ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Theatre & Dance embraces the principles of a liberal arts education by emphasizing interdisciplinarity, collaboration, and experiential learning in both our curricular coursework and our co-curricular production activities. Our students routinely double major and minor, pairing Theatre & Dance with disciplines from English to Environmental Studies, or with interdisciplinary minors like Arts Management & Entrepreneurship.

THEATRE MAJOR

The Theatre major builds knowledge and experience across a broad range of theatrical history and practice, including acting, directing, design, and technical production. Students may pursue more advanced coursework in any of these areas and/or choose from other electives, such as playwriting, dramaturgy, and stage management. Along the way, Theatre majors apply and build upon their classroom learning through real-world production experiences on three or more departmental shows.

SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

A student may complete the Theatre SCE in one of several ways:

• a traditional research thesis in the areas of theatrical criticism, theory, or history;
• a playwriting thesis in which the student writes and workshops a full-length play, which is then presented in a rehearsed reading;
• a production thesis in which the student serves as dramaturg, stage manager, designer, performer, playwright, or director of a departmental production.

Theatre majors propose their SCE projects during the Fall semester of their junior year, develop them during the Spring semester (in Junior Seminar), and complete them over the course of their senior year.

THEATRE MINOR

The Theatre minor allows students to explore the various subfields of theatre more selectively. Minors choose from a cross-section of courses in theatre history, acting/directing, and design/production, plus two electives from across the department. Minors apply and expand upon their knowledge by working on at least two departmental productions.

DANCE MINOR

The Dance program at Washington College trains dancers in the areas of performance, choreography, and teaching, through both curricular and co-curricular experiences. We consider these three domains of creative practice as mutually dependent and interactive aspects of the dance field. Also fundamental to the training of the dancer is the cultivation of artistry, technique, and the ability to articulate this knowledge through movement and writing. The Dance minor program welcomes students from across campus who are interested in incorporating embodied learning within their college experience as a complement to their major field of study.
WHY THEATRE & DANCE AT WASHINGTON COLLEGE?

1. Production Opportunities
Unlike most other institutions, our production season is built around students: We routinely stage 4–8 student-produced shows per academic year, along with 2 faculty-directed theatre pieces and a full-length dance concert. All productions are open to all students (majors and non-majors).

2. Real-World Skills
Theatre and dance students develop essential personal and professional skills, including problem solving, written and verbal communication, creativity, entrepreneurialism, flexibility, organization, and teamwork. These exact attributes were named in 2018 by the National Association of Colleges and Employers as some of the most crucial criteria for hiring and career readiness.

3. Interdisciplinary Learning
The Department of Theatre & Dance strongly encourages interdisciplinarity, both inside and outside the classroom. We frequently offer courses cross-listed with other departments, invite outside faculty and staff members to consult on our productions, and encourage our students to integrate their academic and creative work, including their Senior Capstone Experiences. The department also maintains partnerships within Theatre & Dance, as well as with Business Management, Music, Art + Art History, Communication & Media Studies, The Rose O’Neill Literary House, and the Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience. Working collaboratively with artistic and academic disciplines across campus allows Theatre & Dance students to forge interdisciplinary connections and build curricular pathways as unique as themselves.

4. Arts Management & Entrepreneurship
The interdisciplinary Arts Management & Entrepreneurship program prepares students for careers in the arts by exposing them to this industry’s breadth of professional opportunities, and by arming them with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to succeed as organizational leaders and creative entrepreneurs. The program is highly flexible, with pathways designed to support future artists, producers, presenters, curators, editors, marketers, fundraisers, managers, and entrepreneurs. In addition to taking courses in artistic practice, cultural administration, financial management, and marketing, Arts Management & Entrepreneurship minors must apply their skills and build professional connections through an internship, conducted either locally (through a partnership with the Kent County Arts Council) or at an institution of the student’s choosing.

5. Scholarship & Grant Opportunities
The Department of Theatre & Dance strongly supports the development of our most ambitious and creative students through merit-based scholarships and grants. Prospective students may receive up to $6,000 over four years through the Constance Stuart Larrabee Scholarship for the Arts, and each year the department awards two additional scholarships to Theatre & Dance students: the Timothy Maloney Scholarship (to a rising junior) and the Mary Martin Prize (to a rising senior). Through the Mary Martin Student Grant Program, the department also offers individual grants of up to $1,500 for students to pursue independent learning experiences, such as intensive training programs, professional conferences, internships, and individual or collaborative creative research projects.

Abbey Wark ’18

Theatre major. English and creative writing minors
Current Job: Marketing Content Manager, Washington College

“Prior to Washington College I had very little theater experience. Everyone welcomed me with open arms and gave me a home where I not only found my passion, but gained the confidence that my voice has value.”

During her time at Washington College Abbey acted in and designed on student productions, served as a teacher’s assistant for Acting I, and stage managed both student and faculty productions. For her Senior Capstone Experience Abbey directed and produced Almost, Maine by John Cariani. Abbey graduated with honors and was the 2018 recipient of the Stewart Theater Award.

“One of the biggest takeaways from my liberal arts education is that to be a successful human, especially in the arts, it is important to thoroughly know your area of study as well as the events happening in the world around you,” she reflects.

Outside of the Theatre Department Abbey was a Presidential Fellow, Peer Mentor Leader, and on the executive council for her sorority Zeta Tau Alpha. Before returning home to work at WC, she completed a magical internship with Walt Disney World Parks and Resorts.