

Admission Requirements

Students admitted to the MFA program in directing should have: 1) An undergraduate degree in theatre, or equivalent training, and 2) Experience in directing a variety of plays. To be considered for admission into the Directing Program, you must make sure you are aware of all of the deadlines and that you meet the minimum requirements for entry.

- [Graduate College Deadlines and Requirements](#)
- [International Student Admission Requirements](#)

Application Procedure

1. Submit an application to the Graduate College. GRE exam is not required.
2. Once you have submitted your application, you will receive an email instructing you on how to upload your supporting documents and submit letters of recommendation. These will be uploaded from your Admissions Profile in MyUI, our online service center for applicants and students. You can only access this after you have submitted your application.

Supporting documents that will be uploaded to your Admissions Profile on MyUI:

- A resume of previous theatre and other relevant training and experience
- Three letters of recommendation from people who have seen your directing work
- A written statement that sets out your unique, artistic vision and professional goals, and explains why you are seeking the MFA in Directing at Iowa
- Official copies of all undergraduate (and any graduate) transcripts clearly indicating a final GPA.

If GPA is below 3.00, please include a written statement indicating the reason.

3. Have a personal interview with the head of directing or another member of the program faculty. Interviews may be arranged at U/RTA, at the University of Iowa, or by telephone/Skype. Be prepared to share copies of relevant production materials: programs, plans or sketches, production and/or rehearsal photos, and writing(s) suggesting your conceptual approach to previous work.

We recommend, but do not require, that prospective students visit Iowa City to see the campus and discuss the directing program with our current students and us.

Formal Instruction

Students pursuing an MFA in directing must complete a minimum of 62 semester hours of course work. The program curriculum includes department core courses in literature, history, and criticism; supporting courses in a variety of theatre topics; and courses particular to directing.

Plan of Study

You develop a plan of study during your first semester. The plan takes into account the normal program requirements as well as your particular background and special interests. It is developed in conjunction with the Head of Directing and signed by the program faculty (which may include one faculty member outside the program), who serve as the student's Committee. It must be submitted to the Head of Directing and the Director of Graduate Studies by November 15; it is then reviewed at the end of each academic year. The Head of Directing, your committee, and the Director of Graduate Studies must approve modifications to your Plan of Study.

Typical Plan of Study

First Year Fall

Director's Seminar 1: Applied Kinetics and Analytic Techniques	3 sh
New Play Dramaturgy	3 sh
Playwrights' Workshop	1 sh
Orientation to Graduate Studies	1 sh
Scenic Design	3 sh

First Year Spring

Director's Seminar 2: Directing Modern Drama	3 sh
Acting: Directing from Actors Viewpoint	3 sh
Digital Arts: Installations	3 sh
Theatrical Analysis: Modern Drama	3 sh

Second Year Fall

Director's Seminar 3: TBA	3 sh
Design	3 sh
Electives in Digital Arts; Entrepreneurship; Literature; Dance	6 sh

Second Year Spring

Director's Seminar 4: Directing Classic Plays	3 sh
Acting: Shakespeare	3 sh
Theatrical Analysis: Classical Drama	3 sh
Elective in Digital Arts; Entrepreneurship; Literature; Dance; Design	3 sh

Third Year Fall

Director's Seminar 5: Production and Career Prep	3
Acting: Movement or Combat	3
Electives in Digital Arts; Entrepreneurship; Literature; Dance; Design	6

Third Year Spring

Director's Seminar 6: Opera and Musical Theatre	3
Thesis	3
Elective in Digital Arts; Entrepreneurship; Literature; Dance; Design	3

Adjustments may be made to this template.

Directors Seminar

Semester 1: Applied Kinetics and Analytic Techniques. Through exercises and projects designed to expand perceptual, analytical, and collaborative skills, students will gain a thorough understanding of the three interrelated components of living theatre: Auditory, Visual and Kinetic. Each of these components consists of specific elements, principles, and transformative goals which combine to bring unity to dramatic art. Students will work with these components and begin the process of putting them together in a manner expressive of their individual vision.

Semester 2: Directing Modern Drama. This course will provide the director with a comprehensive system for analyzing text for transformation into theatrical event. Focus will be on plays, both tragic and comic, from Ibsen to O'Neill, and will be coordinated with the dramatic literature course in Modern Drama. Students will also focus on new work to be presented in the Iowa New Play Festival.

Semester 3: TBD.

Semester 4: Directing the Classics. This course will focus on the challenges and joys of directing great plays, tragic and comic, from the Greeks through the Restoration. One project will focus on the direction of a portion of a classic play. Each student will also research and make a presentation on the work of a director from previous centuries.

Semester 5: Production and Career Preparation. Focus will be on career planning, business communication, resume writing and fellowship and grants resources. Guest artists will discuss their work in person and through Skype interviews.

Semester 6: Directing for Opera and Musical Theatre. Working with the Director of the UI Opera Theatre, students will learn to study a libretto and musical score, conceive a musical production, and work with singers. They will direct scenes for the Opera Workshop.

Production Requirements

MFA Directing students must satisfactorily complete production assignments to fulfill the requirements for graduation. You are expected to direct at least one public presentation every semester, though the specific number and scheduling of assignments may vary. Directors must demonstrate consistent development in production work.

Other requirements:

- Comprehensive review covering first two years of study
- Written thesis: Director's Production Book/Analysis of Thesis Production (or other appropriate directed production)
- Cumulative "B" average
- At least 18 credits in "graded" courses (i.e. not Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading)

Note: The curriculum and requirements are subject to change, and students may apply for adjustments.

Thesis

The thesis normally forms the centerpiece of the third year in residence. The thesis typically consists of a full-length work presented by the department and a written document -- that includes analysis and preparation materials. The production and the written document form the basis for the student's final evaluation.

Thesis proposals must be submitted in writing to the program committee, and to the play selection committee, for approval during students' second year. The format of the written thesis must comply with the guidelines as outlined by the program committee and the Thesis Manual of the Graduate College.