

DESIGN AND THEATER PRODUCTION

If you love drawing, painting, building, or creating, the Design and Production program shows you how to take those visual arts skills and bring them to life in exciting new ways. Here, your art doesn't just hang on a wall—it moves, lights up, tells stories, and creates worlds.

You'll explore the creative and technical side of live performance and film: scenic and costume design, lighting, sound, props, film production, and even special effects. You'll work with the same tools and materials that professionals use to turn ideas into full-scale productions.

Many students join us because they enjoy visual arts and want to expand their skills into something bigger—something that combines imagination, craftsmanship, and collaboration.

Every year, you'll take a full-year class focused on a design area. Freshmen start with a hands-on introduction, while sophomores, juniors, and seniors can specialize in Costume, Scenic, Lighting, Sound, or Film Production.

You'll also gain real production experience by working on at least one live show during your first two years, learning what it takes to make the magic happen—from the first sketch to the final performance.

Whether you dream of studying art, technical theater, film, or production in college—or starting your creative career right after high school—this program gives you the foundation, the portfolio, and the real-world skills to make it happen.

Design & Production Course Progression

Year One: Build Your Foundation

- Core Courses:

- *Introduction to Design and Production*
- *Methods and Materials (Visual Arts)*
- *Crafts or Introduction to Film*
- *Text Analysis*
- An elective course from another department

- Practicum:

- Hands-on experience is a required part of the program.
- Work on a school production in roles like wardrobe, deck crew, light or sound board operator, spotlight operator, or assistant stage manager.

Year Two: Explore Your Path

- Core Courses:

- Design courses in Scenic, Costumes/Fashion, Sound, or Properties Design
- Advanced courses in Scenic Art, Properties Construction, Film Production, Costume Construction, Drafting & Drawing, Fashion History, or Art History
- Elective from another department each semester

- Practicum:

- Continue gaining real-world production experience in technical roles similar to Year One.

Year Three: Develop Your Expertise

- Core Courses:

- Advanced Design course in your area of interest

- *Painting or Specialty Course* (e.g., hat making, mask making, puppet making, stage makeup)
- *Art History* (film, fashion, or material culture)
- *Career & College Prep for Design & Production*
- *Drafting & Drawing* (pencil and computer)
- *Lighting for Film & Stage*
- *Computer Design & Content Creation*
- *Advanced Theater Crafts* (costume crafts, props crafts, painting & building techniques)
- Elective from another department each semester
- **Practicum:**
 - Take on leadership roles such as assistant designer, assistant shop manager, props manager, stage manager, or assistant stage manager.

Year Four: Master Your Craft

- **Core Courses:**
 - Advanced Design course in your chosen specialty
 - Advanced Theater Crafts (costume crafts, props crafts, scenic painting, properties, hair & makeup, or scenic construction)
 - *Theater History*
 - *Painting or Specialty Course* (e.g., hat making, mask making, puppet making, stage makeup, 3D design & drawing)
 - Elective from another department each semester
- **Practicum:**
 - Lead a school production in roles like designer, shop manager, props manager, stage manager, master electrician, or technical director.

(Note: This four-year plan is typical; individual experiences may vary.)

DESIGN AND THEATER PRODUCTION COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION REQUIRED COURSES

INTRODUCTION TO DESIGN AND PRODUCTION - Semester

Explore the world of theater design and production in this hands-on course! From script analysis to building sets, props, and costumes, you'll learn how designers and technical staff collaborate to bring a show to life. Gain practical experience with power tools, sewing machines, scenic painting, and design drawing, while also developing research and planning skills. Suited for students eager to combine creative design with hands-on building experience.

COSTUME DESIGN - Full Year

Bring characters to life through costume! You'll design, sketch, and create costumes that define style, time, and personality. Learn about fabrics, construction, and fittings while working hands-on with live productions. This course builds your portfolio and prepares you for college pathways in costume design, fashion, or costume construction.

SET DESIGN -Semester or Full Year

Create the world of the story! In Set Design, you'll learn how to transform scripts into immersive environments for stage and film. Explore concept development, sketching, model-making, and scenic construction while collaborating with directors and designers. By the end, you'll have real-world experience building sets and a portfolio that can lead to college programs or careers in scenic design, architecture, or film production.

LIGHTING DESIGN - Semester

Paint with light! Lighting Design teaches you how to set mood, highlight action, and transform performance spaces. You'll work with lighting consoles, fixtures, and cueing systems while gaining hands-on experience designing and running lights for productions—skills you can take to college or into the world of stage and event production.

SOUND DESIGN-Full year

Shape how a story is heard! In Sound Design, you'll create soundscapes, effects, and audio mixes for theater and film. Learn sound equipment, editing software, and live mixing while

working directly on productions. Build technical and creative skills that can lead to sound design, audio engineering, or media production.

INTRO TO FILMMAKING

This course provides the tools and skills to create your own short films. Perfect for beginners or anyone looking to learn more about visual storytelling, you'll work with professional cameras, collaborate on small projects, and learn basic editing techniques. The class encourages you to explore your unique perspective and develop a strong foundation in filmmaking.

BEGINNING BUILDERS

This hands-on course introduces students to the fundamentals of building and construction for theater and design. You'll learn to safely use tools, work with a variety of materials, and develop basic skills in measuring, cutting, assembling, and finishing projects. Through guided exercises and small projects, you'll gain confidence in the shop while exploring creative problem-solving and teamwork—perfect for anyone eager to start building and bring ideas to life.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS - Full year (Theater Department)

Design and production for performance is always grounded in a script or other texts. How do we learn to read a script to understand character, time period, the playwright's intentions, and what design details are necessary for performance? This course, which is offered by the Theater Department, is a must for future designers.

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION ADVANCED COURSES

COSTUME CRAFTS – Full Year

Dive into the world of costume creation in this hands-on course! You'll learn techniques for crafting, sewing, and modifying costumes, exploring everything from basic hand stitching to advanced fabric manipulation. Develop skills in construction, embellishment, and repair, and bring characters to life through wearable art.

By the end of the course, you'll have a portfolio of completed costume pieces, demonstrating creativity, craftsmanship, and problem-solving in practical design applications.

COSTUME CONSTRUCTION – Full Year

Explore the art of costume creation for theater and film! Learn to interpret designs, research themes, and develop skills in sewing, pattern making, and garment construction. Work hands-on in the costume shop, completing projects from simple alterations to complex creations, and build a portfolio showcasing your wearable designs.

ADVANCED THEATER CRAFTS – Full Year

This full-year course provides hands-on experience in creating theater and film production elements. Students will work on real sets, props, and costumes while learning advanced skills in design and construction. Projects start with short play or film scripts, guiding the research and material selection process. Safety in material use is emphasized as students build and create using a variety of materials. Throughout the year, students will complete 6-10 projects, gaining expertise in advanced building techniques and new materials, contributing to actual productions, and developing a comprehensive portfolio of their work.

ADVANCED DESIGN OR FILM CLASS – Full Year

In your Junior and Senior years students may take an advanced class in the areas of costume design, set or prop design, or film production. These classes will give you the opportunity to work on a higher level, increase your design skills, and may have you designing a full production as your final project. You'll do a lot of drawing, drafting, painting, and will build model boxes for set design, do research, and explore how dramaturgy informs design decisions.

Advanced film class will work on several projects, including a short film that will be supported by all departments of Design and Production. You will finish this class with several short works and one larger completed, collaborative film project.

THEATER HISTORY- Semester (Theater Department)

This class will increase your knowledge of plays and the evolution of performance in theater. As a production professional, knowledge of history and theater terminology will be essential. This collaborative class will be open to Design and Production students

FASHION HISTORY – Full Year

Research is one of the cornerstones of designs, and knowing how to identify different periods by silhouette and construction of clothing, and objects by their color and form is necessary to become a good designer. How does understanding the social changes that

bring on shifts in fashion and objects inform us? Research, and understanding the evolution of objects and fashion is essential to good design and film making. This may include drawing from historical objects and clothing and how to research using primary sources.

PROPERTIES DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT – Full Year

Bring the details of a story to life! In Props Design & Management, you'll create and curate the objects that fill a stage or screen—from hand props to set dressing. Learn fabrication techniques, painting, sourcing, and organization while managing props for live productions. This course develops both creative and practical skills, preparing you for future work in props, scenic design, or production management.

FILM HISTORY – Full Year

Film History will cover the changes and innovations in film that create iconic and memorable scenes. You will expand your knowledge of the language and vocabulary of period, design, techniques, and detail.

ART HISTORY

Stones Ages to Renaissance, Postmodern to present, 3D Anthropology, and Expressive Arts & Cultures: Each of these courses provides an introduction to the creative history visual arts has enhanced and influenced societies around the world. These courses will focus on how art is used to communicate ideas, translate traditions through research, and discover how to analyze and interpret techniques practiced in art making.

FILM EDITING – Full Year

Students will embark on a journey into the art of film editing, focusing on the intricacies of crafting a compelling narrative through the manipulation of footage and sound. Through hands-on experiences, collaborative projects, and analysis of films, students will develop their technical skills, creative thinking, and understanding of the pivotal role that editing plays in shaping the story and emotional impact of a film.

CINEMATOGRAPHY – Full Year

Students will dive deep into the art of cinematography, focusing on how visual storytelling techniques can bring themes to life on screen. Through hands-on experiences, collaborative projects, and critical analysis of films, students will develop their technical skills, creative thinking, and understanding of the role cinematography plays in conveying themes and emotions.

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION ELECTIVE COURSES

METHODS AND MATERIALS – Full Year (offered in the Visual Arts Department)

This semester-long course will introduce students to a wide variety of mediums and the techniques to successfully use them. This foundational course will set up any artist securely on a path to be freer to try out new and different ways to create.

RECYCLED FASHION

Learn how to transform clothing and textiles you already own into completely upcycled fashion and accessories. This class offers someone who wants to learn some basic sewing and fashion design skills the chance to do larger and more ambitious projects by re-imagining existing pieces. You will learn some basic hand sewing skills, how to use a sewing machine, how to make alterations, and how to cut and decorate clothing in a transformative way. No experience in sewing needed. You may need to supply some of your own clothing items for this class.

PHOTOSHOP – Full Year

This course introduces students to Adobe Photoshop, a powerful tool for digital image editing and manipulation. Students will learn essential techniques such as photo retouching, color correction, and compositing through hands-on projects and guided tutorials. They will explore the creative possibilities of Photoshop for enhancing photographs, creating digital artwork, and designing graphics for various purposes. By the end of the course, students will have developed proficiency in using Photoshop to transform images and unleash their creativity in visual media.

3D DESIGN AND DRAWING – Semester

Take your digital skills to the next level! Did you know you can create 3D models on a computer? This class will teach computer drawing, drafting, model making and more! This year-long class will allow you to go to the next level with your design or artwork. You'll begin with an overview of programs and move onto creating show specific projects for GHAHD shows, or by reading scripts and creating your own designs and drawings. This will allow you to create work that can be the capstone to your portfolio.

DRAWING, DRAFTING & DESIGN – Full Year

Explore the art and precision of drafting in this year-long course! You'll learn both hand drafting and digital drafting using AutoCAD, gaining hands-on experience essential for theater design, props, lighting, and even sewing patterns.

Build skills in creating accurate technical drawings, rendering sketches with perspective and shading, and bringing your creative ideas to life. Apply what you learn to real-world design projects and develop a portfolio of 5–6 advanced pieces—showcasing both traditional and digital drafting skills.

SENIOR SEMINAR – Semester/Full Year

The Senior Seminar in Design and Production is an advanced course designed for students to engage in independent research and practical application within the field of design and production. This course provides a platform for students to explore complex projects, develop sophisticated design concepts, and apply production techniques through self-directed study. Students will work closely with their advisor to identify and refine a research question or project, culminating in a comprehensive final presentation or production that demonstrates their mastery of the subject.

(Many classes in Visual Arts and Theater are available to Design and Theater Production students)
