

**THEATRE STUDENT HANDBOOK
2026-2027 (AY27)**

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The UIC School of Theatre and Music sits on the traditional homeland of the original peoples of the area: the Potawatomi, Odawa, and Ojibwe Nations (known as the Three Fires Confederacy) as well as the Menominee and Ho-Chunk who—along with many Indigenous peoples—were among its first inhabitants. The School of Theatre and Music honors the many Native Americans past, present, and future who call this land home.

ANTIRACISM in STM

At UIC Theatre, we acknowledge that Western theatre texts, history, performance, training, and pedagogy derive from a lineage of White Supremacy. We are reviewing our teaching, including our curriculum, pedagogy, and syllabi, in order to better serve our BIPOC students and colleagues. We commit to including more BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and People of Color) perspectives and readings on our syllabi, and to becoming increasingly well-versed in the intellectual discourse around said works. We commit to addressing and correcting historical choices made in privileging white perspectives over others in texts and training.

Our intention is to re-contextualize these elements to address the historical choices made in privileging certain texts and practices over others, and to show parallels of structural, formal, or thematic elements from BIPOC-centered texts and practices.

The STM Antiracism Action Committee was created in AY21, and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Providing education, training, and workshops for STM-wide antiracism initiatives.
- Reporting on the work of the staff, students, faculty, and leadership.
- Determining priorities for school-level initiatives.
- Managing the budget for STM-wide antiracism initiatives.
- Reviewing and recommending revisions to current policies and practices for recruiting and supporting BIPOC faculty, staff, and students.

We invite students to join us on this journey. Students are asked to take their questions or concerns to the instructor, advisor, or student rep. See our [website](#) for more information regarding our work.

INTRODUCTION

This Theatre Student handbook is designed to help you thrive and ensure your success at UIC. Here you'll find contact info for important personnel and campus organizations, resource information regarding health and wellness, and explanations of policies and procedures, including our Standards of Professionalism. STM functions best when communication is open and everyone is aware of their opportunities and responsibilities.

PLEASE READ ALL OF THE INFORMATION CAREFULLY AND COMPLETELY.

The Department of Theatre at the University of Illinois at Chicago is one of two departments that make up the School of Theatre and Music (STM) in the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts (CADA).

KEY PERSONNEL

Dr. Christine Dunford
Director of STM
cdunfo1@uic.edu

Amy Sinclair, Business Manager
Finances, Accounting
asincl3@uic.edu

Zayla Carter, Tech Coordinator
zayla@uic.edu

Lisa Tang, Academic Advisor
ltang9@uic.edu

Yasen Peyankov, Head of Theatre
yasenp@uic.edu

Dr. Brent Talbot, Head of Music
btalbot@uic.edu

Leda Robinson
Facilities, Keys/Swipe Cards, Room Scheduling
ledar@uic.edu
312-996-2977

Contact information for all STM faculty and staff is available [online](#).

EMERGENCY NUMBERS & CAMPUS SAFETY

UIC Police

Emergency Number: 312.355.5555 (5-5555 from a campus phone)

Non-Emergencies: 312.996.2830

UIC Patrol Escort Request: 312.996.2830

A UIC Officer or Student Patrol will walk with you to your destination. Call 15 minutes ahead. Available 24/7.

Night Ride

The UIC Night Ride van (offered through the [TransLoc app](#)) will take you anywhere within its range of service between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. 7 days a week. All riders need a valid UIC I-card to board. The service operates Service area: Union Street on the east; Western Avenue on the west; Van Buren on the north; and 16th on the south. *(Note: Intracampus shuttle buses run until 11p each night.)*

StarTel

For quick access to campus police, look for the brown poles with blue lights on top, found campus-wide. Use these for any emergency.

Emergency Texts

Be sure to subscribe a mobile number for *UIC Alert Notifications* when setting your password and password recovery options for the first time in the [UIC NetID Activation](#) application. An immediate message is sent in case of a serious crime in progress, a weather emergency, or other urgent campus situation. Keeping yourself safe on campus is very important. Things to remember:

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Don't leave any bags unattended, especially if they contain valuables.
- When walking home at night or day, do not be distracted with headphones in your ears, or talk on the phone.
- Try to avoid walking home alone in the dark. Any student can request an escort to their destination through UIC Patrol Escort; see the number above

ICE/Immigration

If you are on campus and federal law enforcement agents such as the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) ask to speak with you, or present you with paperwork or a warrant, campus legal experts suggest that you contact UIC Police immediately: 312.355.5555.

Generally, you are not required to respond to questions or provide information, and if you are obligated in any way, the UIC Police will be able to help you make that determination. UIC Police officers do not inquire about immigration status, and do not detain or make arrests based solely on immigration status unless compelled by law to do so.

[STUDENT WELLNESS AT UIC](#)

The School of Theatre & Music is very committed to the health and wellness of our students, faculty, and staff. We therefore offer many points of support both in our building and elsewhere on campus. Please take a minute to review them!

Behavioral/Emotional Health

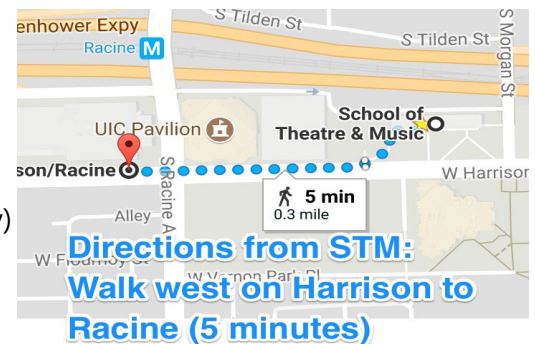
UIC's [Counseling Center](#) is committed to helping students develop improved coping skills in order to address emotional, interpersonal, and academic concerns. The Counseling Center is supported by the Health Service Fee as assessed to all students enrolled at the university, and therefore enrolled students are eligible for these behavioral health services without additional cost.

All health-related matters are strictly confidential, and do not appear on academic records. It is not at all unusual for students to discover a need for counseling with a professional, and we encourage it. If you—or anyone you know—appear to be in crisis or heading that direction, please do not hesitate to ask for help.

UIC Counseling Center 1200 W Harrison, Suite 2010

Call 312.996.3490 for an appointment

- Open 8:30-5:00 M-F
- After-Hours Crisis Hotline (6-10:30pm, Sunday- Friday)
312.996.5535



Inclusion & Belonging

As a federally designated Minority Serving Institution, UIC strives to promote an organizational culture and structure grounded on the principles of access, equity and inclusion. UIC welcomes students, staff and faculty from a variety of racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds, gender identities, sexual orientations, and abilities to cultivate a diverse learning community where human differences are embraced and neither difference nor disadvantage stands in the way of intellectual and professional achievement.

Inclusion and belonging are critical to our work as theatre makers, and STM has several initiatives that ensure students can live and work fully in themselves and achieve their fullest potential. These include:

Touchstone Mentorship Program All incoming UIC Theatre students are assigned a student mentor, who will help to connect them to life in our department and the University. At the Touchstone ceremony early in the fall semester, new students will meet each other and their mentors, and exchange contact information so they can communicate throughout the year.

Convocation The weekly Convocation series includes visits and master classes with guest artists (casting agents, designers, actors, and more) along with info sessions about working in the theatre, and workshops that develop cultural and human sensitivity. This is a 1-credit course that all theatre students must take.

Office of Diversity, Equity, & Engagement This University office has many terrific initiatives and resources, including Advancing Racial Equity (ARE), Black and African Descent Resources (a collection of the numerous resources found across campus), and seven *Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change*, which host events and activities to support and bring students together:

- African-American Cultural Center
- Arab American Cultural Center
- Asian American Resource & Cultural Ctr
- Disability Cultural Center
- Gender and Sexuality Center
- Latino Cultural Center
- Women's Leadership and Resource Center

UIC's Gender and Sexuality Center maintains a [campus records resource guide](#) to help students seeking to change or update a preferred name, legal name, or gender marker with the University.

More resources for students seeking community or assistance beyond the classroom (housing, health, legal issues) can be found [here](#).

Undocumented Students For students who are undocumented or from mixed immigration status families, we have a range of resources and services to help, [here](#).

Physical Health

UIC Department of Family Medicine serves the students of UIC. All students at UIC pay a student services fee, and this fee pays for access to preventive and acute healthcare services provided by the [Department of Family Medicine](#) at their two clinics on Maxwell Street at no additional charge.

The Family Medicine Center
University Village 722 West Maxwell Street, Suite 235
Call 312.996.2901 for an appointment

- Same-day appointments, evening, and Saturdays
- Be sure to bring your UIC student ID card to your appt.

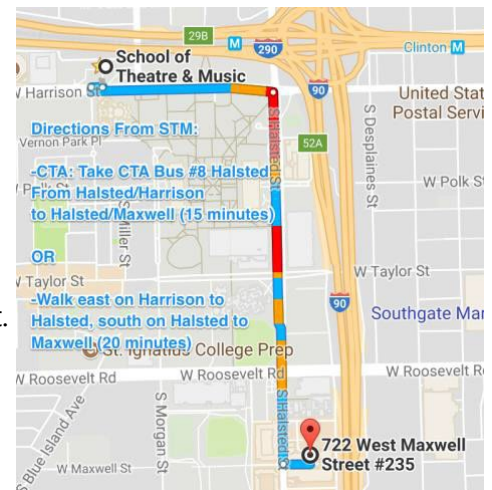
Services provided

- Care of acute illnesses and injuries
- Testing for sexually transmitted diseases
- Contraception
- Annual wellness visit
- Nurse visits to review immunizations (The cost of immunizations will be billed to student's health insurance)

Medications covered

- Medications for minor illnesses and injuries at no cost
- Birth control pills at discounted cost

Medications must be obtained at a UIC pharmacy. UIC pharmacies are conveniently located near the Family Medicine clinics



Medical Insurance

All UIC students are automatically enrolled with CampusCare. Students who have comparable medical insurance (covered by parents or spouse's insurance) can opt out with a Waiver Form. Act fast: the form is due in early September. No repeat action is needed in subsequent semesters. Go to their [website](#) to get submit an opt-out waiver

Religious Observances

For guidance on respecting religious observance while maintaining academic standards and requirements, faculty members are encouraged to reference the Religious Accommodation section of the Office for Access and Equity website at <https://oae.uic.edu/religious/>.

[FACILITIES](#)

The Department of Theatre is located on the lower level of the Education, Theatre & Music, and Social Work Building (ETMSW) at 1040 West Harrison, Chicago, IL, 60607.

ETMSW Building Hours and Card Access

ETMSW is open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. during the week and closed on weekends. Students can obtain 24-hour access to the building with their I-card, which can be arranged in the main office.

School of Theatre & Music Main Office

The School of Theatre & Music Main Office is located in room L260 of ETMSW. Office hours are 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. The Main Office telephone is 312-996-2977. Leda Robinson is the primary contact.

Lockers

You are eligible to use a locker for storing your belongings. Go to the STM main office to make arrangements. Bring your own lock.

Rehearsal Room Reservations

Classes and class projects are given first priority for use of classrooms and theatre spaces. You are welcome to request reservations for available rooms—including classrooms L225 and L227—for rehearsal via the QR code posted beside all classroom doors. Before requesting a

reservation, be sure to check the room's course schedule which is posted next to the doors. Email Leda Robinson (ledar@uic.edu) with any reservation questions or concerns you have.

Be sure to "restore" all rooms (furniture, lights, etc.) to the neutral room condition posted so that the room is ready clear for the next user. Do not remove rehearsal furniture, chairs, etc. and do NOT store them in the halls.

Music Media Lab

The Music Media Mac Lab (L211) is open during the week for all students, and is equipped with both software and hardware specific to STM majors. The lab is open M-F from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The schedule may vary due to use of the lab for courses. A schedule is posted on the door each semester. The computers in the lab require a Net ID and Password to login. Any unauthorized use of the space may result in immediate removal or prohibited access in the future. It is important to treat the lab with respect. Do not eat or drink in the lab and keep your voice to a library level. If you have any questions, please ask the lab monitor posted in the back of the room.

Student Performance Projects

While we wish to encourage student-initiated projects, our departmental resources are very limited. Therefore, all student projects that use departmental resources (rooms, other theater students, lights, etc.) must have sponsorship from either a faculty member as related to a course (e.g., a required course, Independent Study THTR 498, or Special Project THTR 466) or from a student organization, such as Red Light School District. Student-initiated productions cannot be scheduled for the last month of classes through the finals period.

The Callboard

Most important announcements will come to all students via UIC email, so please check that email daily. However, the bulletin board located in the downstairs lobby remains a focal point for the Theatre Department. It posts announcements pertinent to both classes and productions, personal messages, audition and casting announcements, last-minute class changes and other asap messaging. Please check it out whenever you're in the building.

The bulletin board to the left of the box office posts info from non-UIC productions, auditions, and other organizations. The main office needs to approve anything that goes up there.

Scripts

Many play scripts can be found at UIC's Daley Library, 801 S Morgan. You can search the collection at <http://library.uic.edu>.

Copy Machines

Copy machines for student use are found in the following nearby locations:

- 2nd floor of our building (ETMSW) in the Vending Machine Room (Room 2035). WEPA Printer only (no copy function).
- Student Services Building (SSB)
- Copy Stop—at Student Center East
- Daley Library

The department copy machine is only to be used by faculty, staff, and student employees.

Food

A convenience store and vending machines can be found in the Behavioral Sciences Building (BSB) just across Harrison Ave from our building. Student Center East also has a large cafeteria with several fast food vendors and is open until 7 p.m. Port Center Café, on the ground floor of University Hall, has coffee drinks, sandwiches, salads, pastries, etc. Many restaurants can be found on Taylor Street. In the STM building, vending machines are located on the east end of the 2nd floor.

Personal Property / Lost & Found

Please be sure to keep your belongings with you, and never leave any bags or valuables unattended in the theatres or classrooms. Always dispose of your own trash, using the appropriate recycling receptacles. Please turn in found belongings to staff in the Box Office. When in performance/rehearsal, turn in found belongings to your Stage Manager. A campus “Lost and Found” is on the second floor of Student Center East.

Parking

To obtain parking privileges, you must go to the UIC Parking Office with your I-card: 1200 W. Racine. Parking rates vary.

COSTUME AND PROP LOAN

Costume and Prop loan out is available only to UIC students who are working on UIC related projects. This includes: mainstage productions, pieces with UIC student groups, projects with a faculty advisor and UIC parties or events. All inquiries must be made a week in advance. Prop loans can be made through Donna Bachman (donnab2@uic.edu) and costume loans can be made through Stephanie Cluggish (cluggish@uic.edu) by email request; all inquiries must be made one week in advance.

Classroom work will not receive costume pieces beyond corsets and capes for specific acting classes,

which has been pre-arranged by the faculty. Please see the “Rehearsal Clothes” section to see the costume pieces all majors are required to own.

Student-generated projects do not receive technical support simply because of resource and schedule limitations. Faculty and staff will assist as time permits, but their first priority is to classroom and department production/performance needs.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

An overview of all programs at the School of Theatre and Music can be found at <https://catalog.uic.edu/ucatalog/colleges-depts/architecture-design-arts/thtr-mus/>.

The curricula for each of the three theatre degrees are found here:

[BA in Theatre and Performance](#)

[BA in Theatre Design, Production, and Technology](#)

[BFA in Acting](#)

A simple list of all theatre courses we offer can be found [here](#). Theatre courses are listed after the Music courses. You can check on the completion of your theatre curriculum and find links to other student resources at my.uic.edu.

Our programs are growing and changing, and sometimes there’s a delay in updates to the university’s webpage. Please see a theatre instructor or advisor for clarifications you need regarding specific course information.

Any enrolled theatre-degree student wishing to transfer to another course of study within the department should first consult with their advisor, and then the Head of Theatre. An audition or submission of work may be required. The decision to grant the transfer will be made by the Head in consultation with the faculty.

BATP students may request an audition to transfer into the BFA program. Auditions are held in February and March each year, and BATP transfers may audition one time during their time at UIC. Contact the Head of Theatre, or Theatre Admissions. If permission to join BFA is declined, the student retains the BA status.

MINOR IN THEATRE

Theatre Students from other disciplines who want to minor in theatre must complete at least 18 hours in theatre. At least 12 of the 18 hours must be at the upper division level. Students must complete the minor declaration form to add a theatre minor. Contact Lisa Tang to declare a minor ltang@uic.edu.

COMMUNICATION & STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Safety in Classwork and Rehearsals

The study of theatre can involve intense intellectual, physical and emotional challenges. In addition, the study of theatre design, production and technology involves the use of equipment that requires proper use and safety training. Every effort is made to provide a supportive and safe learning environment. Safety is a joint responsibility of everyone. To aid in this regard, students enrolled in theatre courses are responsible for the following:

- All members of the class, including the instructor, are to be treated with respect. No one may intentionally hurt themselves, another person, or the physical space and its contents at any time.
- Likewise, all members of the class, including the instructor, are responsible for maintaining open communication about physical and emotional safety. Students are responsible for informing faculty of anything that might limit their full participation in the class (injuries, restrictions, etc.). A student's grade will not be affected by a request to adapt an activity in order to allow for safe participation.
- Appropriate physical contact between student and student, as well as student and instructor, can be expected in the practice of theatre. When theatre work involves physical contact, students are responsible for informing the instructor and for clearly communicating with fellow students about specific touch parameters, including that they do not wish to be touched, for any reason.
- Students are responsible for acquiring proper use and safety training before using any equipment related to theatre courses (stage combat equipment, etc.), use of theatre spaces (fly system, lighting/sound system, grid, etc.), and/or use of shops (power tools, etc.), and students are responsible for adhering to safety protocols published in the student handbook and course syllabi, as well as those posted in shops and given verbally by Theatre faculty & staff.
- Students will abide by any additional behavior and/or space/equipment use guidelines presented as a prerequisite for participation in theatre courses or spaces.

S.T.A.G.E. — Student Theatre Assembly for Growth and Engagement

This student-run assembly's purpose is to serve as the voice of the student body, ensuring that students' concerns, ideas, and needs are raised, heard, and considered by the faculty and administration. It's mission is to create a transparent, inclusive, and engaged community within the Department of Theatre. Students are encouraged to connect with S.T.A.G.E. and its leadership.

How to Voice a Concern

The UIC School of Theatre and Music condemns bias in all its forms: racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, ageism, and other discriminatory actions.* If you have an experience within the department that does not reflect our goals of respect and inclusion, if you need support around a conflict you are having with someone in the department, or if you'd like help gaining clarity around a challenging situation, please reference the steps below. We recognize that different situations call for different types of support.

When you contact an STM faculty or staff member to voice a concern, they will:

1. Listen
2. Tell you what they heard to ensure that they have it right
3. Ask you if you are interested in developing a plan of action, which might include involving other faculty or staff members, or other university support systems, as appropriate
4. Do what they said they were going to do
5. Let you know that they've done what they said they were going to do

If you have requested a response, you can expect one within 3 working days. You may remain anonymous in this process if you prefer, with the exception of issues for which faculty (including the Heads and Director) and staff are [mandatory reporters](#).

If you are meeting with a member of the faculty or staff to voice a concern, you are encouraged to bring someone with you for support, such as another student or your faculty advisor. If you do not have someone you feel you can ask to attend in support, you may request that the school provide a faculty or staff member to be a third person in the meeting. Please make this request when you schedule the meeting.

How do I voice a concern about a course I am enrolled in?

When you contact any of the individuals listed below, to ensure that they are able to prioritize your concern, please include "Bias Concern" in the email subject heading.

Within STM:

1. If you feel comfortable, contact your professor.
2. If you prefer not to contact your professor, or you spoke to them but you desire further action, contact either your faculty advisor or the Head of Theatre or Music:

Theatre: Yasen Peyankov (yasenp@uic.edu)

Music: Brent Talbot (btalbot@uic.edu)

3. If you are not comfortable with any of the above options, or you have used them but you

desire further action, contact the School of Theatre and Music's Director, Christine Dunford (cdunfo1@uic.edu)

Outside of STM:

4. If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the department, please use the [Bias Reporting Tool](#). The Bias Reporting Tool is a safe, easy to use, and confidential tool that members of the UIC community can use to report incidences of bias.

How do I voice a concern about something that happened during a rehearsal or performance?

For Theatre productions:

1. If you are comfortable, speak to the director (if they are affiliated with UIC) or the production manager.

For Music productions:

1. If you are comfortable, speak to the ensemble leader (if they are affiliated with UIC).

For Theatre and Music productions:

1. If you prefer not to speak with the director, ensemble leader, or production manager, or you have spoken with them but desire further action, contact your department head or the STM Director:

 Theatre: Yasen Peyankov (yasenp@uic.edu)

 Music: Brent Talbot (btalbot@uic.edu)

 STM Director: Christine Dunford (cdunfo1@uic.edu)

Outside STM:

If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the department, please use the Bias Reporting Tool. please use the [Bias Reporting Tool](#). The Bias Reporting Tool is a safe, easy to use, and confidential tool that members of the UIC community can use to report incidences of bias.

How do I voice a concern about something that happened in a different circumstance?

You can always speak with any faculty or staff member about a concern, but here are some options if you are not sure who to talk to:

- Yasen Peyankov, Head of Theatre: (yasenp@uic.edu)
- Brent Talbot (btalbot@uic.edu)
- Christine Dunford, Director of STM ([cdunfo1@uic.edu](#))
- [Use the Bias Reporting Tool](#).
- If you wish to voice a concern that is about your Department Head or the Director of the school, you may also contact Tom Moss (tommos@uic.edu), Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Title IX

Sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or other sexual misconduct of or by students, employees, or others in its education programs and activities is prohibited under the federal law known as Title IX and is not tolerated in STM. Any concerns or incidents regarding sex discrimination are handled by our Office of Access & Equity's *Title IX Coordinator*. If you have any concerns or incidents to report, please contact an instructor, a faculty advisor, or the OAE directly: (312) 996-8670, titleix@uic.edu. Please visit the [UIC Sexual Misconduct website](#) for more information, including how to report an incident.

Professionalism Standards

The Theatre and Music Faculty values the professionalism expected of all theatre-makers in the field. Professionalism in this program is defined as:

- Making satisfactory progress through the theater curriculum with a grade of C or better
- Adhering to the absence and lateness policy as outlined in course syllabi
- Meeting all guidelines and requirements in course syllabi
- Being on time and prepared for classes, crews, rehearsals, meetings, and performances
- Actively participating in classes, rehearsals, meetings, fittings and performances
- Implementing instructors' notes to the best of your ability
- Collaborating willingly, effectively, and in a timely fashion with class, cast, and crew members
- Communicating promptly with instructors and advisors regarding absences and any difficulties you are having that are affecting your work
- Being respectful, kind, and fair, in communications with everyone in the School
- Committing to cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Attending each semester's All-Student Meeting
- Avoiding the misuse or unauthorized possession of intoxicants (e.g., alcohol), controlled or illegal substances, drug paraphernalia, or materials dangerous to public health and safety that can impact your work and that of others. (Note: In addition, unlawful or unauthorized possession, use, distribution, and sale of controlled substances or alcohol is *prohibited on University property*. Here is the complete [UIC Drug and Alcohol Policy](#).)
- Following procedures as set forth elsewhere in this Student Handbook.

Professionalism is also expected of students when involved in department-related activities off-campus (field trips, internships, study abroad, etc.). In addition, students are expected to adhere to the laws of the State of Illinois and the Standards of Conduct as defined by the University in its Student Disciplinary Policy, reprinted here in Appendix A.

Students are expected to meet these standards of professionalism. Failure to do so may result in a prohibition from participation in mainstage projects, the forfeiture of tuition/scholarship monies, and/or a Letter of Concern.

Disciplinary Action

Failure to adhere to the theater department's responsibilities, policies, and/or Standards of Professionalism as explained in this Handbook may result in departmental disciplinary action. Most often, a pattern of habitual lateness or absence, disruptive behavior, and/or poor grades are what lead to disciplinary action. Either or both of the following actions can be taken:

- *Casting and Production Assignment Restriction*

Students can be removed from consideration for casting in either or both mainstage productions of a semester. Students assigned to be Designer, Assistant Director, Dramaturg, or Stage Manager can also be removed. Restrictions are intended to give students the time to focus on their coursework. Decisions regarding Restriction are made by the faculty. Students who are put on University Academic Probation will automatically be placed on Restriction until the student returns to satisfactory academic standing.

Notice of Casting or Production Assignment Restriction will come via email, and may also come with a recommendation to students of specific actions to be taken.

- *Letter of Concern*

Letters of concern (LOCs) are more serious and are issued when a student's pattern of behavior threatens the student's success at the School.

LOCs will come as a written letter that will explain the concern and propose an appropriate remedy (e.g., counseling, casting or production assignment restriction, tutoring, repeating courses).

LOCs are given only after deliberation and agreement by the theatre faculty. LOCs are drafted by the student's faculty advisor, signed by the Head of Theatre, and sent via email to the student. A copy will be filed with the Head. The faculty advisor will inform the student that an LOC is being sent. LOCs can be responded to by the student via email to the Head of Theatre.

[THEATRE PRODUCTIONS](#)

Auditions and Casting

Casting is open to all UIC students; however, theatre degree students are given casting priority. All BA students are encouraged to audition, BATP students are expected to audition, and BFA students are required to do so. Rehearsal and performance experiences are valuable to ALL theatre students as they learn to apply skills acquired in the classroom. Students in our

productions also frequently collaborate with professional guest artists, gaining industry insights and networking opportunities that give UIC Theatre alumni an edge in their careers.

BFA Audition Requirement

UIC Theatre requires its BFA students to audition simply because superior audition skills are vital for professional actors coming out of a conservatory-style program; strong auditions secure jobs, while weak ones can cost opportunities. The audition preparation process is just as crucial for student growth as the audition itself.

While auditions are not graded, failure to audition without an approved Audition Waiver will result in a one-letter grade reduction in that semester's acting class. (First-year BFAs audition for that year's spring shows only.) This requirement does not guarantee casting or exclude non-BFA students.

BFA Audition Waiver

BFA students have the option to request an Audition Waiver, permitting them to not audition for the following semester's shows. If granted, approval will pertain to both shows being produced that semester. Audition Waiver forms will be available electronically when audition information is shared each semester.

If you are approved for an Audition Waiver you may still audition for our shows for the experience of doing so. Please simply inform the directors of your Waiver at the audition.

Off-Campus Performances, Petitions

Performance and Acting students who seek participation in performance opportunities outside the UIC theatre production program (plays, TV & film, etc.) must file a petition via email to Prof. Peyankov, Head of Theatre (pyasen@uic.edu) before agreeing to do any particular project. The petition should explain how the student will ensure that rehearsal and performance dates in no way conflict with class and department obligations. The decision to grant or deny permission is the decision of the Head with performance faculty. Petitions should be submitted at least one week before UIC auditions for the semester in question.

Crew Assignments

Because participation in all aspects of production is important to the mission of this program, all BA and BFA students are required to enroll in one run-crew (THTR 182) and one build-crew (THTR 183) assignment. Specific run-crew and build-crew assignments will be communicated via email and on Canvas after casting has been posted for the shows that semester. Check that email to state your preference of assignment. Production will do its best to honor your requested assignment.

All who are assigned to run-crew are required to be available for tech weekend, all dress rehearsals, all performances, and strike for their assigned production. All dates and times will be provided in the syllabus.

All assigned to a build crew are required to attend all scheduled build-crew times and strikes. All must participate each scheduled day until they are released by a supervising faculty member.

Transfer students will participate in the expectations of the year for which they qualify. Example: if a student comes into the theatre program with sophomore standing, they will enroll in build crew for one semester. If they come in with junior standing, and have completed the equivalent of THTR 182 (run crew) and THTR 183 (build crew) elsewhere, they have no obligation to serve on a run or build crew.

Strike

Run-crew members are required to attend the strike of their assigned show, while build-crew members attend all strikes, unless an alternate plan is provided by their area supervisor. All cast members are required to attend strike, which typically occurs on the Sunday following the Saturday night closing performance. Everyone who is called for strike must remain until released by the area supervisor or technical director. Be sure to sign in when you arrive.

Rehearsal Regulations

Mainstage performances are 3-credit-hour courses (THTR 280) and are therefore graded. All student actors and crew are expected to come prepared to all rehearsals when called, and to adhere to [Student Responsibilities and Standards of Professionalism](#) listed herein. Tardiness and absences are unacceptable, therefore no one is "excused" from rehearsal for any reason, including classes or work. In short, anyone involved in daily rehearsals must entirely clear their schedule of classes, work, or doctors' appointments. (Absences are allowable in cases of illness or family emergency. Students are expected to contact the Stage Manager and the Director immediately in all cases regarding lateness or absences, illness, transportation issues.) If you are commuting cross-campus from a class to rehearsal, inform the Director and the Stage Manager.

Directors rehearse 20 hours each week. The schedule is set by the director and stage manager, and typically includes weekday evenings (roughly 5:30-9:30 pm) and a weekend day. Tech rehearsals typically include two "8-out-of-10" days and take place the weekend immediately prior to opening of the production. Dress rehearsals during the week of opening are often in the evening and can go as late as 10 pm.

Clothing

All theatre students (BATP, BFA, and BADPT) should wear clothing appropriate to the work being done in each course. Follow the instructor's syllabus.

All acting students should have the following rehearsal clothes as needed for rehearsals and for class work:

- Soft-soled shoes (dance/jazz shoes or flats), hard-soled shoes, shoes with a heel, work-out pants, suit (pants, shirt, jacket, and tie), skirts (1 knee length, 1 floor length)

When in productions, be sure your rehearsal costume approximates the costume being designed for your character. We encourage you to make use of the many thrift stores in Chicago, including the terrific Goodwill nearby on Washington St. For the rehearsal process, Costumes will only supply unusual items such as corsets.

Costume Fittings

Costume fittings for all cast members in mainstage productions will be scheduled by the Stage Manager or posted for you on the call board. Please be on time for all fittings. If an emergency arises and you are unable to make your scheduled fitting, inform your Stage Manager and the Costume Shop/Stephanie Cluggish at 312-413-8560.

Complimentary Tickets

For each production each cast and crew member receives two complimentary tickets for the run of that show. Please make arrangements with the box office for these tickets.

OTHER PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTION OPPORTUNITIES

Red Light School District

This UIC improv group, founded in 2008, is student run and performs regularly both on and off campus. Come to the All-Student meetings at the beginning of each semester for more information.

Chicago Circle Players

CCP is the oldest functioning student organization on campus. All productions are selected,

directed, performed, and produced by the student. CCP currently has no members.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS and INFORMATION

Communication Pipeline

All emails from STM will go to students' university email addresses (uic.edu). Please check your UIC email account daily. The department will send award letters and other important correspondence by US mail, so please inform UIC if and when your mailing address changes. Notify both the Main Office and the information in the Student Self-Service online, which can be accessed through my.uic.edu.

Students are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns regarding a particular course first with the instructor. To voice a concern, please see the protocol for [Voicing a Concern](#) on pg. 16.

There are additional ways students can be heard. Students can reach out to:

1. two student reps each for Theatre and Music departments. These reps regularly attend faculty meetings.
2. the School's Executive Committee (an advisory body to the Director), which includes 1 student from each department to represent student interests at their meetings.
3. S.T.A.G.E. (described [here](#))

Class Attendance Policy

Because theatre classes require in-class participation, which cannot be "made up," attendance in ALL classes is mandatory. The faculty of the School of Theatre & Music believes attendance and discipline are vital to the success of each student. Departmental policy allows a maximum of two absences per semester for any course. Subsequent absences can result in lowering your final grade or a failing grade, as may excessive tardies. Instructors will offer specifics regarding the impact of additional and excused absences as well as additional absences, in their course syllabi. Read them closely.

Because theatre classes are small and your absence can affect that day's work, always contact your instructor(s) prior to the beginning of class so they know not to expect you and can make any necessary adjustments to their lesson plans. It is your responsibility to find out about any assignments or homework.

Tardiness

Perpetual tardiness will simply not be tolerated. You are considered late if you arrive after instruction has begun. You will be considered absent if you arrive after a certain time—see each instructor’s syllabus. Chronic lateness in class, rehearsal, or to meetings can affect grades and/or result in disciplinary action.

Grades

Theatre students are encouraged to maintain grades of C or better in all theatre courses. If you receive more than one D or F in your degree requirements or selectives in a semester you will be asked to speak with your adviser to discuss what remedies may be helpful. In addition, an ongoing pattern of Ds and Fs may warrant a written Letter of Concern (see "Disciplinary Actions"). [LINK](#)

Students receiving an F in a required course in a subject sequence must repeat it before continuing in that subject.

Please refer to each instructor’s syllabus for grading guidelines.

Required Courses and Waivers

All required courses in each degree track must be completed. Requests for waivers of required courses in order to accelerate a student's graduation date will not be granted.

Registration

Registration begins in the 11th week of the semester. All Theatre students first meet with Lisa Tang, College Advisor (ltang@uic.edu) and then with their Theatre Advisor. See "[Advising](#)".

Add/Drop and Withdrawals

You can add or drop a course up until the Friday of second week of classes. If the drop deadline is past, you can still withdraw from a course. Unlike a Drop, a Withdrawal will be recorded on your transcript; avoid doing this unless absolutely necessary. Contact Lisa Tang (ltang@uic.edu) with any Add/Drop/Withdrawal queries. Be sure to discuss this with your instructor as well.

Student Evaluations

The theatre student evaluation is a critical academic component of a candidate’s satisfactory progress in the theatre curriculum (BFA/BATP) as outlined under “Professionalism.” All BFA candidates will have individual semester-end reviews with the performance faculty. Evaluations typically take place during the last week of classes. Students are asked to initial

their name as it appears on the schedule when it is posted on the call board.

Faculty Evaluations

All UIC Students have the opportunity to evaluate their instructors in written form at the end of each semester. Please do these; your thoughtful feedback is very helpful to your instructors.

Incompletes

An Incomplete for a course needs to be made up by the end of the next semester in which you are enrolled. Example: if you get an Incomplete for a Spring course and are not enrolled in the summer, your deadline is the end of the Fall semester. Discuss arrangements to complete the course with your instructor. Get that agreement in writing. After 1 year, students need permission from the college office to submit a late grade change for an Incomplete grade.

Graduation

File an Intent to Graduate form online one semester before you expect to graduate. Lisa Tang will assist you. Transfer students are reminded that there is no program guarantee of a specific timeline to achieve course credits toward graduation. All students are expected to complete the degree's courses in the sequence determined for that "track" (BFA, BATP, or BADPT).

Visitors

Visitors to classes are generally discouraged. At the instructor's discretion, visitors may be allowed.

ADVISING

Lisa Tang (ltang9@uic.edu) is the academic advisor to all STM students. Additionally, each student is assigned a faculty advisor to assist with program-specific discussions, including those beyond the curriculum and fulfillment of requirements for graduation. Lisa Tang will contact you to schedule your first advising appointment each semester, and then connect you to your faculty advisor. Students will be able to register for courses after both meetings have occurred.

Students are encouraged to chat with their faculty advisor any time they'd like. See the Advisor List on the callboard for your assigned faculty advisor name and contact info.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year the Department of Theatre awards various scholarships to outstanding students through the generosity of retired faculty, alums, and lovers of theatre. These special scholarships are based on merit and have an expectation of maintaining good academic standing.

General Scholarships

The amounts of these scholarships vary year to year based on availability of funds, and the number of students receiving the award.

The following scholarships are available for students in theatre:

- Chicago Bar Association Scholarship in Theatre
- College of A&A Scholarship, Theatre
- Michael Gross Scholarship
- William F. Raffeld Scholarship
- UIC Theatre and Music Scholarship Award
- Trudy Abarbanel Scholarship

Theatre Merit Awards

The Theatre Program offers talent-based tuition awards to offset your tuition costs. Application information and deadlines will be posted on the theater call board mid-semester. If you are the recipient of a Theatre Merit Award you will receive notification via e-mail. Note that your UIC tuition bill may not show your award (or other financial aid) for several months. If your tuition bill does not reflect an award or aid on subsequent bills, see the department secretary for help in getting this sorted out. Be sure to get a copy of your Award Letter from the university Financial Aid Office. To avoid interest charges, you must pay your portion of the bill when received. The Theatre Merit Award can only be used for tuition payments and cannot cover housing or other fees.

Emergency Scholarship Requests

A student with a financial emergency should first meet with the financial aid office to explore all options for assistance. If no options are available, the student should then schedule a meeting with their department's Faculty Advisor, who will forward the request for emergency financial assistance to the Head of Theatre.

[STUDENT EMPLOYMENT](#)

Many students need to work in order to be able to attend UIC. Please be advised that this can spread your time and energy thin, adversely affecting your schoolwork. Be aware of all your time commitments to classes and productions before you set your work schedule! Do take care of yourself so that you can manage your many responsibilities. Missing or being late for rehearsals and classes

because of work is not acceptable.

Student employment at the School is available to students qualifying for federal work study. Consult your Financial Aid Statement (FAFSA) to see if you have qualified and accepted your award for work study.

Positions Available for student work vary by School needs. Jobs are available in the Design Classroom, Costume Shop, Scene Shop, and Music Media lab, as well as with front-of-house operations for concerts, box office assistant, set-up for concerts and master classes, teaching assistant, and help at audition dates.

All inquiries regarding School employment, pay schedules, and hours should be directed to Business Manager Amy Sinclair at asincl3@uic.edu. If a student is employed through the School for specific work with faculty members, questions regarding hours should be directed to them.

Employment opportunities elsewhere on campus can be found at the UIC Student Employment Office <https://studentemployment.uic.edu/> open Monday through Friday, 8:30a-5p. Call 312-996-3130 or email studentjobs@uic.edu.

IMPORTANT LINKS

Our work in the Theatre Program is very intense and can be quite stressful. It is not at all unusual for students to discover a need for counseling with a professional, and we encourage it. If you—or anyone you know—appears to be in crisis or heading that direction, please feel free to call the Counseling Center at (312) 996-3490 and make an appointment, regardless of whether or not the student's insurance is with Campus Care.

Academic Calendar <http://www.uic.edu/ucat/catalog/CA.shtml>

Schedule of Classes <https://webcs7.oss.uic.edu/schedule-of-classes/static/index.php>

Student Affairs <http://www.uic.edu/uic/studentlife/studentservices>

Library <http://library.uic.edu>

STM student resource/services page <https://my.uic.edu/uPortal/f/welcome/normal/render.uP>
Sign in and open the "students services" tab

Campus Counseling [\(312\) 996-3490](tel:3129963490)

*Congratulations, you've finished reading our Handbook.
See any faculty member for candy or a free hug!*