



## Admission Requirements

We seek mature students with:

- an undergraduate degree completed in good academic standing
- a demonstrated talent and ability as a writer for the stage
- a clear potential for growth as a writer
- experience in theatrical areas outside playwriting

To be considered for admission into Stage Management 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 and official transcript clearly indicating a final GPA of 3.00 or better to the Graduate College. The 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:

- two full-length scripts
- one full-length and one one-act play also accepted
- ten-minute plays are accepted only as supplementary to these primary submissions
- include all contact information on title page
- a resume of relevant academic, theatrical, and work experience
- three letters of recommendation attesting to your experience as a writer and theatre artist, and potential for future growth
- a short personal statement (1-2 pages) outlining your objectives in applying to the Playwrights Workshop and after completing the MFA in Playwriting at Iowa

If selected as a finalist for admission, the candidate will be interviewed by phone. On-campus interviews are not required. However, if a prospective candidate visits Iowa City, he or she is welcome to meet with our students and us.

All MFA playwrights receive a tuition scholarship from the Graduate College, which offsets the amount of the current tuition. General fees are not included in this scholarship. Additionally, all MFA playwrights hold paid teaching or research assistantships. Departmental scholarships also may be awarded, with the amounts varying on an annual basis.

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## **Formal Instruction & Graduate Committee**

The MFA Program in Playwriting requires a minimum of 62 semester hours of coursework in three areas: Playwrights Workshop, Special Topics in Playwriting/Guest Seminar, and the Core MFA Curriculum, consisting of courses in theatre history and dramatic literature.

In THTR:7300: Playwrights Workshop, a course taken in every semester of enrollment, you give first presentations of plays-in-process, usually through rehearsed readings; receive intensive feedback from your colleagues and faculty in playwriting and dramaturgy; and develop plays towards possible production in the department. The Workshop provides a venue for the development of new work, as well as a community of playwrights and dramaturgs who support the development of that work.

Guest Seminar and Special Topics courses expose you to diverse approaches to form and process, and provide tools for writing and revision. Often taught by visiting artists, these courses are designed to challenge your working process and sense of theatrical form.

The department curriculum in Theatrical Analysis is designed to sharpen your theatrical vision in relation to the diverse dramatic and performance traditions of the past and the present.

In the first semester of enrollment, you complete a Plan of Study in consultation with Head of the Playwrights Workshop. The Plan of Study lays out all required and elective courses you will take in completing the MFA. The Plan of Study also reflects any graduate transfer credit to be counted towards the degree; whether or not transfer courses may substitute for department or program requirements; and any coursework you must take in order to fill gaps in your previous academic preparation.

At least 30 of these credits must be completed in residence. Accelerated Degree Status may be granted on the basis of graduate transfer credit that satisfies course requirements and/or for professional experience that the faculty deem equivalent to specific program requirements.

Your Graduate Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies must approve the Plan of Study. For the MFA candidate in Playwriting, the Graduate Committee consists of three members of the Playwriting Faculty (Professors Borreca and Clubb, and either Professor Schlesinger or Professor Gogerty). Once it has been established, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Head of the Playwrights Workshop must approve any changes in the make-up of your Committee.

In addition to approving the Plan of Study, the Committee's approves (in consultation with the DGS) any subsequent changes in the Plan of Study, oversees your academic and creative progress, provides feedback on your writing and production work, approves satisfactory completion of annual reviews; and advises and approves the thesis play in the third year.

## Typical Plan of Study

All MFA candidates in Playwriting must complete a minimum of **64 semester hours** and all of the following:

Playwrights Workshop (6 semesters)	18 sh
Guest Seminar (3 semesters)	9 sh
Special Topics in Playwriting: Fundamentals for Experts	3 sh
Special Topics in Playwriting: Structural	3 sh
Writing for Film	3 sh
Two electives in playwriting or screenwriting, taken in the Dept. of Theatre Arts	6 sh
Orientation to Graduate Studies (taken first year, fall semester)	<b>1 sh</b>
Classical to Romantic Theatre*	3 sh
Modern Drama	3 sh
Postmodern Theatre	3 sh
Two electives in history/literature/theory, taken in the Dept. of Theatre Arts	6 sh
<b>One course in Directing, Dramaturgy, or Collaboration</b>	<b>3 sh</b>
MFA Thesis (spring semester of third year)	3 sh

\*This course may be waived for students who TA for Theatre and Society: Ancients and Modern or History of Theatre and Drama I. If waived, a substitute course in history/literature/theory must be taken.

## Collaboration & Production Requirements

In addition to fulfilling the course requirements outlined above, you are expected to regularly generate new writing for the stage of a quality that merits its production in such department venues as the New Play Festival and the Gallery Series. In these contexts, you are expected to demonstrate ongoing growth as a collaborative theatre artist committed to the making of new work for the theatre.

Allowing for differences in creative process, you are expected to produce a substantial piece of dramatic writing for the Playwrights Workshop—a draft of a full-length play, a substantial revision of a previous draft, or a series of related shorter works—every semester. Over the course of a year, you are expected to show substantial progress on two full length works or the equivalent; one of these works should take a finished form by the end of the Spring Semester.

The department produces some two-dozen plays annually, many of which are new works, and MFA candidates in playwriting are expected to make regular use of opportunities to have their work presented or staged. Over the course of your enrollment, you should have presented at least three substantial works in a departmental venue outside of Playwrights Workshop. One of these scripts should have received a Festival production.

You are expected to develop your skills as collaborative theatre artists in the development and production of your own plays, as well as in your feedback and collaboration on the development and production of your colleagues' work. Unless granted an exception, all MFA students in playwriting are expected to submit a script for Festival consideration in each year of enrollment.

## Thesis

In the 3rd year, you must submit a full-length thesis play, along with a short (4-6 pages) Introduction placing the work in the context of his/her work in the Playwrights Workshop. The thesis play must represent substantial creative work undertaken in the third year of enrollment, and may consist of a play newly written in the third year or a major revision of a play that has been read and/or produced in the first two years.

The thesis must be submitted in accordance with Graduate College policies for the formatting and submission of theses. You are responsible for meeting all Graduate College deadlines for the thesis.

Under normal circumstances, you will receive feedback on the thesis play from the Graduate Committee as the play is being developed in the Workshop and other department venues. If the thesis play is not being given a reading or production in the third year, you are responsible for arranging timely thesis conferences with the members of your Committee.

Following approval of the thesis, program faculty will meet with you for a final review of your work in the program and a look to the future.

## Accelerated Degree Policy

Accelerated degree status may be granted for graduate transfer credit that satisfies particular course requirements and/or for professional experience, which the faculty accept as equivalent to courses or other program requirements. The following explains how this policy applies specifically to MFA students in Playwriting seeking accelerated degree status on the basis of their professional work as playwrights.

Many students enter the MFA Program in Playwriting with professional experience as playwrights and theatre artists. In such cases, accelerated degree status will be granted only to students with a significant record of theatrical production, which reflects, in the view of the faculty, advanced achievement in writing for the stage. Waivers for the Playwrights Workshop or other courses in playwriting will not be granted for professional work in areas other than playwriting.

Usually nine to twelve semester hours of graduate coursework from another institution (one full-time semester) will be applied to the MFA in Playwriting at Iowa, including the waiver of one semester of Playwrights Workshop. Accelerated degree status based on professional experience may include the waiver of up to two semesters of course requirements.

If you believe you might qualify for accelerated degree status should apply for such status at the time of admission.

Also see the Department Accelerated Degree Policy (Under Academic Procedures).