and co-host of Sound Opinions. Playwright Tyla Abercrumbie is leading the work of adapting the life of Mavis Staples for Court’s stage. A cast member on Showtime’s The Chi, Abercrumbie has been hailed by critics as “the next August Wilson.” Using the methods of history, dramaturgy, biography and musicology, students in this course will work with Court’s artistic team to map the story’s rich historical landscape, excavate the essential characters and identify the key events-social, political and musical-that a playwright might explore. Students will pursue individual research projects grounded in the epic journey of the Staples family and its powerful mobilizing role in the Civil Rights movement. Mavis Staples continues to blend gospel, blues, rock and protest music in her work; her collaborators include Bob Dylan, Prince, and Chuck D. Students will trace the Staples family’s story via multiple archives to build a portfolio of sound recordings, oral history interviews, photographs, newspapers, film and video recordings that will help bring the production to life. Kot and Abercrumbie will be regular guests in class.
Instructor(s): N. Titone Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Students enrolled in this course will be invited on an immersive research expedition in the southern US in Summer 2023, traveling to Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi and Washington, D.C., in order to trace the steps of the Staple Singers as they made music—and Civil Rights—history.
Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 20755, CRES 20755, HIST 20300, CHST 20755, Rlst 28755

TAPS 21500. Advanced Acting. 100 Units.
This course develops acting skills for the current moment in addition to preparing for the future. The focus will be on acting analysis methods that are useful for live or remote performance; best practices in monologue, scene study, and/or audition work on camera; and multiple approaches toward creating engaging digital performance. This class will combine the study of acting theory with collaborative performance practice.
Instructor(s): M. Lyons Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Previous acting experience is encouraged.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 31500

TAPS 21700. An Actor Observes. 100 Units.
This course addresses techniques and modes of observation and their application to scene study. Observation study is used to strengthen acting choices, build the physical world of the play, and create original, vital characterizations. It also serves to deepen awareness of group dynamics, integrate symbolic, psychological and physical meaning in a character’s behavior, and guide the process of breaking down a scene. Students will perform observation exercises and apply their discoveries to scene work.
Instructor(s): P. Pascoe Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

TAPS 21730. Movement for Actors. 100 Units.
This course will explore how an actor uses movement as a tool to communicate character, psychological perspective and style. The foundation of our movement work will center on the skills of balance, coordination, strength, flexibility, breath control and focus. Building on the skills of the actor both in terms of naturalistic character work and stylized theatrical text. Students will put the work into practice utilizing scene work and abstract gesture sequences through studying the techniques of Michael Chekov, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Anne Bogart, Complicite and Frantic Assembly.
Instructor(s): D. de Mayo Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Attendance at first class session is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 31730

TAPS 21810. Introduction to Musical Theater Writing. 100 Units.
This course is a practical introduction to writing for musical theater. Students will analyze and discuss character development and dramatic structure across musical theater scripts, scores, and songs, and they will apply these lessons to their own writing. Students will develop treatments and excerpts towards new works of musical theater, and as individuals or in teams they will write, workshop, and present ten-minute musicals at the end of the quarter. No prior experience in script writing or songwriting is required.
Instructor(s): S. Elmegreen Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 24422

TAPS 21860. Songwriting for Musical Theater. 100 Units.
This course is a practical introduction to the art and craft of songwriting for musical theater. Students will analyze and practice song form, storytelling through music, and the writing of lyrics and melody for character and tone. In addition to sharing and workshopping new song material weekly, students will learn about orchestration, arrangement, and the structure of the theatrical score by discussing standout examples of the genre. Students will develop a catalog of character- and story-driven songs to be presented at the end of the quarter. A basic knowledge of music theory is expected; experience in songwriting is not required.
TAPS 22100. Solo Performance. 100 Units.
This is a "maker's" course that takes full advantage of working in a design lab to create a portfolio of short solo performance that could be stand-alone pieces, or further developed into longer works or possibly a TAPS BA thesis. Through the quarter we will examine varied approaches that include personal narrative, adaptation, object work, and projections while investigating the unique performer-to-audience dynamic. Benefiting from a historical approach that originates in the performance art work of the 1970's through contemporary approaches to stand-up, students will research and present on artists including Marina Abramović, Spalding Gray, Anna Deavere Smith, Taylor Mac, Hannah Gadsby, Tig Notaro, Lynn Needle, Heidi Schrek, César Cadabe, and Debra Ann Byrd. Students will generate new works through in-class and take-home assignments and this quarter will culminate in a final showing of selected work for an invited audience. Prior experience is not required.
Instructor(s): H. Coleman Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

TAPS 22300. Performance Art Installation: The Dreamer and the Dream. 100 Units.
In this course we will explore the relations between dreaming and waking life using a broad interdisciplinary approach. Our point of departure will be psychological, cultural, and religious understandings of dreams. On the basis of the readings and the skills and backgrounds of participants, the class will develop a "performance installation" around the liminal spaces of dream and wakefulness. Readings will include literary texts by Apuleius, Calderon, Shakespeare, Schnitzler, and Neil Gaiman, and theoretical texts by Freud, Jung, Klein, and Winnicott.
Instructor(s): P. Pascoe Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 32300

TAPS 22500. Styles and Practice in Storytelling. 100 Units.
What is storytelling? It can be said that it is the oldest form of observing, synthesizing, and communicating feelings thoughts and information."-Temujin the Storyteller. Every day we use stories to communicate. This course provides students with an overview of the art and practice of storytelling. Chicago is a storytelling town from the Moth to Second Story and from Story Slams to traditional storytelling; performance artists give voice to a wide range of expression. Throughout this learning experience, students will be encouraged to explore the world of storytelling and to nurture their creative voices. Students will create and adapt tales focusing on personal experience, folklore, history, and ethnography. We will learn through participation and observation. The creative experiences in this course will enable students to further their skills in: oral presentation, story construction, performance, artistic critique, and analysis. Students will develop and perform stories from at least three distinct areas of experience. The course provides a creative space for learning and exploration.
Instructor(s): E. Lansana Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CHST 22500

TAPS 22550. Performing Nature. 100 Units.
What is it like to be a bat? A tree? A slime mold? Art that attempts to represent non-human experience helps to orient environmentalism around radical and highly personal moments of inter-species empathy. Portraying non-human perspectives, we escape the abstraction of environmental data, and instead approach ecological entanglement on the level of individual imagination. Giving voice and human embodiment to nature is a theme in much 19th, 20th and 21st century creative writing (fiction/nonfiction) and performance work (theater, dance, puppetry). Accordingly, this class offers a broad survey of non-human representation in these arts with special attention to first-person narratives and embodiment of flora and fauna. The course draws on philosophers of mind (i.e. Shaviro’s ‘Discognition’) and nature-science writing, plus contemporary performance projects and digital works by art/technology companies who deploy virtual reality and electronic media to explore the points of view of natural beings and systems. Reading about anthropomorphization and the problem of the subject in nature writing from Erasmus Darwin to the present will allow students to adopt a critical as well as appreciative eye toward this field of study and expression. Creative writing assignments will ask students to write (and perform) monologues from nonhuman perspectives.
Instructor(s): S. Bockley Terms Offered: Spring

TAPS 22680. Queering the American Family Drama. 100 Units.
In this course, we’ll examine what happens to the American Family Drama on stage when the ‘family’ is queer. We will move beyond describing surface representations into an exploration of how queering the family implicates narrative, plot, character, formal conventions, aesthetics and production conditions (e.g. casting, venues, audiences, marketing and critical reception). Our texts will include theatrical plays, live and recorded productions, queer performance theory, and - where it’s useful to our exploration - select examples from film and television. This course will be a combined seminar and studio, inviting students to investigate through readings, discussion, staging experiments, and a choice of either a final paper or artistic project. A background in theater is not required.
Instructor(s): I. Danzig
Equivalent Course(s): SIGN 26080, ENGL 22680, GNSE 20116
TAPS 22900. Introduction to Theater & Performance Studies. 100 Units.

This course is designed to introduce students to foundational concepts and critical skills relevant to the study of theater and performance. In addition to wide-ranging readings and discussions, students will attend a variety of performances and screenings representing a cross-section of genres, interpretive styles, and institutional settings. Although the course will be directed by Prof. Trent, it will be divided into discrete units, each led by a different instructor from the TAPS teaching staff. Thus, students will gain exposure to a variety of teaching styles, areas of expertise, and approaches to the field. The course is open to all undergraduate students as an elective; it also serves as a required course for all TAPS majors and minors.

Instructor(s): L. Buxbaum Danzig Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Attendance at first class session is mandatory.

TAPS 23000. Introduction to Directing. 100 Units.

This course employs a practice in the fundamental theory of play direction and the role of the director in collaboration with the development of textual analysis. By examining five diversely different texts using three different approaches to play analysis (Aristotle, Stanislavski, Ball) students begin developing a method of directing for the stage in support of the written text. In alternating weeks, students implement textual analysis in building an understanding of directorial concept, theme, imagery and staging through rehearsal and in-class presentations of three-minute excerpts from the play analysis the previous week. The culmination is a final five-minute scene combining the tools of direction with a method of analysis devised over the entire course.

Instructor(s): S. Murray Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CHST 23000

TAPS 23600. Improv and Sketch. 100 Units.

This course adapts curriculum originally designed for the various schools of modern improvisation (including the iO, the Annoyance and The Second City) and brings it into the classroom. Listening skills, the ability to work well with others as a team, and building scene work organically are highlighted. You will leave this class a better communicator, with interpersonal tools that support other facets of your life.

Instructor(s): S. Messing Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

TAPS 23700. Playwriting: Creating Natural Dialogue for the Stage. 100 Units.

This course employs collaboration among the students to help each individual writer create natural dialogue for the stage. Students will utilize improvisation to write a contemporary scene focusing on the natural rhythms and nuances of modern communication. Through these improvisations, the students create a framework for their narrative with a special focus on developing unique voices for each character. Students read scenes from contemporary plays which emphasize spontaneous and realistic dialogue. Students have weekly assignments that further explore the characters they are writing. Each class includes an active roundtable discussion of the weekly assignments as well as collaborative exercises that further explore the voices of their characters. In addition to the weekly assignments, students write two complete scenes that will receive readings by their classmates. Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

Instructor(s): E. Linder Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

TAPS 23930. Fundamentals of Playwriting. 100 Units.

This workshop will explore the underlying mechanics that have made plays tick for the last 2,500 odd years, from Euripides to Shakespeare to Büchner to Caryl Churchill, Susan Lori-Parks, and Annie Baker, etc. Students will be asked to shamelessly steal those playwrights’ tricks and techniques (if they’re found useful), and employ them in the creation of their own piece. Designed for playwrights at any level (beginning or advanced), the workshop’s primary goals will be to develop a personal sense of what “works” on stage within the context of what’s worked in the past, and to generate a one act play, start to finish.

Instructor(s): M. Maher Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 33930

TAPS 24050. New Play Development: Playwrights and Dramaturgs. 100 Units.

This class explores the new play development process from first to second draft and will culminate in a staged reading at the end of the quarter. All the roles of a traditional production process will be a part of this class, with students serving as: playwrights, directors, actors, and dramaturgs. What happens once the playwright is ready to invite in collaborators to develop a script? How does each person bring their unique point of view to the play? How can this process serve both the play and the artists involved? The class is studying the art, theory and process of development as well as working on our feet to try our hands at what we are discovering. We will work to develop student plays in which a first draft is already written. Playwrights with a complete, first draft of a play are encouraged to submit their work for this course and will be selected the quarter before this course is offered. To apply, please send your script and note of introduction to ddemayo@uchicago.edu. Students interested in taking on any of the other designated roles of a production team (actors, directors, dramaturgs) should select either TAPS 20450 New Play Development: Playwrights and Dramaturgs OR TAPS 20451 New Play Development: Directors and Actors. Once enrolled, course instructors will assign tasks taking into consideration student interest. For further information on the course or how to enroll, please contact ddemayo@uchicago.edu.
Instructor(s): Elizabeth Edele (Calamity West) Terms Offered: Autumn

TAPS 24051. New Play Development: Directors and Actors. 100 Units.
This class explores the new play development process from first to second draft and will culminate in a staged reading at the end of the quarter. All the roles of a traditional production process will be a part of this class, with students serving as: playwrights, directors, actors, and dramaturgs. What happens once the playwright is ready to invite in collaborators to develop a script? How does each person bring their unique point of view to the play? How can this process serve both the play and the artists involved? The class is studying the art, theory and process of development as well as working on our feet to try our hands at what we are discovering. We will work to develop student plays in which a first draft is already written. Students interested in taking on these designated roles of a production team (actors, directors, dramaturgs) should select either TAPS 20450 New Play Development: Playwrights and Dramaturgs OR TAPS 20451 New Play Development: Directors and Actors. Once enrolled, course instructors will assign tasks taking into consideration student interest. For further information on the course or how to enroll, please contact ddemayo@uchicago.edu. Playwrights with a complete, first draft of a play are encouraged to submit their work for the companion course TAPS 24050 and will be selected the quarter before this course is offered. To apply, please send your script and note of introduction to ddemayo@uchicago.edu.
Instructor(s): Devon de Mayo Terms Offered: Autumn

TAPS 24410. Transmedia Puzzle Design & Performance. 100 Units.
This course will introduce students to the burgeoning field of immersive puzzle design. Students will develop, implement and playtest puzzles that are suited for a range of experiences: from the tabletop to the immersive, from online puzzle hunts to broad-scope alternate reality games (ARG). Students in this course will work directly with master puzzler, Sandor Wiesz, the commissioner of The Mystery League.
Instructor(s): S. Weisz Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 34410, MAAD 24410

TAPS 25200. Neo-Futurists Performance Workshop. 100 Units.
This course is a hands-on introduction to Neo-Futurism: a method of transforming your own thoughts, feelings, and experiences into creative, task-oriented, audience-participatory, non-illusory, unique theatrical events. Students are encouraged to find their own voice as fully rounded theater artists by writing, directing, and performing their own short performances using their own lives as source material. By pursuing the goal of absolute truth on stage, we focus on an alternative to narrative Realism by embracing such elements as deconstruction, found-text, collage, abstraction, synthesis, and chaos. Classes consist of original group exercises as well as presentations of weekly performance assignments.
Instructor(s): G. Allen Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.

TAPS 25505. Adaptation for the Screen. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to the rewards and difficulties of adapting literary material to the big screen. In addition to reading short stories and viewing the films that were made from these stories, all students will be given the same short story to adapt into a 50-60 minute film. Progress on these scripts will be addressed through in-class readings, leading to final meetings with the instructor about your completed first drafts. Screenwriting experience is helpful, but not essential. Class size is limited to 10 students.
Instructor(s): J. Petrakis Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Attendance at first class is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): MAAD 20505

TAPS 25910. Short Form Digital Storytelling: Creating a Web Series. 100 Units.
This course examines the short form storytelling of the digital web series. Through lectures, viewings and discussions in weekly meetings students will determine what makes a strong web series and apply the findings to writing and polishing the pilot episode of their own web series. Students will write weekly 4-5 page assignments building toward the creation of a 5-6 episode series.
Instructor(s): T. Brown Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Attendance at first class session is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): MAAD 24910

TAPS 26050. Dance for Musical Theater. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to the dance styles and performance aesthetics that are foundational to American musical theater. Moving between seminar discussion and studio practice, the course will integrate historical, theoretical, and embodied approaches to traditional and contemporary jazz dance, as well as the vernacular and social dance forms that led to the birth of musical theater. Students will have the opportunity to learn iconic choreography sequences and no previous dance experience is necessary. Readings, viewings, and written assignments will contextualize embodied work.
Instructor(s): P. Mhoon Terms Offered: Winter

TAPS 26110. Choreographic Methods. 100 Units.
This studio course introduces students to a wide range of methods for creating choreography while considering the complex relationship between bodies, form, aesthetics, cultural contexts, technology platforms, and performance objectives. Grounded by interdisciplinary inquiry and ethical collaboration practices, the course
will provide students with a robust toolkit for experimentation and play within dance and movement-based work, including compositional structures, improvised scoring, and choreographic prompts that are inspired by students' unique thematic interests. The course also invites students to consider how choreographic methods can be activated as problem-solving tools across disciplines. Supplementary readings and viewings will drive discussion and analysis while giving students a broad understanding of how choreography engages current social and political issues.

Instructor(s): J. Rhoads Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 36110

TAPS 26170. Dance Pro-Show. 100 Units.
This course gives students the opportunity to learn repertoire and new works by professional guest choreographers and faculty, culminating in a weekend of performances at Logan Center for the Arts. Within an immersive quarter-long production schedule, students will be exposed to a wide array of movement vocabularies, choreographic methods and performance aesthetics, while also gaining practical skills within the many facets of professional production work. Readings, viewings, and weekly journals will supplement studio and production work, connecting each student's experience to broader conversations within dance and performance studies. With a range of performance and production opportunities, this course will accommodate and challenge both trained dancers and movement-curious beginners.

Instructor(s): J. Rhoads Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 36110

TAPS 26225. Dancing Chicago. 100 Units.
With the forthcoming publication of Dancing on the Third Coast: Chicago Dance Histories as text (University of Illinois Press, eds. Susan Manning and Lizzie Leopold), this course would take students out of the classroom to experience, historicize, and critically engage with dance across the city. Students will ask how social and theatrical dancing has shaped the city, and how the city in turn has shaped dancing bodies-in nightclubs and in settlement houses, at world’s fairs and in theaters, on film and in the street. With the new historical perspective and critical view, students will produce a dance event as a final project.

Instructor(s): L. Leopold Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 36225, CHST 26225

TAPS 26230. Dance and the Archive. 100 Units.
In this class, dance and the archive are addressed through three relationships: documenting dance for the archive, researching dance in the archive, and dancing as an archive of past events. The course unveils major topics in dance history and practice, such as alternative ideas about historical narratives and categories, the ephemeral nature of live performance, and how bodies hold knowledge and lived experience, with an emphasis on how racial structures shape archives. In course assignments, students will conduct research using archival sources and build archives that document and consist of their own moving bodies.

Instructor(s): Tara Aisha Willis Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 36230

TAPS 26240. Black Experimentation in Dance. 100 Units.
In this course, experimentation is explored as a choreographic approach to dancing and making dances. Grounded in process, practice, inquiry, and improvisation, experimentation has a long history in Black expressive culture. This class pairs readings at the intersection of Black performance theory, feminist and queer of color theory, and Black dance studies with examples of dance performances and artists interrogating topics such as the problem of aesthetic categorization, navigating racial visibility/invisibility onstage, and the politics of Black dancing bodies. The class focuses on concert dance in the United States, but may cover examples from social dance, popular entertainment, performance art, and global contexts.

Instructor(s): Tara Aisha Willis Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 26231, TAPS 36230

TAPS 26280. Site-Based Practice: Choreographing The Smart Museum. 100 Units.
This course gives students the unique opportunity to create a collaborative, site-based work that culminates in a final performance at UChicago's Smart Museum of Art. Using embodied research methods that respond to site through moving, sensing, and listening, we'll explore the relationship between the ephemeral nature of movement and the materiality of bodies and place, and consider how the site-based contexts for dance shift how it is perceived, experienced, and valued. Our quarter-long creation process will begin with a tour of the Smart Museum, guided by curators and members of the Public Practice team, that will provide context to the museum's exhibitions, programming, and its relationship to geography and community. Assigned readings, viewings, and conversations with guest artists will delve into the relationship between dance and the sites where it happens, including museums-from the material relationship between bodies, objects, and architecture to the digital flows of choreography online.

Instructor(s): J. Rhoads Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 30027, CHST 26280, ARCH 26280, TAPS 36280, ARTV 20027

TAPS 28320. The Mind as Stage: Podcasting. 100 Units.
Audio storytelling insinuates itself into the day-to-day unlike other narrative forms. People listen to podcasts while they do the dishes, drive to work, or walk the dog. In this hands-on course, we will learn to produce a podcast from idea to final sound mix, and explore the unique opportunities that the podcast form affords the storyteller. Students will complete several short audio exercises, and one larger podcast project. The class will be
TAPS 28420. Theater for Social Change. 100 Units.

Augusto Boal argues that theatre is “rehearsal for the revolution.” Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed provides key strategies for collaboratively crafting dramatic narrative. These strategies challenge the conventional Aristotelian structure that privileges a single protagonist and subordinates other stories. Instead, Boal structures a poetics in which the “spect-actor” contributes their voice. Students will engage in devising and embodiment exercises in Image Theatre, Newspaper Theatre, Forum Theatre, and more, by interpreting texts, (e.g., religious texts, constitutional documents, or political manifestos), interrogating current events, exploring public narratives, and valuing diverse learning styles. Students will contextualize destinations for the course material according to the aesthetic and academic questions that they bring into the classroom. To consider ethical concerns surrounding participatory theatre, we will examine arts groups past and present that employ the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed. Readings include Boal, Freire, Jan Cohen-Cruz, Michael Rohd, bell hooks, and Knight and Schwarzman.

Instructor(s): L. Leopold Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 28360, TAPS 38360, MAAD 23860

TAPS 28421. Theater for Social Change. 100 Units.

The recent pandemic has challenged live performance to consider alternatives in the creation of online spaces and the “pivot to digital,” has frequently resulted in innovative approaches of adaptation of texts originally designed for the stage, yet as a result, remain rooted in a “broadcast” modality. Live Experience Design benefits from the exploration of pre-COVID forms including netprov, ARGs, online LARPs, interactive theater, and NFT games as well as popular social media forms including Instagram and Snapchat filters. This course invites directors, designers, and writers to innovate under the influence of networked media with an emerging genre at the nexus between theater, film, and video games to create short-form interactive original work through Zoom, Twitch, Twine, and Discord. Through a series of workshop assignments, lectures, and cross-disciplinary guest artist demonstrations, this immersive course will consider how we can use and build upon existing technologies to make impactful theater in a networked setting that not only creates a story that elicits an emotional but narrative that is dependent on audience interaction. Projects will draw from game mechanics and work across multiple platforms and will require no prior experience with coding or video production.

Instructor(s): H. Coleman Terms Offered: Spring

TAPS 28466. Alternate Reality Games: Theory and Production. 100 Units.

Games are one of the most prominent and influential media of our time. This experimental course explores the emerging genre of “alternate reality” or “transmedia” gaming. Throughout the quarter, we will approach
new media theory through the history, aesthetics, and design of transmedia games. These games build on the narrative strategies of novels, the performative role-playing of theater, the branching techniques of electronic literature, the procedural qualities of video games, and the team dynamics of sports. Beyond the subject matter, students will design modules of an Alternate Reality Game in small groups. Students need not have a background in media or technology, but a wide-ranging imagination, interest in new media culture, or arts practice will make for a more exciting quarter.

Instructor(s): Patrick Jagoda, Heidi Coleman Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Third- or fourth-year standing. Instructor consent required. To apply, submit writing through online form at https://www.franke.uchicago.edu/big-problems-courses; see course description. Once given consent, attendance on the first day is mandatory. Questions: mb31@uchicago.edu.

Note(s): Note(s): English majors: this course fulfills the Theory (H) distribution requirement.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 20700, ARTV 30700, CMST 35954, ENGL 32314, MAAD 20700, CMST 25954, BPRO 28700, ENGL 25970

TAPS 28470. Molière. 100 Units.
Molière crafted a new form of satirical comedy that revolutionized European theater, though it encountered strong opposition from powerful institutions. We will read the plays in the context of the literary and dramatic traditions that Molière reworked (farce, commedia dell'arte, Latin comedy, Spanish Golden Age theater, satiric poetry, the novel), while considering the relationship of laughter to social norms, as well as the performance practices and life of theater in Molière's day.
Instructor(s): Larry Norman Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): For undergrads: FREN 20500 or FREN 20503
Note(s): Taught in French.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 25000, FREN 35000, FNDL 25001

TAPS 28479. Theater and Performance in Latin America. 100 Units.
What is performance? How has it been used in Latin America and the Caribbean? This course is an introduction to theatre and performance in Latin America and the Caribbean that will examine the intersection of performance and social life. While we will place particular emphasis on performance art, we will examine some theatrical works. We ask: how have embodied practice, theatre and visual art been used to negotiate ideologies of race, gender and sexuality? What is the role of performance in relation to systems of power? How has it negotiated dictatorship, military rule, and social memory? Ultimately, the aim of this course is to give students an overview of Latin American performance including blackface performance, indigenous performance, as well as performance and activism.
Instructor(s): Danielle Roper
Prerequisite(s): Undergraduates must be in their third or fourth year.
Note(s): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 29117, LACS 39117, GNSE 39117, TAPS 38479, CRES 29117, SPAN 39117, GNSE 29117, CRES 39117, LACS 29117

TAPS 28480. The Worlds of Harlequin: Commedia Dell'arte. 100 Units.
This course is an introduction to the Italian art of theatrical improvisation or commedia dell’arte, a type of theater featuring masked characters and schematic plots. We will look at the influence of Boccaccio’s Decameron on the formation of stock-characters, the introduction of women into the realm of theatrical professionalism, the art of costume and mask making, and the Italian knack for pantomime and gestural expression. Readings include such masterpieces in the tradition of comic theater as Machiavelli’s The Mandrake and Goldoni’s Harlequin Servant of Two Masters, as well as their renditions in film.
Instructor(s): Rocco Rubini Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 38480, ITAL 29600, ITAL 39601

TAPS 29800. Theater and Performance Studies BA Colloquium. 100 Units.
This two-quarter sequence is open only to fourth-year students who are majoring and/or minoring in theater and performance studies.
Terms Offered: Autumn Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of Director of Undergraduate Studies.
Note(s): 100 units credit is granted only after successful completion of the Winter term.

TAPS 29900. Reading and Research. 100 Units.
This is a reading and research course for independent study.