

Music Theatre FAQs

2019

What are strengths/highlights of UCI's MT program?

The UCIrvine Music Theatre Program is diverse in its training and particular strengths. The faculty trains actors to be their best self: as an actor, a dancer, a singer, and as a person. Each student is valued as an individual and trained in that manner – ours is not a “one size fits all” program. We have faculty who are active in the professional theatre world and they share their expertise and experience in classes, workshops, rehearsals and performances. The New York Satellite Program takes students to the world where it happens.

Unique to UCI MT is the chance to design and arrange curriculum suited to the needs of each actor's specific needs, focused on the areas they desire to develop. We maintain the philosophy that MT students are best served by a wide exposure to all aspects of theatre, which includes musical theatre. The Drama Department's acting, movement, improvisation, design, production, and history courses are designed to broaden each actor's understanding of the art of making theatre. Musical Theatre is an inclusive art form; having knowledge about each element that goes into creating theatre allows for deeper, more insightful collaborations and results in more productive, creative careers.

What professional preparation do all Music Theatre students (BA or BFA) receive?

Once an actor gets into Music Theatre Workshop Level I, they will begin training their voice, body, and heart for the theatre. They will gain knowledge appropriate audition material as well as how to handle themselves in auditions, rehearsals and performances. They will also engage in analysis of text and music to deepen their understanding of the connection between these elements and themselves.

Are private voice lessons a part of the program?

Voice training is a part of the group classes throughout the Music Theatre Workshop levels. Small group instruction is provided for student in Level III as well as individual song coachings. Those admitted into the BFA program receive more individual voice lessons and song coachings in preparation for the LA and NYC Showcases.

How many musicals do you have each school year?

We have TWO fully produced musicals each year - our Fall Musical (open to grads and undergrads) and our Spring Musical (undergrads only). In addition, we provide the opportunity for student inspired independent projects in musical theatre each quarter.

What are the qualifications for a BFA student?

Actors that attain the BFA are determined, bright, talented and ready to play leads in non-union musical theatre national tours. They can hold the stage as lead singers, dance at a level required of a lead singer, and be excellent actors as well.

How do I get into the BFA program at UCI?

Each actor auditions through the Music Theatre Workshop Levels I - IV. Once you reach MT Level III, you have the opportunity to audition for the BFA program. Each actor though may continue to pursue their training through other music theatre courses (such as musicianship, dance technique, and the New York Satellite Program) and receive the Honors in Music Theatre denotation on their diploma at graduation.

What is the size of the BFA class each year?

The class size varies each year and is dependent on those actors deemed ready for a professional career in music theatre upon graduation from university.

What is a Musical Theatre Showcase?

The BFA Showcase is an opportunity to audition for and possibly meet with casting directors and agents.

Is a Showcase necessary to have a career?

A Showcase is not necessary to start a career in show business. Most actors beginning their careers in NYC and/or LA do not have agents or managers. You will acquire representation when your career grows and it becomes important.

Is it possible to do showcase and the New York Satellite Program in the same year?

No. Actors will participate in the New York Satellite Program (NYSP) the year before they graduate and showcase. NYSP opens the doors and eyes of each participant and encourages students to train more vigorously during their last year of education at the undergraduate level.

If I am a new transfer student, can I complete the BFA in two years?

While it may be possible, we have found that transfer students who are on campus for eight (8) quarters have better outcomes upon graduating. Spending the first year at UCI deepening one's understanding of musical theatre, the second year preparing and participating in the New York Satellite Program, and the third year preparing and participating in the BFA Showcase allows the actor the opportunity for more rigorous and through training.

What kinds of opportunities have BFAs received after graduating from UCI?

*Many of our BFA students and our Honors students move to New York City or Los Angeles to pursue careers in theatre, film and television. Currently, we have BFA and BA alumni on Broadway in **Tootsie, King Kong, Be More Chill, Cher, Phantom of the Opera, Frozen, Book of Mormon and The Play That Goes Wrong.** Some are "living the dream" on cruise ships across the world or working in theatre companies across America, including the Utah Shakespeare Festival, Sacramento Music Circus, Forestburg Playhouse, Mill Mountain Theatre, Santa Rosa Theatre, Laguna Playhouse, Nashville Repertory Theatre, among many others.*

We thank you for your interest in Music Theatre and look forward to meeting you at our 2019 auditions.

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