

MUSICAL THEATRE (B.F.A)

Program Overview

The musical theatre major at Rider prepares students for a professional career in musical theatre with veteran faculty and regular interface with top industry professionals. This program is provided in a nurturing liberal arts environment just one hour from New York City at Rider's Lawrenceville campus.

The musical theatre program offers development of well-rounded, competitive musical theatre professionals. Rider's professional musical theatre faculty members are committed to developing students' talents and technique in all areas – vocal, dance and acting – preparing them to succeed in the highly competitive world of professional musical theatre.

Rider musical theatre majors enjoy affordable, student-sponsored Broadway performance trips, special student discounts, class-related Broadway field-trips and backstage tours or just a quick visit via the nearby train.

Degree Offered

- B.F.A. in Musical Theatre

Contact

Sean McCarther, M.M., D.M.

Associate Professor and Interim Chair

Omega House, #013

609-896-5000 x 8301

smccarther@rider.edu

Program Website: www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/wca/sfpa/undergraduate/musical-theatre/ (<http://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/wca/sfpa/undergraduate/musical-theatre/>)

Associated Department: Department of (<http://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/westminster-college-of-the-arts/school-of-fine-performing-arts/undergraduate-programs/musical-theatre/>) Theatre (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/westminster-college-of-the-arts/school-of-fine-performing-arts/undergraduate-programs/theatre/>) and (<http://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/westminster-college-of-the-arts/school-of-fine-performing-arts/undergraduate-programs/musical-theatre/>) Dance (<https://www.rider.edu/academics/colleges-schools/westminster-college-of-the-arts/school-of-fine-performing-arts/undergraduate-programs/dance/>)

Related Programs

- Arts and Entertainment Industries Management (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/westminster-college-arts/fine-performing-arts/majors-minors-certificates/arts-entertainment-ind/>)
- Dance (<http://catalog.rider.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/westminster-college-arts/fine-performing-arts/majors-minors-certificates/dance-ba/>)
- Voice Performance (<http://catalog.rider.edu/westminster-choir-college/program-course-descriptions/voice/>)

Musical Theatre (B.F.A.) Program Requirements

(120 credits)

General Requirements

For all majors offered in the Theatre & Dance Department, students must earn a minimum grade of "C" in those courses required in the major area in order to make satisfactory progress. If a grade of "C-" or lower is earned, the student must repeat the course.

B.F.A. –Musical Theatre majors must earn a minimum grade of "B-" each semester in the primary applied music field in order to make satisfactory progress. If a grade of "C+" or lower is earned, the student must repeat the semester.

Students must meet attendance and performance requirements in studio performance classes and Musical Theatre Lab.

Applied Music – Voice Primary Study

Students in the B.F.A.-Musical Theatre degree must register for applied music in each semester of study, to a maximum of eight semesters. Six terms are taken under MUS 168A (2-credit, 1-hour lesson) and two semesters are taken under MUS 168B (1-credit, half-hour lesson). The section number corresponds to the instructor with whom the student will study.

Musical Theatre Lab

All majors are required to attend a weekly musical theatre lab during every semester of enrollment. The lab supplements curricular instruction with presentations by guest artists, managers, agents, and casting directors. This interface provides each student with an opportunity for interaction with some of the most important professionals in the musical theatre business.

Performing Opportunities at Rider University

The musical theatre program offers three fully staged productions led by faculty and experienced and notable directors, conductors and choreographers from the professional community. The Theatre and Dance Department also offers a well-established theatre program that provides additional performing opportunities in three major productions. Majors also are encouraged to participate in student-directed and produced events, presented each year on both campuses. The Voice Department at the Westminster campus offers two Opera Theater productions each year. All productions are open by audition to all Rider University students except first-semester freshmen. Consult the Musical Theatre Handbook for the Audition Policy.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|------------------------------------|---|---------|
| Applied Music | | |
| MUS 168A | Applied Voice (2-credits, repeated 6 times) | 12 |
| MUS 168B | Applied Voice (1-credits, repeated 2 times) | 2 |
| MTR 132 | Group Piano | 1 |
| Theory, History, Technology | | |
| MTR 120 | Hist of American Music Theater | 3 |
| MTR 131 | Music Theory for MT | 3 |
| MTR 133 | Sight Singing for MT | 3 |
| THE 105 | Theatre History to 1700 | 3 |
| THE 106 | Theater History Since 1700 | 3 |
| THE 127T | Theatre Production Tech (must be taken 3 times) | 3 |
| THE 115 | Stagecraft | 3 |
| Professional Studies: DANCE | | |
| Select three of the following: | | 3 |

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| MTR 109 | Beginning Ballet I | |
| MTR 112 | Advanced Ballet I | |
| MTR 114 | Advanced Ballet II | |
| MTR 113 | Beginning Ballet II | |
| MTR 313 | Ballet V | |
| MTR 314 | Ballet VI | |
| MTR 480 | Dance for Performing Artist | |
| Select two of the following: | | 2 |
| MTR 209 | Tap Dance I | |
| MTR 210 | Tap Dance II | |
| MTR 307 | Tap III | |
| MTR 308 | Tap IV | |
| Select two of the following: | | 2 |
| MTR 309 | Beginning Jazz Dance I | |
| MTR 315 | Advanced Jazz Dance I | |
| MTR 316 | Beginning Jazz Dance II | |
| MTR 312 | Advanced Jazz Dance II | |
| MTR 319 | Jazz Dance III | |
| MTR 320 | Jazz Dance IV | |
| Select two of the following: | | 2 |
| MTR 415 | Musical Theatre Dance I | |
| MTR 416 | Musical Theatre Dance II | |
| Professional Studies: ACTING | | |
| THE 107 | Acting I: Intro to Acting | 3 |
| THE 110 | Acting II: Scene Study | 3 |
| THE 310 | Acting III | 3 |
| THE 311 | Acting IV | 3 |
| MTR 317 | MT Auditions:Preparation/Tech | 3 |
| MTR 335 | Speech for the Actor | 3 |
| Professional Studies: MUSICAL THEATRE | | |
| MTR 105 | Musical Theatre Practicum (1-credit, repeated 2 times) | 2 |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab (8 semesters) | 0 |
| MTR 215 | MT Performance: Song as Text | 3 |
| MTR 218 | Musical Theatre Scene Study I | 3 |
| MTR 219 | Musical Theatre Scene Study II | 3 |
| MTR 255 | Musical Theatre Repertoire I | 3 |
| MTR 256 | Musical Theater Repertoire II | 3 |
| MTR 493 | Music Theater Production | 1 |
| or THE 127 | Theatre Production | |
| General Education Requirements | | |
| See the list of requirements at the end of the School of Fine and Performing Arts section of the catalog. | | 33 |
| Free Electives | | |
| Select 6 credits of free electives | | 6 |
| Total Credits | | 120 |

The following educational plan is provided as a sample only. Rider students who do not declare a major during their freshman year; who change their major; or those who transfer to Rider may follow a different plan to ensure a timely graduation. Each student, with guidance from his or her academic advisor, will develop a personalized educational plan.

| Course | Title | Credits |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| Year 1 | | |
| Fall Semester | | |
| CMP 120 | Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric | 3 |
| MTR 105 | Musical Theatre Practicum | 1 |
| MTR 109 | Beginning Ballet I | 1 |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 131 | Music Theory for MT | 3 |
| MUS 168A | Applied Voice | 2 |
| THE 107 | Acting I: Intro to Acting | 3 |
| THE 190 | Production I | 1 |
| General Education Course | | 3 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 17 |
| Spring Semester | | |
| CMP 125 | Seminar in Writing and Research | 3 |
| MTR 105 | Musical Theatre Practicum | 1 |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 112 | Advanced Ballet I | 1 |
| MTR 133 | Sight Singing for MT | 3 |
| MTR 309 | Beginning Jazz Dance I | 1 |
| MUS 168A | Applied Voice | 2 |
| THE 110 | Acting II: Scene Study | 3 |
| THE 115 | Stagecraft | 3 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 17 |
| Year 2 | | |
| Fall Semester | | |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 132 | Group Piano | 1 |
| MTR 209 | Tap Dance I | 1 |
| MTR 215 | MT Performance: Song as Text | 3 |
| MTR 316 | Beginning Jazz Dance II | 1 |
| MUS 168A | Applied Voice | 2 |
| THE 105 | Theatre History to 1700 | 3 |
| THE 310 | Acting III | 3 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 14 |
| Spring Semester | | |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 210 | Tap Dance II | 1 |
| MTR 218 | Musical Theatre Scene Study I | 3 |
| MUS 168A | Applied Voice | 2 |
| THE 106 | Theater History Since 1700 | 3 |
| THE 190 | Production I | 1 |
| THE 311 | Acting IV | 3 |
| Elective Course | | 2 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 15 |
| Year 3 | | |
| Fall Semester | | |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 211 | Ballet III | 1 |
| MTR 219 | Musical Theatre Scene Study II | 3 |
| MTR 255 | Musical Theatre Repertoire I | 3 |
| MTR 335 | Speech for the Actor | 3 |

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-----|
| MUS 168A | Applied Voice | 2 |
| THE 190 | Production I | 1 |
| General Education or Elective Course | | 2 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 15 |
| Spring Semester | | |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 120 | Hist of American Music Theater | 3 |
| MTR 256 | Musical Theater Repertoire II | 3 |
| MUS 168A | Applied Voice | 2 |
| General Education/Free Elective Course | | 6 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 14 |
| Year 4 | | |
| Fall Semester | | |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 415 | Musical Theatre Dance I | 1 |
| MUS 168B | Applied Voice | 1 |
| General Education or Elective Courses | | 12 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 14 |
| Spring Semester | | |
| MTR 111 | Musical Theatre Lab | 0 |
| MTR 317 | MT Auditions:Preparation/Tech | 3 |
| MTR 416 | Musical Theatre Dance II | 1 |
| MUS 168B | Applied Voice | 1 |
| General Education or Elective Courses | | 9 |
| Semester Credit Hours | | 14 |
| Total Credit Hours for Graduation | | 120 |

MTR 105 Musical Theatre Practicum 1 Credits

This course explores the literature of musical theatre vocal ensembles. It emphasizes examining a wide range of styles. This is a studio/academic class, not a performance ensemble.

MTR 109 Beginning Ballet I 1 Credits

This course introduces the basic elements of ballet technique. Technique is based on the five positions of the legs and feet, coupled with appropriate arm positions. The class consists of a basic ballet barre warm-up that includes stretching and developing strength and turn-out used in dance positions and combinations. Instruction includes jumping, turning, and connecting steps with movement. Ballet terminology is addressed.

MTR 111 Musical Theatre Lab 0 Credits**MTR 112 Advanced Ballet I 1 Credits**

Continuation of MTR 109, building upon techniques learned in that course.

MTR 113 Beginning Ballet II 1 Credits

Intermediate ballet, expanding upon Ballet I and concentrating upon the American lineage of ballet training.

MTR 114 Advanced Ballet II 1 Credits

Continuation of MTR 113. Intermediate ballet, expanding upon Ballet I and concentrating upon the American lineage of ballet training.

MTR 120 Hist of American Music Theater 3 Credits

The history of the American Musical from the first American production in 1750 of Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* up to the present will be traced. Emphasis will be placed upon those common elements which are solely intrinsic to the American stage. Developments and imported ideas (e.g., *The British Invasion*) will be highlighted.

MTR 131 Music Theory for MT 3 Credits

Teaches students to understand musical form, structure, melody, rhythm and harmony by applying these concepts to musical theatre literature. Includes full analysis of musical theatre songs. Required in the first year.

MTR 132 Group Piano 1 Credits

Offers the musical theatre student appropriate keyboard technique to play any vocal part and to play a rudimentary accompaniment. Required of all second-year students.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 131.

MTR 133 Sight Singing for MT 3 Credits

Intensive class in reading music, designed for musical theatre students. Traditional solfeggio techniques used with musical theatre texts whenever possible. Required of first-year students.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 131.

MTR 209 Tap Dance I 1 Credits

Introduction to the basic elements of tap dancing. Tap technique is geared to enhance rhythm and motor skills, basic elements that will be used to connect several steps and movements into combinations. Other variations such as "soft shoe" or "clogging" are included.

MTR 211 Ballet III 1 Credits

Intermediate ballet, expanding upon Ballet II and concentrating upon the American lineage of ballet training.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 110.

MTR 212 Ballet IV 1 Credits

Continuation of MTR 211. Intermediate ballet, expanding upon Ballet III and concentrating upon the American lineage of ballet training.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 211.

MTR 215 MT Performance: Song as Text 3 Credits

In this course the student will learn how to develop a performance of musical text by making doable, actable choices and applying those choices to musical monologues – solo songs.

Prerequisite(s): THE 110.

MTR 218 Musical Theatre Scene Study I 3 Credits

Scene study class exploring the literature of the musical theatre – emphasis placed on two- and three-character scenes. Required of all second-year students.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 215.

MTR 219 Musical Theatre Scene Study II 3 Credits

Further exploration of scenes in the musical theatre literature – emphasis on more complex scenes. Required of all third-year students.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 218.

MTR 255 Musical Theatre Repertoire I 3 Credits

This course provides the opportunity to encounter/examine the repertoire of the major musical theatre writers through the 1950s. The thrust of this class is split between studio work and academic work.

Prerequisite(s): THE 106 with a minimum grade of D and THE 311 with a minimum grade of D.

MTR 256 Musical Theater Repertoire II 3 Credits

This course provides the opportunity to encounter/examine the repertoire of the major musical theatre writers since the 1950s. The thrust of this class is split between studio work and academic work.

Prerequisite(s): THE 106, THE 107.

MTR 307 Tap III 1 Credits

This course is designed for the moderately advanced tap dancer. Course to be taken in the fall.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 210.

MTR 308 Tap IV 1 Credits

The course will allow the more advanced student to complete the work begun in Tap III.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 307.

MTR 309 Beginning Jazz Dance I 1 Credits

Based upon the ballet foundation, this course explores the expressive style of jazz dance, and basic Western theatrical dance forms and social dances used most often on the stage.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 109.

MTR 313 Ballet V 1 Credits

Advanced ballet, expanding upon Ballet IV and concentrating upon the American lineage of ballet training. Inclusion of advanced combinations, physical development and coordination skills.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 212.

MTR 314 Ballet VI 1 Credits

Continuation of MTR 313. Advanced ballet, expanding upon Ballet IV and concentrating upon the American lineage of ballet training. Inclusion of advanced combinations, physical development and coordination skills.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 313.

MTR 315 Advanced Jazz Dance I 1 Credits

Continuation of work begun in MTR 309.

MTR 317 MT Auditions:Preparation/Tech 3 Credits

This course, building upon skill-sets established in the Music Theatre singer-actor curriculum, will introduce and hone the required skill-sets for preparing to audition in Music Theatre. Genres and styles of music most often required for auditioning in the industry will be prepared and explored. An audition "book," based upon the demands of the industry, as well as the most suitable material for each student will be built. When appropriate, guests from the industry will be invited to present master classes and evaluations in a "mock audition" process.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 207, MTR 216, MTR 217, MTR 492.

MTR 319 Jazz Dance III 1 Credits

This course continues the work begun in MTR 318.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 318 and MTR 212.

MTR 320 Jazz Dance IV 1 Credits

This course continues the work begun in MTR 319.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 319 and MTR 212.

MTR 335 Speech for the Actor 3 Credits

This course introduces and develops speech techniques, specifically in the areas of relaxation, posture and alignment, respiration, phonation, support, registration, resonance, and articulation. Students learn to consistently produce a free, resonant, fully supported speaking voice. Exercises will increase flexibility and range of speaking and will foster heightened responsiveness to feeling. Regular practice in the delivery of both impromptu and prepared monologues is required. This course includes studies in Neutral American Speech.

MTR 415 Musical Theatre Dance I 1 Credits

This is the first capstone course in the Musical Theatre dance sequence. Practical and historical study of Broadway dance styles; main focus on jazz idiom. Emphasis placed on performance quality, auditioning skills, self-taping, and "how to swing/dance captain".

Prerequisite(s): Completion of Ballet, Tap, and Jazz requirements; senior standing.

MTR 416 Musical Theatre Dance II 1 Credits

This is the second capstone course in the Musical Theatre dance sequence. Emphasis is placed on other dance styles used on stage, film, music videos, and television. Primary focus is on Hip Hop and Street Jazz.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 415 with a minimum grade of C.

MTR 480 Dance for Performing Artist 3 Credits

This course is a culmination of the dance elements and forms studied in ballet, tap, and jazz dance. Context areas include movement used most often in performance of music theater and movement fundamentals applicable to all aspects of presentation and principle to refine and articulate the performer's awareness and use of the body through singing and dance. Performance issues and movement as a basis for music and sound production are addressed.

Prerequisite(s): MTR 209, MTR 309.

MTR 493 Music Theater Production 1 Credits

Preparation and performance of a solo or ensemble role in a fully staged music theatre production. Concurrent participation in stage crew activities is required.

MUS 168A Applied Voice 2 Credits**MUS 168B Applied Voice 1 Credits****THE 105 Theatre History to 1700 3 Credits**

The history of theater from the primitive time through the Baroque era. Examines major plays and playwrights, emphasizing the Greek, Roman, Medieval, and Elizabethan eras. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

THE 106 Theater History Since 1700 3 Credits

The history of theater from the Restoration to the present. Examines major plays and playwrights, emphasizing the Restoration, Romantic, and Realistic movements. This course counts towards the fulfillment of the Disciplinary Perspectives element of the CLAS general education curriculum.

THE 107 Acting I: Intro to Acting 3 Credits

Exercises and improvisations developing the fundamental prerequisites for the actor are provided. The emphasis is on vocal and physical mobility and the ability to communicate emotional states from the stage.

THE 110 Acting II: Scene Study 3 Credits

Basic acting techniques. Emphasis on the ingredients of any action: what am I doing, where, why, who am I, what is my attitude toward partner?

Prerequisite(s): THE 107.

THE 115 Stagecraft 3 Credits

The theory and practice of construction and rigging of stage scenery is offered. Emphasis is on actual productions and road show set-ups. One lecture and two labs per week.

THE 127 Theatre Production 1 Credits

Students rehearse and perform roles in a play produced by the department and directed by a member of its faculty. Students may also prepare a major element of design or technology for the production. Maximum of eight credits are accepted in theatre production, band and/or choir.

THE 190 Production I 1-3 Credits

Students carry out a technical theatre crew position for one or more theatre, musical theatre or dance productions during the semester of course registration. May be repeated seven times, for a total of eight credits.

THE 310 Acting III 3 Credits

Students will study in-depth techniques for exploring characterization. They will be introduced to the "magic if" and study techniques for placing themselves in the circumstances of the characters they are portraying. They will learn the interior and exterior analysis of characters using "Adler" and "Practical Aesthetics" techniques.

Prerequisite(s): THE 107, THE 110.

THE 311 Acting IV 3 Credits

Students will learn the appropriate techniques to explore characters in the three styles of Elizabethan, Restoration, and Commedia dell'arte theatre. Sessions will include movement, effective speech, and finding appropriate actions for each style. Students will also learn proper research techniques to understand cultural influences on plays and characters.

Prerequisite(s): THE 107, THE 110, THE 310.