

Performance Studies

The Graduate Group in Performance Studies at UC Berkeley provides an interdisciplinary and individually crafted curriculum directed at advanced studies in the literatures, performances, cultural contexts, and theories of performance throughout the world. Based in the Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies, the PhD program in Performance Studies takes advantage of Berkeley's distinguished history in the field of drama and theater studies and opens out to a wider interrogation of the disciplines and methodologies of performance studies. The program is administered by the Graduate Group in Performance Studies, comprised of faculty from a wide range of related departments. Students in the Performance Studies PhD program conduct research in a diverse array of interdisciplinary methodologies, on projects spanning the fields of theater, dance, and performance studies.

Admission to the University

Applying for Graduate Admission

Thank you for considering UC Berkeley for graduate study! UC Berkeley offers more than 120 graduate programs representing the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary scholarship. The Graduate Division hosts a complete list (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/choosing-your-program/list/>) of graduate academic programs, departments, degrees offered, and application deadlines can be found on the Graduate Division website.

Prospective students must submit an online application to be considered for admission, in addition to any supplemental materials specific to the program for which they are applying. The online application and steps to take to apply can be found on the Graduate Division website (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/>).

Admission Requirements

The minimum graduate admission requirements are:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A satisfactory scholastic average, usually a minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale; and
3. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in your chosen field.

For a list of requirements to complete your graduate application, please see the Graduate Division's Admissions Requirements page (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/requirements/>). It is also important to check with the program or department of interest, as they may have additional requirements specific to their program of study and degree. Department contact information can be found here (<https://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2024-25/graduate/degree-programs/>).

Where to apply?

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).

Admission to the Program

The graduate group admissions committee seeks applicants with qualities that will enable them to succeed in an intensive interdisciplinary program:

creativity and analytical skills, practical experience, individual initiative, and intellectual rigor. Priority will be given to applicants whose research interests dovetail well with current faculty resources. Candidates holding a bachelor's or master's degree in theater, literature, performance studies, dance, or any appropriate humanities-related field are eligible to apply for admissions. The graduate group is particularly interested in applicants who have already formulated a specific focus of interest, including professional theater or dance practitioners who demonstrate a capacity for and training in advanced scholarly study. Please see the graduate group webpage for additional admission information (<http://tdps.berkeley.edu/programs-courses/graduate-program/admission-information/>).

As part of the application, you will be asked to submit the following:

1. All college transcripts
2. Three letters of recommendation
3. TOEFL scores (if applicable)
4. Resume/CV
5. Personal Statement
6. Statement of Purpose
7. Critical Writing Sample (15-20 pages)

Normative Time Requirements

Normative Time to Advancement

Normative time to advancement is three years.

Normative Time in Candidacy

Normative time in candidacy is three years.

Total Normative Time

Total normative time is six years.

Time to Advancement

Curriculum

The following is a breakdown of requirements to be fulfilled during the student's first five semesters of study. All courses must be taken for letter grades. For additional information, please see the graduate group Program of Study (<http://tdps.berkeley.edu/programs-courses/graduate-program/program-of-study/>).

Core Colloquia

THEATER 200A	Introductory Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Research in Performance	2
THEATER 200B	Research Colloquium	2
THEATER 200B	Research Colloquium	2

Core Seminars

THEATER 201A	Performance Theory: Key Topics	4
THEATER 201B	Performance Theory: Enduring Debates	4
THEATER 202	Methodologies in Performance Studies	4
THEATER 203	Performance Practicum: Bodies, Space, and Time	4

Electives

Complete eight additional 4-unit graduate seminars, including at least two different Theater 266 seminars. See below for details.

Pedagogy Courses

THEATER 375 Teaching Reading and Composition in Performance Studies 2

See below for details.

Performance Studies Electives

Two different THEATER 266 seminars (4 units each) must be taken in the first five semesters in the program.

Complete at least two graduate seminars offered by the Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies. Only THEATER 266, not Theater 299, may fulfill this requirement and all electives must be discussed with the Head Graduate Advisor and approved before the start of each semester.

Additional Electives

Six additional graduate seminars (4 units each) offered by any department must be taken in the first five semesters in the program.

Complete at least 6 additional graduate seminars (200 level) offered by any department at UC Berkeley, may include additional THEATER 266 seminars. All electives must be discussed with the Head Graduate Advisor and approved before the start of each semester.

Pedagogy Courses

To prepare for appointment as a graduate student instructor (GSI), students are required to take THEATER 375 in the fall semester of the first year (this course is not offered in the spring). Also, GSIs for TDPS enroll each semester in THEATER 300 with their teaching supervisor.

QE

Students sit their qualifying exams in their sixth semester before proceeding to the dissertation.

Time in Candidacy

For additional information, please see the graduate group Program of Study (<http://tdps.berkeley.edu/programs-courses/graduate-program/program-of-study/>)

Prospectus

During the dissertation phase, students are expected to submit a copy of their dissertation prospectus (by the end of the seventh semester).

Fifth Year Presentation

Students give a public presentation of their research in the ninth semester.

Dissertation

Students are expected to complete their dissertations within the normative time frame (i.e., 12 semesters from the start of the program).

Performance Studies

THEATER 200A Introductory Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Research in Performance 2 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the research resources of the University, to the methodologies and research interests of the faculty affiliated with the Ph.D. program, to the demands of a professional academic career, and to trends and developments in theater, dance, and performance studies.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of colloquium per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

THEATER 200B Research Colloquium 2 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023

This course is designed to provide an opportunity for graduate students to work with one another to advance their individual research projects and present their ongoing work.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of colloquium per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

THEATER 201A Performance Theory: Key Topics 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2022

Part one of a two-semester core sequence on performance theory, required of first-year Performance Studies PhD students. The course examines key issues and key words in performance studies, from the field's emergence in the 1970s and 1980s to ongoing contemporary debates. Precise topics will vary by instructor, but may include theoretical investigations of corporeality; power, colonialism, and decoloniality; representation, mimesis, and mimicry; spectatorship, audience, and publics; performativity and more. Offered fall semester.

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: To give beginning graduate students a comprehensive understanding of the antecedents, origins, and early development of Performance Studies.

Student Learning Outcomes: •

Basic literacy in the foundations and background of Performance Studies

•

Beginning capacity in publishable-quality academic writing (achieved through the crafting and submission of a seminar paper, with feedback from the instructor).

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

THEATER 201B Performance Theory: Enduring Debates 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Part two of a two-semester core sequence on performance theory, required of first-year Performance Studies PhD students. The course examines key issues and key words in performance studies, from the field's emergence in the 1970s and 1980s to ongoing contemporary debates. Precise topics will vary by instructor, but may include theoretical investigations of space; liveness, media, and presence; affect; economies; activism and politics; and more. Offered spring semester.

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: To ground beginning graduate students in the major contemporary debates in Performance Studies, providing them with a framework for their own research interventions.

Student Learning Outcomes: •

Knowledge of primary debates within Performance Studies

•

Increasing capacity in publishable-quality academic writing (achieved through the crafting and submission of a seminar paper, with feedback from the instructor).

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Theater 201A or consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

THEATER 202 Methodologies in Performance Studies 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2019

The study of different approaches and contemporary methodologies for analyzing performances of various kinds within their cultural and historical context. Specific methodologies can include archival research, field methods, etc. The specific focus in any one course is contingent upon the focus of the instructor.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Formerly known as: Dramatic Art 202

THEATER 203 Performance Practicum: Bodies, Space, and Time 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2021

Students in this course will engage in performance practice as: epistemology, methodology, and mode of research; explore the relationship between bodies, spaces, and temporality as a fundamental aspect of performance; and understand "performance as research" in Performance Studies as a field.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

THEATER 266 Special Topics: Theater Arts 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Topics vary from semester to semester and have included The Power of Music and Poetry in the Theater; Modern Drama and Theater, 1940 to the Present; Theaters, Tricksters, and Cultural Exchange; Art as Social Action; and The Invisible World (Process Seminar).

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction. Students may enroll in multiple sections of this course within the same semester.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

THEATER 277 Special Studies in Directing 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Fall 2019

Advanced practice in play direction.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D. and consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-12 hours of studio per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Formerly known as: Dramatic Art 277

THEATER 294 Directed Research 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2018, Spring 2015, Spring 2012

Meetings to be arranged, either individually or as a group to explore fields not covered in courses listed elsewhere in Dramatic Art's offerings. May be taken by students engaged in writing dissertations.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing in Dramatic Art and consent of instructor

Credit Restrictions: A maximum of 12 units may be divided among several instructors during a semester.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0-0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

THEATER 299 Special Study 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

May be taken when preparing prospectus, graduate portfolio, and/or oral presentation before qualifying oral examination. May not be substituted for available seminars.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 2.5-10 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1-7.5 hours of independent study per week

10 weeks - 1.5-6 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Formerly known as: Dramatic Art 299

THEATER 300 Professional Preparation: Supervised Teaching in Dramatic Art 2 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2014, Spring 2013, Spring 2012

Discussion, problem review and development, course development, supervised practice of teaching.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing, appointment as a teaching assistant or associate, or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 6-12 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Formerly known as: Dramatic Art 300

THEATER 340 Pedagogy for Movement Based Classes - Graduate Level 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2015

This course studies pedagogical theories and methods. It is designed to prepare graduate students to teach practice-based dance and movement courses. In class teaching exercises will be supported by readings, research projects and assignments on the subject of pedagogy. Development of professional teaching documents such as a teaching philosophy, a sample course syllabus, sample lesson plans, and self-evaluation statements are required.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit with advisor consent.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 6 hours of studio per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 15 hours of studio per week

8 weeks - 10 hours of studio per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Professional course for teachers or prospective teachers

Grading: Letter grade.

THEATER 375 Teaching Reading and Composition in Performance Studies 2 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

This course will explore the theory and practice of teaching undergraduate-level reading and writing skills, specifically within the field of performance studies. This hands-on practicum will cover topics such as course design, lesson planning, teaching critical reading skills, building writing assignments, teaching writing skills, giving feedback, grading, and time management. We will also explore methodologies specific to teaching in performance studies: performance analysis, movement analysis, ethnography, and embodied research. Finally, we will devote attention to how we build equitable, student-centered classrooms attentive to difference and encouraging of support across diverse populations.

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: 1.

Ask students to develop a series of scaffolded reading and writing assignments, discussing the skills these assignments each address and how the assignments help undergraduate students to build up to a written college essay

2.

Ask students to design in-class exercises and identify the skills they address

3.

Explore performance studies methodologies and how to teach them to undergraduates

4.

Explore feedback and assessment strategies

5.

Share pedagogical techniques collectively

6.

Explore strategies for creating inclusive classrooms

7.

Write a syllabus

8.

Observe current GSIs in the classroom

Student Learning Outcomes: 1.

Teach undergraduate-level reading skills

10.

Teach students how to succeed in the university—i.e. deadlines, office hours, where to go for help

2.

Teach undergraduate-level writing skills

3.

Assess undergraduate-level reading and writing

4.

Incorporate performance studies methodologies into a reading and composition course

5.

Design a reading and composition course

6.

Plan and manage classroom work

7.

Give group and individual feedback

8.

Manage time and workload

9.

Develop methods for creating an inclusive classroom

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

THEATER 602 Individual Study for Doctoral Students 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2014, Fall 2013, Spring 2013

Individual study in consultation with the major field adviser, intended to provide an opportunity for qualified students to prepare themselves for the various examinations required of candidates for the Ph.D.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction. Students may enroll in multiple sections of this course within the same semester.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-36 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 5.5-67.5 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Theater, Dance, and Performance St/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Formerly known as: Dramatic Art 602