



Skills and Competencies

Aspiring actors and directors--and anyone interested in careers within the dramatic field--should take part in high school and university theatre, or work with community and nonprofit theatres for experience. Formal theatre training or acting experience is generally necessary, although some people enter the field without it. Most training takes place at colleges and universities throughout the country offering bachelor's and master's degrees in theatre. College theatre curricula usually include courses in acting, directing, stagecraft, design, theatre history and the liberal arts. Northern Michigan University is no exception. In fact, the preparation you'll receive as a theatre major at NMU will provide you with a solid academic background that will help you whether or not you decide to enter the theatre field.

Your ability to write and speak effectively is absolutely critical in today's workforce. Similarly, your ability to analyze and solve problems is also important. Much of your academic course work--be it in theatre, literature, or philosophy--will help you fine-tune these skills.



Career Development

A theatre major is a dynamic degree which can prepare you for a variety of fields--in and outside of the theatre. You should be aware that acting is only the tip of the iceberg. In fact, there are more jobs available in the design, technical, theatre management, and arts management areas than there are in acting and directing. On the flip side of the coin, "big name" actors and directors do command huge salaries and are in the public eye. Obviously, if you wish to pursue a theatre-related career, the more practical experience you have, the better. You will discover numerous opportunities to perform onstage or work backstage here at NMU. Most NMU theatre students find employment during the summer months, which provides them with more experience and valuable contacts in the world of professional theatre. Competition is keen; only the most talented will enjoy regular employment in the field. Also remember that NMU is here to help. The Academic and Career Advisement Center can provide you with career planning help, while Career Services will help you fine-tune your resume.



Additional Resources and Info

For Career Planning and Opportunities:

Academic & Career Advisement Center
3302 C.B. Hedgcock
906-227-2971
www.nmu.edu/acac

Communication and Performance Studies Dept
203 Thomas Fine Arts
906-227-2045
www.nmu.edu/theatre

For Job Search, Resume and Career Information:

Career Services
3502 C.B. Hedgcock
906-227-2800
www.nmu.edu/careers

For Information about NMU Student Organizations Associated with this Major Contact:

Center for Student Enrichment
1206 University Center
906-227-2439
www.nmu.edu/cse

Internet Resource Links:

www.careers.org
www.careerresource.net
www.bls.gov/oco Occupational Outlook Handbook

For Career Information with National Organizations:

www.tcg.org Theatre Communications Group Inc.

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What To Do With A Major In....

Theater





Theater

One of the finest and most active undergraduate Theatre programs in the country can be found at Northern Michigan University. If you're interested in pursuing a theatre-related career, and are willing to work hard to gain the necessary experience and skills, then a Theatre degree from NMU may be for you.

As a Theatre major you will have the opportunity to become involved in all NMU theatrical productions, from acting to directing to working on production and technical crews. These are all experiences from which you will gain critical experience and acquire marketable skills and competencies. You may even find yourself a part of award-winning productions, like the students involved in the 1994 American College Theatre Festival award-winning production of **Haywire** (performed at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC).

TH130 Introduction to Theatre, TH131 Stagecraft, and TH132 Acting I are all courses of interest if you're considering Theatre as your major. In addition to talking with theatre students and faculty, getting involved onstage or backstage are also good ways to discover if this major is for you.



Potential Careers

NMU's Theater Program prepares students for employment in the following careers:

Occupations

- Actor
- Advertising Manager
- Aid
- Best Boy
- Booking Agent
- Box Office Manager/Treasurer
- Campaign Manager
- Casting Director
- Choreographer
- Company Manager
- Costumer
- Critic
- Development Specialist
- Director
- Director of Audience Development/Fund Raising
- Dolly Grip
- Dramaturg
- Gaffer
- Librettist
- Lighting Designer
- Makeup Technician/Designer
- Personnel Director
- Playwright
- Press Agent/Secretary
- Producer
- Properties Designer
- Publicity Director
- Radio/TV Announcer
- Sales Representative
- Scenic Designer
- Screenwriter
- Sound Designer
- Special Effects Designer
- Speech Writer
- Stage Carpenter/Electrician/Manager
- Technical Direction
- Theatre Management
- Tour Coordinator

Additional Considerations

Practical experience on stage or backstage is imperative in these fields.

Graduate work focusing on cinema exclusively is a necessary prerequisite to some film careers.

A business minor or second major would be helpful if you're interested in the business field.

Proficiency in a second language may be helpful.

Remember to take any necessary exams early; it can take up to six weeks for results to be sent to schools to which you applied.

Job Outlook

Careers in the theater field are expected to grow as fast as average. Due to the very diverse collection of professions, salary can range from very low to as much as top earning Hollywood stars.