

Music Theatre FAQs

2022-2023

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 goals, 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. Music 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 of 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 curriculum throughout the Music Theatre Workshop levels. Small group and semi-private instruction is provided for students in Level III. Those admitted into the BFA program receive private voice lessons in preparation for the LA and NYC Showcases.

How many musicals do you have each school year?

For the 2022-23, UCI will produce the Tony award winning musical RENT. This will be an all-undergraduate production. Normally, 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 musical theatre projects 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 an actor moves into MT Workshop Level III, they 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. The 2021 BFA Class consisted of 11 actors – 9 women and 2 men. We had 10 students in the BFA 2022 class.

What is a Musical Theatre Showcase?

The now digital UCI Undergraduate Showcase introduces our BFA actors to casting directors, agents, and managers from New York to Los Angeles, broadening their reach into the business of film and television as well as commercial and not-for-profit theatre.

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. Actors find out about auditions on Actors Access and Backstage.

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

*BFA actors will most often participate in the New York Satellite Program (NYSP) the year **before** they graduate. NYSP gives actors experiential knowledge about the rigors of a career in music theatre and encourages students to train more vigorously during their last year of undergraduate education.*

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

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 music theatre through their time in DR 65 and DR 142 allows for full immersion in UCI’s Music Theatre process. Transfer students spend their second year on campus preparing for and participating in the New York Satellite Program. The third year of training concentrates on role building and showcase prep in DR 144. This additional year of intense music theatre focus provides the actor time to develop the tools required for a professional music theatre career.

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. Our BFA and BA alumni have been seen on Broadway in Hadestown, Mean Girls, Tootsie, King Kong, Be More Chill, Cher, Phantom of the Opera, Frozen, Book of Mormon, Jersey Boys and The Play That Goes Wrong. Currently we have grads in the National Tour of Anastasia and in Chicago preparing the Broadway production of The Devil Wears Prada. Some are “living the dream” on cruise ships or working in theatre companies across America, including the Utah Shakespeare Festival, TimberLake Playhouse, Sacramento Music Circus, Forestburg Playhouse, Mill Mountain Theatre, Santa Rosa Theatre, Laguna Playhouse, Nashville Repertory Theatre, Sierra Repertory, Tuacahn Theatre, and many others.

Thank you for your interest in Music Theatre.
We look forward to meeting you at our 2022 auditions.
Please check the Drama Digital Callboard for more information.

Andrew Palermo - Dance Technique & Director/Choreographer
Zachary Dietz - Music Director
Daniel Keeling – Vocal Training / Coaching
Dr. Myrona DeLaney – Head of Music Theatre