

AMDA

AMDA College of
the Performing Arts
LOS ANGELES

The American Musical
and Dramatic Academy
NEW YORK CITY

Master of Fine Arts Degree in Writing for Theatre and Media

Master of Arts Degree in Theatre



MASTER OF FINE ARTS DEGREE IN WRITING FOR THEATRE AND MEDIA

Program Learning Outcomes

- **Advanced Skills in Dramatic Construction:** Demonstrate the ability to create texts that effectively incorporate dramatic strategies and structures.
- **Concept to Script:** Demonstrate the ability to cultivate an idea from concept to finished product.
- **Script to Production:** Demonstrate the ability to edit a script through the process of collaboration to final production.
- **Interdisciplinary Competency:** Demonstrate a command of interdisciplinary research and practice through written and oral presentation.
- **History, Theory and Criticism:** Acquire an advanced understanding of theatre history, theory and criticism as it reflects current and historical discussion and debate and apply this knowledge to the production of creative pieces.
- **Cross-cultural Responsibility:** Demonstrate a grasp of global perspectives and cross-cultural analysis.
- **Research:** Engage in original, focused research pertaining to their field of study.
- **Professional Writing:** Demonstrate key professional capacities related to writing for performance, including effective communication skills, technology literacy and an understanding of professional ethics and best practices.

The Master of Fine Arts in Writing for Theatre and Media is a three-year terminal graduate degree designed for students who are passionate about developing the professional-level skills necessary to create narratives from concept to production. Students prepare for their careers as professional writers by learning how to think critically about society and how to approach current issues such as diversity, inclusion, access and modern theatre theory. With a focus on the collaborative process, students develop advanced storytelling techniques through writing-intensive coursework and in co-curricular programming. Creating production-ready content is at the core of this program and to this end, students have many opportunities to witness their work being brought to fruition by AMDA's student performers on the stage and screen. Graduates complete the program having created a portfolio of professional pieces, preparing them to enter the business of writing for theatre and media.

SUMMARY OF REQUIRED COURSES

Program Category Key	Credits
Creation and/or Presentation of Theatre	39.0
Advanced Analytical and Academic Theatre Studies	12.0
Writing Internship	9.0
Total Program Credit Hours	60.0

Sample Curriculum

YEAR ONE

Fall Semester

THR520	Seminar in Theatre History	3.0
WTM510	Theatre and Media Writing: Collaboration	3.0
WTM520	Theatre and Media Writing: Research and Application	3.0
Total Credits		9.0

Summer Semester

WTM581	Writing Internship	3.0
Total Credits		3.0

Spring Semester

THE550	Seminar in Theories of Drama and Theatre	3.0
WTM511	Writing Workshop/Lab 1	6.0
Total Credits		9.0

YEAR TWO

Fall Semester

THE560	Seminar in Critical Race Theory	3.0
WTM530	Theatre and Media Writing: Dramaturgy	3.0
WTM540	Theatre and Media Writing: Readings, Analysis and Adaptation	3.0
Total Credits		9.0

Summer Semester

WTM582	Writing Internship	3.0
Total Credits		3.0

Spring Semester

WTM561	The Business of Writing for Theatre and Media	3.0
WTM512	Writing Workshop/Lab 2	6.0
Total Credits		9.0

YEAR THREE

Fall Semester

THE570	Seminar in Queer and Gender Theory	3.0
WTM571	Advanced Design, Technology and Production	3.0
WTM513	Writing Workshop/Lab 3	3.0
Total Credits		9.0

Summer Semester

WTM583	Writing Internship	3.0
Total Credits		3.0
Total Program Credits		60.0

Spring Semester

WTM550	Theatre and Media Writing: Contemporary and Future Media	3.0
WTM514	Writing Workshop/Lab 4	3.0
Total Credits		6.0

MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN THEATRE

Program Learning Outcomes

- **History, Theory and Criticism:** Acquire a comprehensive understanding of theatre history, theory and criticism as they reflect current and historical discussion and debate.
- **Research:** Engage in original, focused research pertaining to their field of study.
- **Cross-cultural Responsibility:** Demonstrate a grasp of global perspectives and cross-cultural analysis.
- **Interdisciplinary Competency:** Demonstrate a command of interdisciplinary research through written and oral presentation.
- **Academic and Professional Writing:** Demonstrate skills in academic and professional writing, including an effective understanding of primary research, project organization, drafting, revision, and final editing, resulting in work worthy of critical peer review and publication.
- **Praxis:** Produce original scholarly work and/or analysis of creative primary research that will add to the general body of knowledge.

The Master of Arts program at AMDA offers students the opportunity to develop as original scholars of theatre. Unique at AMDA is the opportunity to study theatre arts at the graduate level amongst an active and diverse community of performing artists. This intensive graduate program is completed in one year, including three semesters of immersive courses and an original thesis project. Student theses are completed under the mentorship of faculty and through collaboration with peers. The program's curriculum includes a course sequence in academic writing that emphasizes peer learning and review as well as organization, technique and writing project management. Students graduate from this program with highly developed skills in the analysis of theatre literature, history and criticism.

SUMMARY OF REQUIRED COURSES

Program Category Key	Credits
Advanced Analytical and Academic Theatre Studies	27.0
Advanced Analytical and Academic Theatre Studies, Elective	12.0
Total Program Credit Hours	
	30.0

Sample Curriculum

First Semester

THR570	Academic Writing in Theatre Studies: Development, Revisions, and Critique	3.0
THR550	Seminar in Research Methods	3.0
THE550	Seminar in Theories of Drama and Theatre	3.0
THR520	Seminar in Theatre History	3.0
Total Credits		12.0

Second Semester

THR541	Seminar in Cross-Cultural Theatre Studies (Asian Theatre Focus)	3.0
THR530	Seminar in Theatre History II	3.0
THR580	Academic Writing in Theatre Studies: Articles, Conferences, and Publication	3.0
Select one of the following elective courses:		3.0
THR540	History of Musical Theatre	
THE560	Critical Race Theory	
THE570	Queer and Gender Theory	
Total Credits		12.0

Third Semester

THR600	Thesis Seminar	6.0
Total Program Credits		30.0

Course Descriptions

Master of Arts Degree in Theatre

ADVANCED, ANALYTICAL AND ACADEMIC THEATRE STUDIES

THE550 Seminar in Theories of Drama and Theatre

Students experience an intensive survey of theories of drama, theatre and performance from historical and contemporary perspectives. Topics include semiotics, phenomenology, queer and gender theory, critical race theory and ecocriticism. (3.0 credits)

THE560 Seminar in Critical Race Theory

This seminar identifies and examines existing power structures that perpetuate white heteronormative ideologies and the marginalization of people of color. It investigates race and racism as a social construction and highlights the ways these theories are supported and/or condemned in the performing arts. Topics include Afropessimism, Latinx race theory, Orientalism, Native American race theory and multiculturalism. (3.0 credits)

THE570 Seminar in Queer and Gender Theory

This seminar offers an intersectional approach to understanding identity and its relationship to sex and sexuality. It is a post-structural analysis of heteronormative power structures that promote heterosexuality as the preferred sexual orientation and institutionalize patriarchy. It examines the ways these analyses and theories are supported and/or condemned in the performing arts. Topics include identity and performance, queer theory and intersectional feminism. (3.0 credits)

THR520 Seminar in Theatre History

This survey course provides a concise study of the diverse expansion of drama and the development of theatre from its earliest ritual beginnings through the turn of the 21st century. Students will read, discuss and analyze the theatrical, societal and cultural significance of each historical era as well as seminal playwrights and plays. Plays and course lessons are drawn from Western and non-Western sources. Some of the topics explored could include the evolution of the physical stage, acting styles, the introduction of psychology as a new science, cultural diversity and the rise of women in theatre. (3.0 credits)

THR530 Seminar in Theatre History II

This course offers a deep exploration of highly impactful periods in the history of theatre and drama. Critical moments in theatre history are examined through the lenses of their social, political and economic environments. Individuals who made significant contributions to these paradigm-shifting eras are discussed in terms of how theatre shaped their

perspectives and how their perspectives shaped theatre. (3.0 credits)

THR540 History of Musical Theatre

This topical course explores the history and development of musical theatre (primarily, American musical theatre) as well as various related subjects, themes, concepts and ideas. The contributions of major composers, lyricists, directors, performers and choreographers are examined as well as various genres of musicals including book, concept, jukebox and rock/pop. Possible topics explored could include the deconstruction of Oklahoma, race and cultural diversity in casting, women in musical theatre, and the Off-Broadway musical. The course utilizes lectures, student presentations, video clips, sound recordings, live performance attendance and assigned readings. (3.0 credits)

THR541 Seminar in Cross-Cultural Theatre: Asian Theatre

This survey course introduces students to the dramatic texts, theatrical arts, traditions and new developments in Asian theatre. The course focuses on traditional as well as modern Asian theatre and explores material drawn from each of the five diverse regions of Asia. Topics explored could include politics and the theatre in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea; the Muhammadan religion and theatre; and rising female playwrights in modern Japanese theatre. The reading and viewing of dramatic material from each region covered is supported by class lecture and discussion and relevant critical texts that provide the student with an informed perspective on the rich cultural, artistic, intellectual, historical and sociopolitical contributions of Asian theatre. (3.0 credits)

THR550 Theatre Research Methods

Research and theatre have a variety of developing relationships. This course considers those relationships from multiple angles, including research as theatre, archival research and practice-based research. As such, the course will explore experimental research practices that bring theatre together with sociological, communication and historical practices. Students in the course will engage in collaborative research through the media of performance, text and visual documents. (3.0 credits)

THR570 Academic Writing: Development, Revisions and Critique

This is a practice-oriented introduction to the fundamentals of academic literacy, including effective research, critical reading and written communication using the MLA style. The course focuses on invention, researching, drafting, revising and editing, along with effective techniques for critiquing both personal work and the work of colleagues. Special

attention is given to constructing an effective argument. (3.0 credits)

THR580 Academic Writing in Theatre Studies

Articles, Conferences and Publication (A practice-oriented, intensive analysis of the principles of excellent academic writing as they specifically pertain to the goals of conference presentations and publication of articles, chapters in anthologies, and books. Practical instruction includes the submission process and guidelines for submissions for academic conferences, preparing and submitting a book proposal and the specifications of academic journals. (3.0 credits)

THR600 Thesis Seminar

This seminar is designed to guide candidates in the development and effective completion of their thesis. Focus will be on the essential components of identifying the subject and methodology for the thesis; producing, critiquing, analyzing and revising the thesis; and completing a finished thesis, edited according to MLA guidelines and suitable for publication. (6.0 credits)

Course Descriptions

Master of Fine Arts Degree in Writing for Theatre and Media

CREATION AND/OR PRESENTATION OF THEATRE

WTM510 Theatre and Media Writing: Collaboration

A laboratory-style introduction to creative collaboration. The course applies effective strategies for researching, experimenting and devising new work. Emphasis is placed on communication and the process of theatrical collaboration. Artists from different disciplines work together to create a 10-minute performance composition for the Artist's Lab. (3.0 credits)

WTM511 Writing Workshop/Lab 1

This course addresses the principles of writing for performance. It examines the core pillars of writing such as structure, character, theme lines, plot points, voice, dialogue and moving from concept to script and script to production. It further addresses necessary skills in organization, software, idea cultivation and work ethic. This course unfolds in a series of four labs with each lab emphasizing different aspects of script development. Lab 1 will develop these skills in a one act or short film and a treatment and pitch. (6.0 credits)

WTM512 Writing Workshop/Lab 2

This course addresses the principles of writing for performance. It examines the core pillars of writing, such as structure, character, theme lines, plot points, voice, dialogue and moving from concept to script and script to production. It further addresses necessary skills in organization, software, idea cultivation and work ethic. This course unfolds in a series of four labs, with each lab emphasizing different aspects of script development. Lab 2 will focus development on a full-length script. (6.0 credits)

WTM513 Writing Workshop/Lab 3

This course addresses the principles of writing for performance. It examines the core pillars of writing, such as structure, character, theme lines, plot points, voice, dialogue and moving from concept to script and script to production. It further addresses necessary skills in organization, software, idea cultivation and work ethic. This course unfolds in a series of four labs with each lab emphasizing different aspects of script development. Lab 3 will focus on the development of the thesis project. (3.0 credits)

WTM514 Writing Workshop/Lab 4

This course addresses the principles of writing for performance. It examines the core pillars of writing, such as structure, character, theme lines, plot points, voice, dialogue and moving from concept to script and script to production. It further addresses necessary skills in organization,

software, idea cultivation and work ethic. This course unfolds in a series of four labs with each lab emphasizing different aspects of script development. Lab 4 will focus on the culmination and staged reading of the thesis project. (3.0 credits)

WTM520 Theatre and Media Writing: Research and Application

This course implements research techniques and practices that foster the student's ability to create worlds in their writing. It examines how to build context to clearly convey their play's aesthetic. Topics may include historical accuracy, understanding genre and cultural relevance. Students apply these methods to one piece of work for the Artist's Lab. (3.0 credits)

WTM530 Theatre and Media Writing: Dramaturgy

This course examines the role of the dramaturg in relation to writing—from concept to script, script to production and production to publication. It focuses on topics such as research, development, continuity, editing and supporting writers to implement their vision. Students create a dramaturgical presentation about one of their scripts. (3.0 credits)

WTM540 Theatre and Media Writing: Readings, Analysis and Adaptation

This course explores the benefits and challenges of adaptation for the stage and various media platforms. It addresses the ethics of adaptation in both fiction and nonfiction storytelling, and it examines techniques for reading and analyzing materials for the purpose of adapting a story from one medium to another or from antiquity to modernity. Students demonstrate their learning by writing a short play or screenplay adaptation. (3.0 credits)

WTM550 Theatre and Media Writing: Contemporary and Future Media

This course examines the emerging practices of writing in digital environments such as social media, video games, web sites, mobile apps and virtual reality. Students learn both theory and practice through readings, viewings, discussion and software tutorials. Students demonstrate their knowledge through a series of online writing projects or by writing an immersive theatre script. (3.0 credits)

WTM561 The Business of Writing for Theatre and Media

This course is a thorough exploration of the business of writing for stage and screen. It discusses the relationship between art and commerce through topics such as securing an agent, submitting and pitching a script, networking, conferences, creating a strong portfolio, publishing, the WGA and how to interview. Students create a portfolio

and submit an actionable career plan for their culminating project. (3.0 credits)

WTM571 Advanced Design, Technology and Production

This seminar focuses on all aspects of design as they relate to scripts and production. It emphasizes research, text analysis, conceptualization, visual expression, execution and professional collaboration. It examines the ways productions aesthetically execute worlds, psychology, time, problems and other various aspects required by a story or text. Students must present a researched presentation of one design element for one of their plays. (3.0 credits)

WTM581 - 583 Writing Internship

Students have the option to choose either an internship within AMDA's Production Department, working with highly skilled members of staff to bring creative pieces to life on both stage and screen, or an approved writing-related internship within the expansive entertainment industry that surrounds AMDA's Los Angeles dynamic campus.

ADVANCED, ANALYTICAL AND ACADEMIC THEATRE STUDIES

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THE570 Seminar in Queer and Gender Theory

This seminar offers an intersectional approach to understanding identity and its relationship to sex and sexuality. It is a post-structural analysis of heteronormative power structures that promote heterosexuality as the preferred sexual orientation and institutionalize patriarchy. It examines the ways these analyses and theories are supported and/or condemned in the performing arts. Topics include

identity and performance, queer theory and intersectional feminism. (3.0 credits)

THR520 Seminar in Theatre History

A comprehensive survey of the history of theatre and drama from its beginnings to the present. Special emphasis is given to the social, political and economic environments of each time period as they pertain to the development of theatre. (3.0 credits)