

DRAMA

Bachelor of Arts in Drama

Revised August 2026



DRAMA 457 students hang lights in the SPS grid for their March 2025 production of *Argonautika*.

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Our Program

This Student Handbook was created to act as a guidebook for new and returning students pursuing their Bachelor of Arts in the Department of Drama. It will (hopefully) contain all the information you need to go about your day-to-day activities in the program, and help you settle in and feel comfortable in your new environment. The book contains helpful hints about how to get involved in the department, and tips for making the most of your time here, as well as little contributions by past and present students. Your education is really what you make of it, but here in the Fine Arts Building, you will find yourself surrounded by caring, creative, hard-working individuals who will always support your pursuits.

DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA



Table of Contents

Welcome	Page 3
Message from the Chair	Page 3
Message from the BA Program Coordinator	Page 3
Introduction	Page 3
Objectives	Page 4
Program Overview	Page 4
Bachelor of Arts - Drama Major	Page 4
Typical Course Load and Requirements	Page 4
Bachelor of Arts (Drama) Honors	Page 6
Typical Course Load and Requirements	Page 6
Bachelor of Arts in Drama and Education	Page 8
Bachelor of Arts in Drama (Minor)	Page 8
Getting Involved	Page 9
The Beginning	Page 9
Drama 383/483	Page 9
MFA Directing Projects	Page 9
ABBEDAM	Page 9
New Works Festival	Page 10
Off-the-Cuff Cabaret	Page 10
Student Governance	Page 11
Department 101	Page 11
Resources	Page 11
General Etiquette	Page 12
Storage	Page 13
Drama Student Emergency Bursary Fund	Page 13
Related Documents	Page 14
Checklist	Page 15

Welcome to the Department of Drama!

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of our faculty and staff, welcome to the Department of Drama at the University of Alberta!

Choosing to study here is a huge step, and we're thrilled to have you. Every new group brings fresh energy, new perspectives, and a spark that transforms our classrooms and studios. Over the coming years, you'll push your creative limits, tackle big ideas, and make work you haven't even imagined yet.

The heart of any great Drama Department is its community. Because theatre asks us to examine the world critically and honestly, building a supportive, respectful culture is our top priority. Taking bold creative risks requires trust, and as students, you play a lead role in shaping that environment.

Whatever your specific focus, we are one department and one community. You belong here. Welcome!

April Viczko
Chair of Drama

MESSAGE FROM THE BA PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Welcome to a new year of discovery, challenge, new friends, deepening relationships with old friends and the joys of collaboration in all aspects of the creative process. No matter where you see yourself in the world of theatre making – acting, teaching, designing, directing, writing, building, managing, producing – you will find a place in one of the programs in the BA/BA/BEd and BA Honors. The faculty and staff of the Drama Department are here to support you as you dream big and carve your own path. We work hard, we care deeply, we celebrate fully and we are thrilled you are here!

Michele Fleiger
BA Program Coordinator

INTRODUCTION

Pursue Your Passion. Discover Your Niche.

There's a rush you get from live theatre and it's pulsing through your veins. Whether you're waiting in the wings for your entrance, calling cues on the head set or watching, perched on the edge of your seat – you feel a magnetic charge in the air. If you love creating theatre, the BA (Bachelor of Arts) Drama program is for you!

Throughout this four-year degree program, you will combine theory and practice while engaging in the many aspects of the theatrical process. The flexibility of the BA program will allow you to build your own degree and concentrate your theatre courses in the areas that most interest you.

The BA Drama program here at University of Alberta has a strong focus on performer-created theatre. That means we emphasize the creation of theatre, as well as the interpretation of theatre. It's the difference between performing a script that was written by someone else or performing a work that was born out of one's own creative process.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the BA Drama Major Degree Program are;

- To actively foster diversity and inclusivity, and welcome students and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, circumstances, learning and communication styles and interests.
- To develop students' self-motivation and self-reliance in order to generate an independent sense of inquiry and discernment within a liberal arts context.
- To educate students and citizens who, through theatre, are capable of grappling effectively with challenging ideas, as well as understanding, assessing, questioning, and influencing the socio-political and cultural world in which they live.
- To cultivate in students a personal artistic, ethical, and critical understanding of theatre that will prepare them for further education and experience in drama, and in many fields besides drama.
- To encourage students to discover and develop their intellectual and creative potential by means of a comprehensive introduction to theatre, including play and performance analysis, the socio-historic context of plays, the creative dramatic process, and the theoretical approach to performance.
- To enable students to develop their critical and practical skills for theatre in general, and for particular sub-disciplines of drama.
- To support the students in their pursuit of independent creative and research projects that reflect their vision of theatre and of the world.
- To integrate the theory and practice of theatre and performance in both curricular and extracurricular work.

Program Overview

University is complicated – it's hard to stay on track with your courses! What courses to take, when to take them, what is required to take what?... Here is a short guide to help you plan your education and prevent your brain from exploding from an information overload.

BACHELOR OF ARTS - DRAMA MAJOR

Typical Course Load and Requirements

- Students must complete 120 course weights (* or CW) to complete the degree.
- Below you will find a "Recommended Program Route". Routes may differ from student to student. See your advisor or coordinator if you have questions.
- **Please note that courses being offered are subject to change. Please check with the Undergraduate Student Advisor or BA Program Coordinator if you have any questions.**

YEAR ONE (*30) BA DRAMA MAJOR			
Term One		Term Two	
DRAMA 150	Introduction to Dramatic Process	DRAMA 103	Critical Analysis of Play texts

- English 102, 103 or 125 or WRS 101 (*3)
- Language other than English (*6)
- Non-Arts Discipline(s) (*6)

Note: DRAMA 150 and 103 are required and essential in order to continue in the BA as requisites for your second-year courses.

YEAR TWO (*30) BA DRAMA MAJOR

Term One		Term Two	
DRAMA 208	Theatre History I	DRAMA 203	Performance Analysis
DRAMA 257 Scene Study (F or W)			
DRAMA 279 Stagecraft and Design (F or W)			
Strongly Recommended: • DRAMA 240 Oral Communication • DRAMA 259 Performer-Created Theatre » Both are prerequisites for some 300-level courses so make sure you look ahead!			

YEAR THREE (*30) BA DRAMA MAJOR

Required Courses

DRAMA 308 - Theatre History II: Modern Theatre **PLUS TWO** of the following:

- DRAMA 302 - Modern Canadian Theatre
- DRAMA 306 - Historical Approaches to Western Dramatic and Theatrical Theories
- DRAMA 312 – Indigenous Theatre in Canada
- DRAMA 327 - Community Based Theatre
- DRAMA 406 - Contemporary Approaches to Dramatic and Theatrical Theories
- DRAMA 409 - Contemporary Theatre

Drama Options:

- DRAMA 327 - Community Based Theatre
- DRAMA 331- Movement and Physical Theatre
- **DRAMA 357 - Scene Study II**
- DRAMA 361- Playwriting
- **DRAMA 383 - Introduction to Directing**
- **DRAMA 391 - Production Lab I**
- And Minor Subject courses or other Arts Courses

Strongly Recommended:

- DRAMA 240 Oral Communication
 - DRAMA 259 Performer-Created Theatre
- » Both are prerequisites for some 300-level courses so make sure you look ahead!

Note: not all courses are offered every year. Check Bear Tracks to confirm; courses in **bold** are prerequisites for some 400-level courses

YEAR FOUR (*30) BA DRAMA MAJOR

Required Courses

By the end of the four-year BA Drama Major Degree program, the student must have successfully taken a minimum of *9 at the 400-level or above.

Drama Options:

- DRAMA 406 (F) Contemporary Approaches to Dramatic and Theatrical Theories
- DRAMA 409 - Contemporary Theatre (**W**)
- DRAMA 427 Topics in Community Based and Applied Theatre (**F**)
- DRAMA 452 - Solo Performance (**F**)
- DRAMA 453 - Physical Comedy (**F**)
- DRAMA 454 - Performance Creation (**F**)
- DRAMA 457 (W) Production/Performance *6 DRAMA 483 - Elements of Directing (**F**)
- DRAMA 492- Running Crew Projects
- DRAMA 507 - Senior Projects (Independent Study, taken with permission)

For additional information contact:

Fine Arts Undergraduate Student Advisors

Stephen Tchir & Caitlin Wells

dramaug@ualberta.ca

BACHELOR OF ARTS (DRAMA) HONORS

The Honors program offers students an additional opportunity to develop their research and critical skills, and to acquire solid knowledge of theory, while maintaining intensive creative and performative learning. Successful completion of an Honors degree puts students in an ideal position to pursue their graduate studies.

Typical Course Load and Requirements

Students must have a GPA of 3.3 in all Drama courses, as well as 3.0 overall in their previous *30 to enter the Honors program and must maintain these GPAs to be promoted to the following year, and to successfully complete the Honors program.

- Students must complete 120 CW* to complete this degree; students can apply for the Honors Drama Program after their first year of the BA Program
- Students completing Honors in Drama require a minimum of *48, maximum *72 in Drama courses including the junior (100's) and senior (200's and higher) level
- Course Weights (cw) indicated by *
- All courses worth *3 except DRAMA 457 Production/Performance, which is worth *6
- (F) Indicates that the course is offered in Fall Term; (W) indicates the Winter Term

- Please note that courses being offered are subject to change. Please check with the Undergraduate Student Advisor or BA Honors Coordinator if you have any questions.

YEAR ONE (*30) BA HONORS DRAMA			
Term One		Term Two	
DRAMA 150	Introduction to Dramatic Process	DRAMA 103	Critical Analysis of Play texts
• English 102, 103 or 125 or WRS 101 (*3) • Language other than English (*6) • Non-Arts Discipline(s) (*6)			
Note: DRAMA 150 and 103 are required and essential in order to continue in the BA as requisites for your second-year courses.			

YEAR TWO (*30) BA HONORS DRAMA			
Term One		Term Two	
DRAMA 208	Theatre History I	DRAMA 203	Performance Analysis
DRAMA 257 Scene Study (F or W)			
DRAMA 279 Stagecraft and Design (F or W)			
Strongly Recommended: • DRAMA 240 Oral Communication • DRAMA 259 Performer-Created Theatre » Both are prerequisites for some 300-level courses so make sure you look ahead!			

YEAR THREE (*30) BA HONORS DRAMA	
Required Courses DRAMA 308 - Theatre History II: Modern Theatre	
Other Required Courses • DRAMA 306 - Historical Approaches to Western Dramatic and Theatrical Theories • DRAMA 406 - Contemporary Approaches to Dramatic and Theatrical Theories • DRAMA 409 - Contemporary Theatre (W) These alternate in the timetable from year to year. Honors students are required to complete these courses during their Third and Fourth year, depending on which year they are offered.	
Drama Options: • Maximum *15 from other DRAMA course	

YEAR FOUR (*30) BA HONORS DRAMA

Required Courses

- DRAMA 401 - Research and Critical Writing
- DRAMA 402 - Honors Essay (DRAMA 402 will be completed under the supervision of a full-time faculty member of the Department and will start in the Winter Term of the third year and continue through the fourth year).

Other Required Courses

- DRAMA 306 - Historical Approaches to Western Dramatic and Theatrical Theories
- DRAMA 406 - Contemporary Approaches to Dramatic and Theatrical Theories
- DRAMA 409 - Contemporary Theatre (W)

These alternate in the timetable from year to year. Honors students are required to complete these courses during their Third and Fourth year, depending on which year they are offered.

For additional information contact:

Fine Arts Undergraduate Student Advisors

Stephen Tchir & Caitlin Wells

dramaug@ualberta.ca

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DRAMA AND EDUCATION

This program is complex and the overview is best explored through the UofA calendar here:

https://calendar.ualberta.ca/preview_program.php?catoid=56&poid=83820&returnto=17468

BACHELOR OF ARTS - MINOR IN DRAMA

A minor in Drama requires at least *12 at the senior level, of which *6 must be at the 300-level or above. Some 300-level Drama courses have specific prerequisites or need Departmental consent. Students interested in a minor in Drama should take DRAMA 102 and DRAMA 149 in their first year.

As a Drama Minor, it may seem difficult to know what sorts of activities you can get involved in – can I take this class, am I allowed to participate in this activity, will I be allowed the same opportunities as everyone else?

The answer is: YES. Just because you're not Majoring in Drama does not mean that you are not allowed to participate in anything and everything you want! There's a good chance you will not be taking as many Drama classes as a Major or BA/BEd student, so take every opportunity you can to get involved.

Being a Drama Minor, you will not have as many required Drama courses as some other students, which allows you to really go through the course catalogue and pick the courses which you are passionate about. Use your choices wisely, and who knows, maybe you'll end up switching to a Major in Drama! (But no pressure).

There are some courses that give priority to those who are majoring in drama, so you may not be able to enroll, or will have to wait to see if there are still places available. It's nothing personal, but there are a number of courses that Drama Majors **MUST** take in order to graduate – if you **REALLY REALLY REALLY** want to take a course, your best option is to ask for permission to enroll. Take initiative – if you are interested in a course, and then try to take it!

It is very important that every student, no matter their experience, or educational background, feels included in the department. As a Drama Minor, you are a part of the program as much as everyone else, so get involved, meet some new people, make some new friends, and have a blast.

Getting Involved

There are plenty of ways students can get involved, network, and try new things in the Drama Department. Whether you are a new or returning student, this guide can help you stay up to date on what is going on in the department, and how you can participate.

THE BEGINNING

One of the best ways to get in the loop in the Drama Department is to attend BA and BEd Student Orientation. This invaluable information session will take place in the Timms Centre Lobby (check in with your Drama Instructors for the date and time) At the Orientation, you will be provided with information about events throughout the Department, receive details about all of our student-run festivals, and get a chance to meet and interact with your professors, the support staff in the Timms and Fine Arts Building, and other students. This session is not only for incoming students, but also for senior students, as it is where you can submit your name to appear on one of the various student committees in the Drama Department!

DRAMA 383/483

The third and fourth year directing classes are always looking for student actors to perform in their final projects. There is typically at least one DRAMA 383 class in each semester. They audition students to perform in their final performances, which take place in the rehearsal halls in FAB. Drama 483 takes place in the Fall Semester, and the student directors require actors to perform in both their midterm and final scenes, which are presented in Second Playing Space in the Timms. Both classes provide an excellent opportunity to network, and get to know the people in the department! These short scenes can provide an excellent opportunity to expand your repertoire and help your peers! Keep an eye open for emails and posters advertising audition dates and times!

MFA DIRECTING PROJECTS

From time to time, Masters of Fine Arts Directing Candidates will put out audition notices for their projects. Make sure to check your emails for audition announcements, these projects are **MORE** than worthwhile.

ABBEDAM

An acronym made up of BA, BEd and MA, ABBEDAM is an extracurricular production company that, each year, presents a show that showcases the talents of students in the drama department. Founded in 1995 by Alex and Joan Heys Hawkins, ABBEDAM was created to help build community amongst

students, provide learning and performance opportunities, and give students in the BA, BA Honors, BEd and MA programs exposure in the Drama Department. The beauty of ABBEDAM is that the productions are the result of collaboration between students in all different fields of theatre studies, resulting in a professional-quality show.

The shows are typically large-cast ensemble plays, directed by a BA, BEd or MA alumni and presented in November. ABBEDAM is an incredible opportunity to get involved and showcase your talent, even if you prefer to be behind the scenes! They are always looking for stagehands, set-up and tear-down crews, and recruits for next year's creative team. Watch for audition notices in your email and check their social media accounts for announcements.

For more information or to get involved, check the U of A Drama webpage, or contact: abbedam@ualberta.ca

NEW WORKS FESTIVAL

The New Works Festival is a student run one-act play festival presented in the Winter Semester. New Works is specifically designed to showcase the talents of up-and-coming playwrights at the U of A – their scripts will be produced and performed in front of a live audience! It also presents a wonderful opportunity for students to get involved, as each show requires a director, stage manager, dramaturge, designer, as well as lots of student actors, stage hands, lighting crews, etc. There are so many opportunities to participate!

New Works will present scripts chosen from a pool of submissions to be produced in the Second Playing Space in February. The amazing thing? All plays are entirely New Works that have never been performed.

- A Blind Jury reads all submissions, discusses, and debates them, and in the end, chose fantastic shows to present for your entertainment.
- The call for directors and dramaturgs will go out in early October, shortly followed by a call for stage managers and designers.
- Auditions are generally held in November, so check your email regularly for announcements.
- There are also lots of opportunities for stagehands, lighting and sound operators, and props assistants.
- This festival is an incredible opportunity to get involved in the department and do some serious networking, so come out and join the madness!

To get in touch, please email newworksyeg@gmail.com.

OFF-THE-CUFF CABARET

Shortly after the New Works Festival comes the Off-the-Cuff Cabaret! Previously known as the Quick 'n Dirty Festival, then CAHOOTS, Off-the-Cuff was rebranded and re-launched in 2015. It is an interdisciplinary fine arts series that showcases the talents of student artists from all over the U of A Campus. Acts of all types are encouraged, whether you sing, dance, juggle whilst simultaneously doing the Charleston, or have a painting you'd like to add to the visual arts exhibition.

Off-the-Cuff is a low-key, easy way to get your foot in the door and show us what you've got!

For more information, or to get involved with Off-the-Cuff: offthecuffcabaret@gmail.com

STUDENT GOVERNANCE

Please see the General Handbook for more information on BA representation on department committees.

Department 101

The BA Program at the University of Alberta strives to teach students how to operate as a professional in the theatre world, whether they are an actor, a director, dramaturge, or stagehand. One of the key things you need to remember is that you must ALWAYS be respectful in a theatre environment. This isn't nagging; it's the small details that people think they know, but sometimes forget. School is preparing you for your future, so make use of your time here to instill certain rules into your brain. Here are some things to think about:

RESOURCES

Booking Rehearsal Space

Room bookings for students enrolled in Drama classes are coordinated online. **You will be emailed the URL for the sign-up page.**

Students are entitled to a maximum of 2 hours a day, up to 10 hours a week across all rooms. Rooms bookings are offered on a first-come-first-served basis. This time is strictly to be used for activities related to drama classes.

The website is updated each Friday for the following Monday through Sunday. **The website will be down each Friday from 8:00am-10:00am** to update the following week's availability.

If you encounter problems, or have questions or concerns, please contact Production and Operations Assistant, Emily Logan at prodops@ualberta.ca.

Library

Please see the General Handbook for a "Library Appendix" that is chock full of library ins and outs. There are some incredible resources, but it takes a bit of time to find them. Our Drama Librarian has some great tips in that appendix.

The Support and Guidance

Michele Fleiger

BA Program Coordinator

Michele coordinates and troubleshoots the BA program.

mb10@ualberta.ca

Dana Tanner-Kennedy

BA Honors Program Coordinator

If you are an honors student or want to be an honors student or are curious about the program, contact Dana.

tannerke@ualberta.ca

Stephen Tchir and Caitlin Wells

Undergraduate Advisors

Stephen and Caitlin provide student advising for Drama, Music and Art & Design. One of them can help you with programs, courses, timetabling and registration.

Office: FAB 3-146

dramaug@ualberta.ca

GENERAL ETIQUETTE

The following points may seem obvious, but it's crazy how often people seem to forget small details!

- **Always be on time to rehearsal, if not early**
 - » It's hard to get out of bed in the morning, we know. But it is extremely disrespectful to be late, whether it is to a rehearsal, meeting, or a class. If you are a part of a professional production, and you are consistently late, they have the power and the resources to replace you, and word spreads very quickly. Don't get a reputation as 'that-person-who-wastes-everyone's-time'.
- **Communication is key**
 - » Sometimes, wild-random-happenstance situations will arise, and there is nothing you can do about them. Life happens! If you ARE going to be late to a rehearsal, just LET SOMEONE KNOW. It's very simple to do and will keep everyone happy!
- **Dress appropriately for your classes**
 - » You have the right to wear whatever you want. Always keep in mind that drama classes can get you rolling on the floor, standing on your head, jumping up and down. Wear clothes you can move in and layers are key to staying comfortable while sitting still or moving around.
 - » That being said, try to look presentable. We don't want the Drama Department to be known as 'that department where everyone wears pajamas'. Unless it's for a performance, in which case, rock those jammies!
 - » If you choose to wear clothing in which you cannot move or participate fully, you are only holding yourself back. Essentially, if you can't do a standing triple-back-tuck in your cocktail dress, you probably shouldn't wear it to your 331 Movement Class. *If you can do a standing triple-back-tuck in a cocktail dress, you should consider joining Cirque du Soleil. And you get +4 awesome points.

- **Treat others with respect**

- » This means EVERYONE. As a theatre professional, you will have to work with a variety of people in many different scenarios, so treat everyone the way you want to be treated. This includes teachers, colleagues, directors, and peers. Again, if you are in a production and you are being difficult to work with, they can, and will, replace you.
- » Respect your environment. You will be working in a shared space – please try to keep the classrooms and furniture in good condition! They are for everyone to use.

STORAGE

Don't want to wear lulus every second of every day? There are quite a few lockers available to sign out through the Fine Arts Building. You'll get an email in the Fall telling you how to do this.

DRAMA STUDENT EMERGENCY BURSARY FUND

What is it?

This fund is designed to assist Drama Students who are in financial need. Sometimes during the semester, a situation will arise where a student has absolutely no money for food or rent. If they have exhausted all other resources, they may make an appointment with program advisors, seeking ways to help pay their bills, and ensure that they can continue to pursue their education.

Student Services on campus have an emergency bursary program which can also serve this need, however, it is not the right fit for everyone; funding is not announced until late March, though typically, students are concerned in February about their funds for March and April.

If you are a drama student with financial problems, you may wish to apply for assistance from this fund. If so, read on:

Terms of Reference

- Eligible applicants will be registered as full-time students in one of the following programs: BA (Drama Major), BA (Drama Honors), BA/BEd Combined (Drama), BFA (Design), BFA (Acting), (BFA (Stage Management), BFA (Technical Theatre), PhD (Performance Studies), MA (Drama), MFA (Directing), MFA (Design), MFA (Theatre Practice), and MFA (Voice Pedagogy). They will be intending to complete a degree in Drama at the U of A and will usually have been full-time students through the academic year in which they apply for funding.
- Students must show that they have sought all other available funds, including student loans and applications to the University and/or GSA emergency bursary programs.
- Students must prepare a specific budget and request a specific amount of money.
- Assistance will range from \$300-\$600 as needed, and as endowment earnings allow. These amounts will be reviewed.
- This endowment will be established and built up with funds from student activities and performances, which are designated as fundraising events. Funds may be enhanced over the years via other Departmental fundraising activities.
- The names of applicants will be held in confidence.
- The Chair will report on the activities of the fund to the Drama Council annually, citing the number of students served, bursary amounts, recipients' programs, and endowment income.

Application Procedure:

Simply fill out the short application form at the link and you will be contacted.

<https://forms.gle/gVYz7FBiXv2jqBSs7>

If you are having financial problems, please, do not be afraid to ask for help. We want every student to have an enjoyable University experience and get the education they deserve!

Related Documents

The following documents are referred to in this Handbook, and should be obtained, read in detail, and referred to throughout the program:

GENERAL HANDBOOK

Will be emailed out to you. Check your inbox! Ask Michele if you don't receive it.

POLICIES CONCERNING USE OF THE TIMM'S CENTRE:

Administrative Info for Drama Department Productions can be found here:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/drama/resources/policies>

(Venue Operations Manager, Iain Graham)

TESTIMONIALS

"I love how much the BA challenges your creativity – you get a taste of all aspects of theatre! I learned that I love design, and how I can integrate design elements into my work as an Actor and Director."

– Jessica Watson
BA Major Alumna

"Learn everything to teach everything; that was the beauty of the BA/BEd combined program for me. From acting and directing, to designing and producing, ask the program what you want from it, and it will deliver. The program gave me the opportunity to practice and hone the skills I would need to pursue a professional career in theatre, with the added security of the skills I would need to pursue a profession in education. My advice to incoming students: take advantage of all the extra-curricular activities, student groups and clubs offered through the department. Make your own experiences and celebrate every failure just as you would celebrate every success. Break a leg!"

– Luay Eljamal
BA/BEd Combined Alumnus

"I auditioned for everything I could, became a member on boards, and volunteered for everything. I had the fortune of directing ABBEDAM and running the Quick N Dirty Festival in 2010. Both represent the fruition of my learning at school and inspired me to create the Found Festival and work as a free-lance director in Edmonton. No opportunity is given to you, you need to go out there and make them. I challenge you to apply for everything, express your interest, create something new, break the rules, and innovate!"

– Andrew Ritchie
BA Major Alumnus

Checklist

- ☐ Read: Department of [Drama General Handbook](#)
- ☐ Read through the “Related Documents” section (on the previous page)