THEATRE / DANCE
What can I do with this degree?

Theatre and Dance (THAD) Majors integrate the study of theory and history of performance. Kinesthetic, cognitive, and creative understanding skills are developed. (Winona State University, 2010)

This program offers opportunity to develop as an actor, director, producer, designer, technician, or playwright in a professional manner. (DISCOVER, n.d.)

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (2011) reports that hiring for the Class of 2011 (all majors) nationally is up 5.9% with an average salary offer of $50,462. Hiring for the Midwest region is reported by The Collegiate Employment Research Institute (2010) as also increasing by 10% for Bachelor graduates with an average salary of $36,866, which is down from the past two years. The Midwest Colleges and Employers Association (2010) reports regional (12 state Midwest region) hiring is increasing by 9% with an average starting salary of $35,453 for all Bachelor degree recipients. The Midwest Colleges and Employers Association (2010) also reports all Liberal Arts majors regionally are expected to earn an average salary of $34,242 while The Collegiate Employment Research Institute (2010) reports Liberal Arts majors are expected to earn an average starting salary of $35,445. Visual and performing arts are expected to average an offering salary of $32,371 (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2011). Hiring in the Entertainment and Arts sector has increased by 5% (The Collegiate Employment Research Institute, 2010).

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<tr>
<th>AREAS</th>
<th>EMPLOYERS</th>
<th>PREPARATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERFORMING</strong></td>
<td>• Community theaters&lt;br&gt; • Regional theaters&lt;br&gt; • Commercial theaters&lt;br&gt; • Summer stock theaters&lt;br&gt; • Dinner theaters&lt;br&gt; • Children's theaters&lt;br&gt; • University theater groups&lt;br&gt; • Touring companies&lt;br&gt; • Industrial shows&lt;br&gt; • Show groups&lt;br&gt; • Amusement and theme parks&lt;br&gt; • Television/film studios&lt;br&gt; • Radio stations</td>
<td>• Participate in acting workshops, courses, and seminars to get advice and experience and to make contacts with others in the field.&lt;br&gt; • Join unions or actors' guilds to stay abreast of opportunities and developments in the field.&lt;br&gt; • Get as much acting experience as possible. Perform in school productions, Community Theater, summer stock, etc. to hone acting skills.&lt;br&gt; • Prepare a professional resume that lists your acting experience. Have your resume attached to or printed on the reverse side of an 8&quot; x 10&quot; photograph of yourself.&lt;br&gt; • Be prepared to make the rounds. Distribute your resume to numerous agencies and offices. Follow up with several personal visits.&lt;br&gt; • Be aware that more opportunities exist in large cities such as New York and Los Angeles.&lt;br&gt; <strong>Learn about the entertainment industry as a whole:</strong>&lt;br&gt; • Take courses on entertainment law, business, management, etc.&lt;br&gt; • An extensive network of contacts is essential. Get to know people working in your field and related areas.</td>
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<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>• Public and private schools&lt;br&gt; • Colleges and universities&lt;br&gt; • Performing arts centers</td>
<td>• Obtain certification for the state in which you wish to teach. Obtain dual certification for more teaching opportunities.&lt;br&gt; • Get experience in various areas of theater, as well as working with young people.&lt;br&gt; • Obtain a graduate degree to teach on the college level. Develop one or two areas of expertise within theater arts.</td>
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# THEATRE / DANCE

**What can I do with this degree?**

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<th>AREAS</th>
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| **DIRECTING** | ● Theaters  
● Television/film studios | ❖ Participate in the Director's Guild Training Program.  
❖ Develop leadership skills through participation in campus and community organizations.  
❖ Experience with fund-raising is important. Volunteer to do this with local theaters and arts councils.  
❖ Learn what types of permits and insurance are needed to film or perform in certain areas.  
❖ Volunteer with directors in local theaters to become familiar with the environment. Serving as an assistant is a great way to get started in this area.  
❖ Gain directing experience by participating in college productions. |
| **BEHIND THE SCENES** | ● Community theaters  
● Regional theaters  
● Commercial theaters  
● Summer stock theaters  
● Dinner theaters  
● Children's theaters  
● University theater groups  
● Touring companies  
● Industrial shows  
● Show groups  
● Amusement and theme parks  
● Television/film studios  
● Radio stations | ❖ Learn to work well in a team.  
❖ Develop a sense of artistry and creativity.  
❖ Become involved in the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). This organization can give you information about becoming an apprentice as well as help you make valuable contacts.  
❖ Get experience. Offer your services to school and local theaters.  
❖ Read industry magazines and books to learn about your area.  
❖ For sound design: Become familiar with computer technology as digital sound effects and electronic music replace traditional means of sound design.  
❖ For costume design: Supplement your program with courses in art history and fashion design.  
❖ Learn about different eras in history in order to recreate on stage. A basic knowledge of history and architecture is helpful. |
| **BUSINESS** | ● Theaters  
● Arts councils  
● Television/film studios | ❖ Secretarial/clerical positions in theaters and studios are often stepping-stones to other positions and a good way to make contacts.  
❖ Take business courses to supplement your program.  
❖ Obtain a working knowledge of computers.  
❖ Gain a thorough understanding of theater.  
❖ Develop skills in leadership, negotiation, budgeting, and fundraising. |

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Winona State University, Career Services, Winona, MN 55987  
Phone: 507-457-5340  
Web: [www.winona.edu/career](http://www.winona.edu/career)  
Email: [career@winona.edu](mailto:career@winona.edu)
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<td>WRITING</td>
<td>Theaters</td>
<td>✷ Review plays, movies, and TV shows for school or local newspaper.</td>
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<td>Television/film studios</td>
<td>✷ Theatrical press agents publicize and promote theatrical productions. They</td>
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<td>Television stations</td>
<td>write press releases, arrange press conferences, and other media events.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>✷ Take courses in related areas such as public relations, advertising, and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>business.</td>
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<td>Freelance</td>
<td>✷ Reporters spend time on the set absorbing everything. They interview</td>
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<td>actors as well as craftspeople.</td>
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<td>✷ Get as much writing experience as possible: Write for the college</td>
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<td>newspaper, enter playwrighting contests, etc.</td>
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<td>✷ See many different productions and shows. Read a variety of scripts to see</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>how scripts are developed.</td>
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<td>✷ Researchers gather information for movie writers.</td>
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<td>✷ They may also track down photographs or historical documents to make the</td>
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<td>film more authentic.</td>
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<td>Theaters</td>
<td>❖ Complete an internship or an apprenticeship with a local theater. Participate in summer stock.</td>
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<td>❖ Network: Talk with people working in the field to find out about jobs and opportunities.</td>
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<td>❖ Read newspapers and periodicals related to the theater to keep up with new developments. Read the &quot;trades&quot;—magazines and newspapers that report events in the entertainment industry.</td>
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<td>Magazines</td>
<td>❖ Read the &quot;Theater&quot; section of daily newspapers to find out about upcoming productions.</td>
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<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>❖ Get your foot in the door and get involved with productions in any way you can. Be prepared to do various tasks assigned by stage managers or producers.</td>
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<td>Freelance</td>
<td>❖ Join professional groups as an opportunity to make contacts.</td>
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<td>❖ Volunteer with fundraising efforts for the arts.</td>
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<td>❖ Be aware of scams. Check out the legitimacy of agencies and companies before paying any fees.</td>
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<td>❖ Be prepared to move to a metropolitan area where more opportunities exist.</td>
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<td>❖ A career in the arts takes patience, dedication, and luck!</td>
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<td>❖ Have a back-up plan. Be aware that the unemployment rate for actors hovers around 85%. Develop skills that qualify you for other jobs while you wait for opportunities in acting. Consider pairing theater with another career interest or major to open up more job opportunities.</td>
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<td>❖ Theater helps students develop verbal and written communication, public speaking, and teamwork skills. These transferable skills are valued by many types of employers.</td>
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<td>❖ There are many ways to be involved in the theater while pursuing other career options.</td>
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## STRATEGIES

- Complete an internship or an apprenticeship with a local theater. Participate in summer stock.
- Network: Talk with people working in the field to find out about jobs and opportunities.
- Read newspapers and periodicals related to the theater to keep up with new developments. Read the "trades"—magazines and newspapers that report events in the entertainment industry.
- Read the "Theater" section of daily newspapers to find out about upcoming productions.
- Get your foot in the door and get involved with productions in any way you can. Be prepared to do various tasks assigned by stage managers or producers.
- Join professional groups as an opportunity to make contacts.
- Volunteer with fundraising efforts for the arts.
- Be aware of scams. Check out the legitimacy of agencies and companies before paying any fees.
- Be prepared to move to a metropolitan area where more opportunities exist.
- A career in the arts takes patience, dedication, and luck!
- Have a back-up plan. Be aware that the unemployment rate for actors hovers around 85%. Develop skills that qualify you for other jobs while you wait for opportunities in acting. Consider pairing theater with another career interest or major to open up more job opportunities.
- Theater helps students develop verbal and written communication, public speaking, and teamwork skills. These transferable skills are valued by many types of employers.
- There are many ways to be involved in the theater while pursuing other career options.

## LINKS

- The Art and Science of Theater
- Theatre Communications Group
- American Association of Community Theatre
- Job Listings and Internships for Entertainment Careers
- Showbiz Jobs.com
- Backstage Jobs
- Playbill
- PropPeople
- Artslynx
- Stage Managers Association
- Educational Theatre Association
- Actors, Producers, and Directors from the Occupational Outlook Handbook

Prepared by the Career Planning staff of Career Services at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. (2003)
The following is a representative sample of types of job positions relating to theatre and dance (not all possible options are listed):

**Teacher (Art/Music/Drama/Speech)**
These teachers are growing annually at a rapid rate of 3.2% (Economic Research Institute, 2010). Nationally there are 162,300 teachers averaging an annual salary of $50,000 (United States Department of Labor, 2009). In Minnesota there are 46,800 positions averaging an annual salary of $52,500. Starting annual salaries average $38,500 nationally and average $40,500 in Minnesota. A Bachelor’s degree is required for licensure (DISCOVER, n.d.).

**Critic (Book/Theater)**
This field is growing annually at a moderate rate of 1.5% (Economic Research Institute, 2010). There are 43,400 Critics in the nation including 1,740 in Minnesota (United States Department of Labor, 2009). Annually they average a salary of $56,000 nationally and average $59,000 in Minnesota. Starting salaries average $39,500 nationally and average $41,500 in Minnesota. Most employers prefer those with Bachelor’s degrees (DISCOVER, n.d.).

**Director (Social)**
Directors are expected to grow annually at a moderate of 1.4% (Economic Research Institute, 2010). Nationally there are 655,400 positions averaging an annual salary of $52,000 (United States Department of Labor, 2009). In Minnesota there are 18,890 positions that average an annual salary of $55,000. Starting salaries average $31,500 nationally and average $33,500 in Minnesota. A Bachelor’s degree is required (DISCOVER, n.d.).

**Dramatists (Playwright)**
This career is growing annually at a moderate rate of 1.5% (Economic Research Institute, 2010). There are 43,400 employed positions in the nation including 1,740 in Minnesota (United States Department of Labor, 2009). The annual salary averages $58,500 nationally and averages $61,500 in Minnesota. Starting annual salaries average $44,500 nationally and average $47,000 in Minnesota. There is no educational requirement however, college courses are beneficial (DISCOVER, n.d.).

**Set Designer**
This occupation is expected to grow annually at a moderate rate of 1.7% (Economic Research Institute, 2010). Nationwide there are 7,900 positions averaging an annual salary of $49,500 (United States Department of Labor, 2009). In Minnesota there are 90 positions averaging an annual salary of $52,000. Starting salaries average $39,500 nationally and average $41,500 in Minnesota. A Bachelor’s degree is required with some positions holding Master’s degrees (DISCOVER, n.d.).

**Actor**
Actors as a career are growing annually at a moderate rate of 1.3% (Economic Research Institute, 2010). Nationally there are 39,900 positions with 640 positions in Minnesota (United States Department of Labor, 2009). The annual salary averages $49,500 nationwide and averages $52,000 for Minnesota. There is no educational requirement although some hold Master’s degrees and some purse a Master of Fine Arts degree (DISCOVER, n.d.).

For additional information please visit the websites below:

- Career One Stop: [http://www.careeronestop.org/](http://www.careeronestop.org/)
- O*Net Online: [http://www.onetonline.org/](http://www.onetonline.org/)
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