The school of theatre arts

The theatre program at Illinois Wesleyan is exceptional. As a professional school, our programs deliver comprehensive, rigorous theatrical training. As a tightly knit community, we nurture creativity, confidence and collaboration. Additionally, as an integral part of a distinguished, liberal arts university, we provide a curriculum that cultivates curiosity, critical thinking, knowledge and understanding. If you have dreams of high achievement and the drive to make them real, I invite you to consider the School of Theatre Arts at Illinois Wesleyan University, where creativity is informed by scholarship and study enriched by art.”

Thomas Quinn, Director and Associate Professor of Theatre Arts

Individual Attention

Individual attention from faculty and staff is interwoven throughout the curriculum and co-curricular production program. Some highlights include: All the BFA degrees feature a weekly masterclass where each student presents and is individually coached by faculty beginning in the first year. Some acting and movement classes feature individual coaching sessions. BFA Music Theatre voice lessons and weekly coachings are individually experienced. Freshman BFA Design and Technology majors work one on one with a faculty mentor on a specific production situation and further this experience working one on one their senior year.
Faculty as Mentors
The student-teacher ratio at Illinois Wesleyan is 11 to 1, guaranteeing that every student will enjoy close mentoring relationships with our expert faculty members. The relationships students forge with our faculty often last a lifetime.

Liberal Arts Advantage
The liberal arts curriculum at Illinois Wesleyan enables students in the School of Theatre Arts to not only explore all aspects of theatre, but also expand their studies beyond the performing arts. This curriculum provides Wesleyan theatre students with a broad perspective and deeper understanding that enhances their creative endeavors.

Undergraduates Only
Illinois Wesleyan is entirely for undergraduates. That means our students play all the roles in the varied production schedule and have more opportunities to direct and design productions than students at larger schools.

Theatre Facilities
The School of Theatre Arts has a variety of performance and rehearsal facilities, including:
- Jerome Mirza Theatre, a fully equipped 273-seat proscenium/thrust theatre
- The E. Melba Johnson Kirkpatrick Laboratory Theatre, a “black box” theatre with flexible seating
- The Phoenix Theatre, a small space for experimental productions
- Dance Studios, used primarily for dance rehearsals
In addition, the School of Theatre Arts stages performances and concerts in the Hansen Student Center, Evelyn Chapel and the Joslin Atrium.
The Bachelor of Arts in Theatre is an interdisciplinary degree allowing a broad range of exploration in theatre as an artistic, scholarly and social discipline. This degree is flexible and each BA Theatre Arts student pursues a unique course of study, focusing on developing their skills and voice as an artist. The BA in Theatre is also well-suited for those wishing to double major or whose expertise spans more than one facet of the discipline. Students in the BA program have the full range of opportunities to participate in the production season and routinely hold leadership positions and play major roles.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting is for the student who aspires to an acting career. This well-rounded pre-professional curriculum includes applied training in acting, movement and voice. Students are immersed in both classical and contemporary acting styles ranging from Shakespeare to Acting for the Camera. The degree also includes academically oriented courses such as Theatre History and Dramatic Literature. Students are exposed to the technical areas through Theatre Laboratory and production experiences.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music Theatre is for the student who aspires to a professional performance career. This well-rounded pre-professional curriculum requires each student to enroll in a balanced mix of acting, voice and dance courses. These include both applied skills courses such as Stage Makeup, Music Theory and Broadway Dance Repertory, and academically oriented courses such as Music Theatre History and Introduction to Dramatic Literature. Students are also exposed to the technical areas through Theatre Laboratory and production experiences.

“My education at Illinois Wesleyan has prepared me to be adaptable in any situation, not only in my career but in life!”
Ian Coulter-Buford (left), BFA Music Theatre ’12


**Degree Programs**

- **4 main stage productions**
- **3-4 lab productions**
- **1-2 dance productions**
- **8-12 student productions**
- **4-6 guest artists**
- **1 Chicago showcase**
The Bachelor of Fine Arts in **Theatre Design & Technology** is for the student who aspires to a career as a designer, stage manager or technician for the theatre. The curriculum includes applied training in drawing, rendering, sound, stagecraft, construction, hand and computer drafting, painting and stage management as well as design courses in costume, scenery and lighting. In addition, students will take academically oriented courses such as Introduction to Dramatic Literature, Directing and Theatre History. BFA designers and technicians will apply their skills to our production program with the goal of having managed or designed a Main Stage or Laboratory Theatre production prior to graduation.

The Minor in **Theatre Arts** provides students majoring in another field the opportunity to pursue theatrical interest at the college level. Theatre minors take performance, technical and academic courses in theatre, and participate actively in our production season.

The Minor in **Theatre Dance** provides students training in dance (modern, jazz, tap and ballet) and choreography. It encompasses the physical workings of the body in dance technique, as well as the creative and theatrical aspects of the discipline.

The Minor in **Arts Management** (offered by the Department of Business Administration) is for the student who aspires to management of their own theatre, or to work in arts development. It provides an excellent complement to the BA in Theatre Arts.
Student Groups

At Illinois Wesleyan there are countless ways to be involved in theatre other than in class and on stage. These groups promote creativity and leadership and foster actors, directors, playwrights, designers, dancers and comedians.

Masquers is the student service organization for the School of Theatre Arts. The Music Theatre Society takes its roots from the City Center Encores! and produces musicals in concert. Jm7* improvisation troupe does all forms of improv, has weekly classes and performs throughout the year. Shringara Theatre is our multi-cultural theatre company producing plays and creating a platform where actors and directors can share their views. Cohesion Dance Company is an auditioned dance company. In addition, there is an annual student choreographed dance concert. Check out the website for more information about other student groups.

Special Programs

Nearly one in two Illinois Wesleyan students choose to study abroad for a semester, a year or during May Term.

Study Abroad

In order to provide a wide variety of opportunities and experiences for Illinois Wesleyan students who choose to study abroad, Illinois Wesleyan has affiliated with a number of study abroad programs, including the IES Gaity School of Acting in Dublin, Ireland, National Theatre Institute/Eugene O’Neill Center — Moscow Program, and the British/American Drama Academy in London, which offers summer and full-semester programs. Some programs are independently operated while others offer the option of enrolling directly in major international institutions. During May Term, travel seminars are offered under the guidance of faculty members. Students have a variety of travel options around the globe and topics of study range from photography to language immersion.
Chicago Arts Programs
The Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) Chicago Arts Program is a semester that immerses students in the art scene of Chicago. Students live with a roommate in a studio apartment in downtown Chicago, work at an arts-related internship, take courses and explore an area of the arts in an independent study project. Students attend openings, plays, readings, concerts, screenings, rehearsals, recording sessions, installations, performances and more. They meet the people who are making and presenting art in Chicago and learn about what they do, how they do it and how they got where they are today.

Internships
Theatre Arts students quite often participate in pre-professional internship programs during their careers at Illinois Wesleyan. Some result from our affiliation with the Great Lakes College Association (GLCA), which places interns with professional theatres, television studios, casting agencies and the like, in New York City. Internships can also be arranged in such theatrical centers as Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Internships are available in design, performance and management. Recent examples include student internships in performance and technology at the MUNY (St. Louis), in lighting at Stages (St. Louis) and as a stage manager at Berkshire Theatre Festival (Massachusetts). Internships can be taken for academic credit during the school year, and the faculty is eager to help create an internship that will be of value to each student.

IWU provides an essential, diversified theatrical training with so many hands-on opportunities. By the time I graduated, I had the tools and confidence to enter the professional world. I was so well-prepared; my internship offered me a job and my Equity card right after graduation!"

Brian Bogin, BFA Theatre Design & Technology ’99

Broadway & National Tours: War Horse, Elf, The People in the Picture, Wicked, Spamalot, The Phantom of the Opera, Urinetown, Chicago, Dr. Seuss’ How the Grinch Stole Christmas (AEA Stage Manager)
Audition Requirements

2016-17
Audition Dates

November 19
January 28
February 11
February 25

BA in Theatre Arts

- Resume of theatre work
- Recent photo or headshot
- Interview Application
- Interview

- Talent Audition: Students wishing to audition for a talent award or talent scholarship may present either an acting audition or design portfolio.

BFA in Acting

- Prescreen: Please visit getacceptd.com/iwutheatre for requirements and to submit
- Resume of theatre work
- Recent photo or headshot
- Interview Application

- Audition: Prepare two contrasting monologues that are within your casting age and range. They should be taken from modern plays (no Shakespeare, verse or dialects please). Select active monologues (not passive voice) that you feel express your current strengths as an actor. Each selection should be memorized, thoroughly rehearsed and one to two minutes in length.

- Interview

Photos, clockwise from top: The Drowsy Chaperone, 2014; Hay Fever, 2013; As You Like It, 2013.
BFA in Music Theatre

- **Prescreen:** Please visit getacceptd.com/iwutheatre for requirements and to submit
- **Resume of theatre work**
- **Recent photo or headshot**
- **Interview Application**

**The audition has four components:**

- **Dancing:** The dance audition will be taught as a class, with warm up, followed by ballet and jazz combinations. Bring appropriate attire for dance, especially shoes.

- **Acting:** Prepare two contrasting monologues within your casting age and range (adolescent to 30 years old) and personality type; no Shakespeare, verse or dialects please. Each one should be approximately one minute in length. Avoid text from musical theatre librettos. Each selection should be memorized and thoroughly rehearsed.

- **Singing:** Prepare vocal selections from music theatre literature, one ballad and one up-tempo. Cut the song to 32 bars of music (do not sing the whole song). An accompanist will be provided; bring your sheet music and make sure your cuts are clearly marked and you are prepared to talk with the accompanist. Please note that a 32-bar cut is sufficient, but you may be asked to sing the entire song. Each selection should be memorized and thoroughly rehearsed.

- **Interview**

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**BFA in Design & Technology**

- **Resume of theatre work**
- **Recent photo or headshot**
- **Interview Application**

**Portfolio:** The portfolio should represent examples of your theatrical work in the form of costume sketches, scenic sketches, paint elevations, light and sound plots, hand or computer drafting or sketches and prompt books from theatrical productions and production photography. Rough design sketches, sketchbooks and construction process photography are welcomed. Other examples may include light and sound paperwork and cues, programs/posters, sewing and patterning projects, craft and properties projects, design collage boards and background research. Additional evidence of your artistic abilities may include fine art photography, drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry and printmaking.

- **Interview**

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*Above and right: Students interested in design and technology participate in an all-encompassing pre-professional curriculum which includes applied training in drawing, rendering, stagecraft, construction, drafting and painting as well as academically oriented courses like dramatic theory, history and literature.*
I’ve concluded that to be a professional artist is to be a professional learner and a professional risk taker. My time at Illinois Wesleyan was the crucial foundation that helped install in me the heart of a lifelong learner. The professors and faculty at IWU helped me establish tools and skills that provided the launch pad for my career. Each student is treated as a unique individual and pushed beyond their boundaries while being supported along the way. 

Annie Simpson (right), BFA Music Theatre ’13

Annie began at Barter Theatre as a Barter Player doing life-changing productions such as Anne of Green Gables, Little House on the Prairie, Jack and the Beanstalk, Cinderella, and much more. Annie is now transitioning into the Resident Acting Company at Barter Theatre in Curtains: The Musical and The Three Musketeers.

Scholarships

Talent Awards, Scholarships and Grants

Illinois Wesleyan is again considered one of Kiplinger’s “Best Values in Private Colleges.” We are pleased to be able to offer scholarships based on talent and/or academic performance. Students planning to major in the BFA Acting, Design and Tech, Music Theatre or BA in Theatre programs will be considered for the Alumni Fine Arts for Theatre Scholarships or Alumni Fine Arts for Music Theatre Scholarships. These scholarships are renewable for four years and are awarded on the basis of a combination of auditions or portfolio evaluations and high school academic performance. Awards range up to $25,000 per year.

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BLOOMINGTON - NORMAL
two great college towns

#15 Best college town with under 250,000 residents
(American Institute for Economic Research, 2010)

#1 Best cities for singles
(Kiplinger, 2013)

#2 Top places to find a job
(Beyond.com, 2013)

#3 Top 25 small college towns in America
(USA Today, 2016)

#7 Best small cities for educated millennials
(Business Insider, 2015)

#15 Top cities for recent college graduates
(The Atlantic, 2011)

#28 Best small places for business and careers
(Forbes, 2012)

Top 100 Best communities for young people
(The America’s Promise Alliance and ING, 2011)

Illinois Wesleyan is located in Bloomington-Normal, a two and half hour drive from Chicago and St. Louis.

Contact IWU
To schedule a campus visit or for additional information, contact:

The Admissions Office
Illinois Wesleyan University
P.O. Box 2900
Bloomington, IL 61702-2900
309-556-3031 or 1-800-332-2498

Recruitment Office
School of Theatre Arts
309-556-3944
e-mail: theatre@iwu.edu

www.iwu.edu/theatre

Facebook: facebook.com/iwutheatre
Twitter: @IWUTheatre

Illinois Wesleyan University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Illinois Wesleyan University does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation including gender identity and expression, disability, or national origin in its admissions policies, educational programs and activities, or employment policies. Inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policy should be directed to the Office of the President, Illinois Wesleyan University, P.O. Box 2900, Bloomington, IL 61702-2900.

Illinois Wesleyan University expressly recognizes the requirements of Title IX legislation. Title IX complaints should be reported to the University’s Title IX coordinator, who is the Associate Provost (211 Holmes Hall, 309-556-3255).

Illinois Wesleyan University does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. The Vice President for Business and Finance, the Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, and the Associate Provost are designated by the University to coordinate all efforts to comply with Section 504 and its implementing regulation 34 C.F.R. Part 104 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. All questions should be directed to the University compliance coordinators indicated above.