

MFA Program in Dramatic Art Bylaws
Administrative Home: **Department of Theatre and Dance**
Revised 1995; 2005, 2009
Graduate Council Approval: June 9, 2009

ARTICLE I. Objective

A. Degrees - The Department of Theatre and Dance administers graduate instruction and research leading to a MFA in Dramatic Art in conformance with the regulations of the Graduate Division of the University of California, Davis. The MFA is a terminal degree in the areas of Acting, Directing, Design and Choreography.

B. Discipline – The program is a department-based program established to administer graduate instruction and research leading to a Master of Fine Arts degree. The MFA program is intended for early to mid-career theatre and dance artists and is a two-year program of study. The student focuses on one discipline: Acting, Directing, Design or Choreography but may explore interdisciplinary study in additional areas.

C. Our mission is:

To attract students with the highest creative potential and provide them with a rigorous program of sustained artistic development.

To encourage research activities and exchange of ideas among all areas of the program, which includes directing, acting, choreography and the areas of design-scenic, lighting and costume and combinations thereof.

To provide a supportive work environment to help students explore new understandings within the ever-expanding field of contemporary performance.

To work closely with students through regular critiques and reviews to assess both conceptual and practical development of each student's work in preparation for their final thesis projects and presentations.

To provide students with an in-depth knowledge of historical and contemporary issues of theatre, dance and performance as relates to their specific area of study.

To ensure that graduates are able to pursue their craft and develop it in new directions in preparation for professional and academic careers.

ARTICLE II. Membership

A. Criteria for Membership in the MFA Program:

1. Membership in the MFA program shall consist of faculty colleagues who:

a. Have an interest and background in Theatre and/or Dance, independent of department appointment, as evidenced by their degree, publications and/or course offerings and following the Guidelines for Membership in Graduate Programs as adopted by Graduate Council.

b. Hold an appropriate academic title as (a) a member of the Academic Senate of the University of California (includes Professors, Lecturers with Security of Employment,

Professors in Residence, Professors of Clinical “__”, Professors Emeritus/a, and Research Professors), (b) Adjunct Professor, (c) Lecturer (without Security of Employment) or (d) Lecturer Without Salary. Academic staff with primary appointments as Cooperative Extension Specialists or in the Professional Research series are not eligible to be members of graduate programs unless they also hold an appropriate instructional title (normally Lecturer Without Salary).

- c. Are willing to participate in the administration of the program.
- d. Are actively involved in their own program of research or creative work commensurate with the aims of the program.
- e. All active members, except Emeriti, are eligible to vote.

B. Application for Membership

1. Membership is automatic for faculty within the Theatre and Dance Department. Faculty members outside the department may apply by self-nomination or nomination by an existing member and must be approved by a vote of the membership.
2. To apply, interested faculty should submit a CV and a letter of interest stating they are willing to participate in the program as stated in II. A.
3. The main responsibilities of the MFA Program faculty are:
 - a. To take an active role in the administration of the graduate program by serving on MFA program administrative committees in each discipline.
 - b. To serve as a graduate adviser (not to be confused with being a major professor)
 - c. To serve as an administrative officer of the program.
 - d. To provide graduate level instruction, independent study, as appropriate, in addition to research instruction.
 - e. To serve on thesis committees.

C. Emeritus Members

Emeriti can teach within the MFA Program and serve on various committees as they wish. Emeritus faculty members do not participate in voting on MFA program matters.

D. Review of Membership

A periodic review of membership will occur every three years and a decision for continuation will be made by the Membership committee in consultation with the Chair. Minimal participation expected to remain an active member includes the criteria listed in section II.B.3. above.

E. Membership Appeal Process

Should there be any applicants denied membership or renewal of membership, applicants may submit a written appeal to the Chair. Should that be denied, applicants may make a final appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

ARTICLE III. Administration of the Program

The administration of the program and its activities shall be vested in the Chair of the Program, the MFA Program Committee, the MFA Faculty Adviser, the MFA Staff adviser (AKA Graduate Program Administrator) and the Department of Theatre and Dance

ARTICLE IV. MFA Program Chair

The Department of Theatre and Dance Chair administers the Program. The Chair may delegate the day-to-day responsibilities of the MFA Program to one or more faculty members of the program.

The duties of the Chair are to:

- a) Provide overall academic leadership for the program;
- b) Develop and implement policies for the program;
- c) Represent the interests of the program to the campus and University administrators;
- d) Call meetings of the MFA Program Committee;
- e) Call and preside at meetings of the program;
- f) Be responsible for coordinating all administrative matters with the Office of Graduate Studies;
- g) Manage the budgets of the program;
- h) Submit course change or approval forms;
- i) Be responsible for the accuracy of all publications related to the program including web pages and catalog copy;
- j) Coordinate program's graduate course teaching assignments with relevant department chairs; and
- k) Nominate graduate advisers for appointment.

ARTICLE V. Committees

A. MFA Program Committee

The MFA Program Committee consists of 6-7 members:

1. A minimum of four members drawn from each of the four disciplines of the program: acting, directing, design and choreography.
2. The MFA Adviser (who may serve as representative from a discipline);
3. The Chair of the Program;
4. The Graduate Program Administrator (*ex officio* and non-voting)

Any member of the MFA Program may attend MFA Program Committee meetings. Any MFA program member is permitted to vote.

Term of Service and Nomination Process

1. The Chair of the MFA Program Committee is the MFA Adviser.
2. MFA Committee members will serve for a two-year term. Service is renewable.
3. Vacancies on the MFA Program Committee will be filled by selection of the Chair.
4. The duties of the MFA Program Committee are:

- a. To meet at least once each quarter. Other meetings may be called as frequently, and for such purposes, as deemed desirable by the MFA Program Committee.
- b. To appoint such committees as it deems necessary to administer the activities of the Program.
- c. To prepare recommendations regarding degree requirements;
- d. To prepare announcements for the University Catalog, and for publications of the Graduate Division pertaining to graduate study and research in Dramatic Art.
- e. To consider information received from the other deliberative bodies on the campus.
- f. To consider and act upon information and requests received from members of the Graduate Program and from the graduate cohort.
- g. All members have voting rights, except as noted.

B. Membership Committee

The membership committee consists of all active members of the program and the Chair of the MFA Program. The membership committee conducts reviews of membership using criteria described in Section II above and maintains a list of current members. All members are eligible to vote. The Chair of the committee is the Chair of the MFA Program.

C. Acting Committee

1. The Acting Committee consists of all faculty who teach in the area of Acting unless there are fewer than three people in an area in which case the MFA Program Committee will appoint any additional faculty.
2. The MFA program chair appoints the Acting Committee Chair for a period of two years. Service is renewable.
3. All members have voting rights.
4. Role and function of the committee:
 - a. Review and select student applications for admission to the Acting program
 - b. Review applicant and continuing student files for fellowships, financial aid, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships.
 - c. Recommend casting of graduate actors to the Chair and the directors and choreographers of Theatre and Dance Department productions.
 - d. Review and advise on the mentoring and advising of the graduate acting students.
 - e. Review curricular requirements and the courses used to fulfill those requirements in the Acting area. Make recommendations to the Chair and the general MFA Program membership for delivering and improving those courses.

D. Directing Committee

1. The Directing Committee consists of all faculty who teach in the area of Directing unless there are fewer than three people in an area in which case the MFA Program Committee will appoint any additional faculty.
2. The MFA program chair appoints the Directing Committee Chair for a period of two years. Service is renewable.
3. All members have voting rights.

4. Role and function of the committee:
 - a. Review and select student applications for admission to the Directing program.
 - b. Review applicant and continuing student files for fellowships, financial aid, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships.
 - c. Review and advise on the mentoring and advising of the graduate directing students.
 - d. Review curricular requirements and the courses used to fulfill those requirements in the directing area. Make recommendations to the chair and the general MFA Program membership for delivering and improving those courses.

E. Choreography Committee

1. The Choreography Committee consists of all faculty who teach in the area of Choreography unless there are fewer than three people in an area in which case the MFA Program Committee will appoint any additional faculty.
2. The MFA program chair appoints the Choreography Committee Chair for a period of two years. Service is renewable.
3. All members have voting rights.
4. Role and function of the committee:
 - a. Review and select student applications for admission to the Choreography program.
 - b. Review applicant and continuing student files for fellowships, financial aid, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships.
 - c. Review and advise on the mentoring and advising of the graduate choreography students.
 - d. Review curricular requirements and the courses used to fulfill those requirements in the Choreography area. Make recommendations to the Chair and the general MFA Program membership for delivering and improving those courses.

F. Design Committee

1. The Design Committee consists of all faculty who teach in the area of Design unless there are fewer than three people in an area in which case the MFA Program Committee will appoint any additional faculty.
2. The MFA program chair appoints the Design Committee Chair for a period of two years. Service is renewable.
3. All members have voting rights.
4. Role and function of the committee:
 - a. Review and select student applications for admission to the Design program.
 - b. Review applicant and continuing student files for fellowships, financial aid, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships.
 - c. Recommend selection of graduate designers of department of Theatre and Dance productions to the Chair and the directors and choreographers of said productions.
 - d. Review and advise on the mentoring and advising of the graduate Design students.
 - e. Review curricular requirements and the courses used to fulfill those requirements in the Design area. Make recommendations to the Chair and the general MFA Program membership for delivering and improving those courses.

VI. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

A student representative from the MFA program is invited to attend the Theatre and Dance Department faculty meetings. The program does not appoint student representatives to program committees due to the small size of the program.

VII. GRADUATE ADVISERS

MFA Advisers are appointed by the Chair of the Program in compliance with the policies and procedures of the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies. One MFA Adviser is appointed for a two-year term, and can be consecutively reappointed for one additional two-year term.

Duties of the MFA Adviser include:

- A. The MFA Adviser serves as chair of the MFA Program Committee.
- B. Delivers a report of the committee's activities to the Program Membership, usually at the monthly department faculty meetings.
- C. Coordination of administrative matters with Staff Academic Coordinator/graduate program adviser and the Chair of the department.
- D. Responds to applicant and student appeals.
- E. In consultation with major professors tracks student progress and submits yearly progress reports to students and the office of Graduate Studies.
- F. In consultation with major professors provides advice on how the student may best complete the requirements of the Program;
- G. In consultation with major professors determines whether and how graduate student work satisfies Program requirements;
- H. To advise the Department concerning scheduling of courses relevant to the Graduate Program;
- I. To communicate to students their standing in the Program.
- J. Other duties as outlined in the Policy and Procedure Manual, University of California Davis.

VIII. MEETINGS

MFA Program Membership meetings are held with the faculty as a whole. Meetings during the Academic year are scheduled at the beginning of Fall quarter.

MFA Program Committee meetings during the Academic year are scheduled at the beginning of Fall quarter.

Notification of additional meetings shall be given at least one week beforehand, by electronic mail. Faculty members of the Program away from campus may participate in meetings by submitting in advance written comments, and by casting proxy votes. At the discretion of the presiding officer of meetings of the MFA Program Committee or its Standing Committees, faculty may participate in meetings by audio or videoconference.

Members of the Program will be given formal opportunity to respond to decisions and actions taken by the MFA Program Committee during Program meetings, and MFA Program members may raise academic, artistic and administrative issues with the MFA Program Committee at any time during the year.

IX. QUORUM

All issues that require a vote must be:

- a. Voted on by 50+% of the eligible members; and
- b. Passage requires a 50+% supporting vote of the members voting.
- c. Voting may be via e-mail ballot.

X. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Bylaws may be made by at least a two-thirds majority of a quorum. Written notice of a proposed amendment shall be sent by mail and email to each member of the program at least five calendar days prior to a meeting at which the amendment is to be proposed and discussed. Ballots will be mailed to members after the meeting.