The Department of Theatre at Illinois College is dedicated to teaching students to develop skills they need to enter the professional theatre and the 21st-century workforce at large: creative problem-solving, leadership, collaboration, critical thinking, and integrity. In addition to honing students’ reading, writing, and analytical skills as part of a liberal arts institution, the department also encourages students to develop their craft through a program of coursework and guided experience in acting, playwriting, directing, management, design, and the use of technologies most common in theatre. Practical, hands-on experience in TheatreWorks productions allows students to put their knowledge into practice and to showcase their work for the larger community.

The Department offers both a major and a minor. The major requires the completion of 37 semester hours of coursework (eight 4-credit courses, two 2-credit courses, and one 1-credit course); 5 productions (TH 150/151); and presentation of a Senior Showcase and Portfolio (TH 495):

- TH 222
- TH 231
- EN 321 or 322 or 339 (study of dramatic literature)
- TH 325
- TH 361 or TH 362 or TH 363 or approved substitute
- TH 371 (2 credits)
- TH 372 (2 credits)
- TH 373
- TH 485
- TH 495
- 8 hours of TH or approved electives at the 300-level or above
- 5 productions

Also subsequent to declaration of the major, at least 1 hour of theatre practice credit must be in Production (backstage), and at least 1 hour must be in Performance (onstage). Four of the five productions required for completion of the major and 2 of the 3 productions required for completion of the minor must be faculty-directed.

All courses required for the major must be completed with a grade of ‘C’ (2.0) or better.

The minor consists of 16 hours of coursework (4 courses) and 3 productions (TH 150/151):

- TH 205 or TH 222 or TH 231 (2 courses),
- 8 hours of electives (2-3 courses) at the 300-level or above
- 3 productions

TH 150 Theatre Practice (0 - 3) for faculty-directed work

A theatre practicum consists of significant participation in some facet of an Illinois College TheatreWorks production or an outside production, approved by the department chair.

- 1.5 credit hours awarded for backstage crew, or light and sound board operators
- 2.5 credit hours awarded for assistant stage managers
- 3 credit hours awarded for stage managers
- 2-3 credit hours awarded for actors
TH 151 Theatre Practice (0 - 1.5) for student-directed one-acts/coursework
- .5 credit hour awarded for actors, backstage crew or light and sound board operators
- 1-1.5 credit hours awarded for actors
- 1.5 credit hours awarded for stage managers

For TH 150 and TH 151, each credit hour is awarded for 30 hours of work, so credits earned vary depending on the student's role and the production. Majors may count 12 theatre practice credit hours toward graduation and non-majors may count 8. Participation beyond these limits is registered at 0 credit hours.

TH 205 Introduction to Theatre (4)
Introduction to the history and practice of the arts of the stage, with special emphasis on the aesthetic and practical dimensions of stage production, including projects in acting, directing, playwriting, and scenic design. Note: This is not primarily an acting class. See TH 222. Offered most semesters.

TH 222 Acting (4)
An introductory workshop experience for actors, designed to foster a basic competence in the uses of the voice, body, and imagination for dramatic performance. Offered most semesters.

TH 231 Stagecrafts (4)
Students will acquire a hands-on knowledge of the methods, principles, and conventions of scenic production by way of both lab and lecture periods. As this is a prerequisite for advanced classes in technical theatre, basic skills and a working vocabulary in scenery and property construction, scene painting, lighting, and sound will be stressed. Offered every semester.

TH 325 Theatre Through the Ages (1)
This team-taught course covers the breadth of historical theatrical activity not covered in the other more in-depth cultural studies courses. Students will read about one historical era and read one play each week. Offered alternate years.

TH 351 Intermediate Acting (4)
A studio class utilizing the specific methodology of theorist Sanford Meisner. Additionally, this course will focus on the mastery of audition technique relevant to prepare students for professional competition. Offered once every three years. Prerequisite: TH 222 or consent of the instructor.

TH 352 Theatre on the Edge (4)
A studio class exploring various non-realistic approaches to theatre-making, including the body as object, masks, commedia dell’arte, physical comedy, soundscapes, and translations of film, art, and music into theatrical performance. Offered once every three years.

TH 353 Advanced Acting (4)
A studio class focusing on physical characterizations, especially for monologues; period style movement; voice work; understanding and speaking classical texts; and stage combat, both unarmed and single rapier. Offered once every three years. Prerequisite: TH 222 or consent of the instructor.

TH 361 Elements of Design (4)
This course will immerse students in a study of all aspects of theatre design, from general design theory to practical execution of designs in the theatre, with a focus on scenic design. Prerequisite: TH 231. Offered alternate years.
TH 362  Light and Sound (4)
In this course students will examine the visual and aural world around us and how that is imitated and manipulated in theatrical lighting and sound. Students will acquire a thorough understanding of lighting and sound technology through a study of history, theory, and hands-on experience. Prerequisite: TH 231. Offered alternate years.

TH 363  Stage Management and Theatre Operations (4)
This course combines stage management and production management, exploring the relationship between the artistry and execution of theatre from conception to final performance. Topics include stage management, production management, delegation, scheduling, professional unions, time and personnel management, touring, publicity/marketing, box office, and house management. Students will be placed in a problem-solving environment so they can acquire knowledge and skills necessary for becoming a leader in a theatre organization. Prerequisite: TH 231. Offered alternate years.

TH 371  Theatre in Society (2)
An in-depth study of two major periods in the history of the theatre, Classical Greece and 19th-Century America, with particular attention to historiographical concerns and culminating in the production of a piece of original research. Offered alternate years.

TH 372  Drama and Performance Studies (2)
A historical study of critics’ theories on playwriting and performance, especially concerning how plays and their productions should impact the audience. The course culminates in an exploration of contemporary performance art. Offered alternate years.

TH 373  Shakespeare’s Theatre (4)
A study of the historical, economic, political, social, religious, and artistic dimensions of the theatre in England beginning with the medieval period but focusing on the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Special attention will be paid to the practices of the companies and audiences of the period’s most significant playwrights. Offered alternate years.

TH 461, 462  Independent Study in Theatre (1 - 4)
Advanced tutorial on an appropriate topic. Prerequisite: consent of the instructor.

TH 463, 464  Internship in Theatre (1 - 6)
Internship with a theatre company or company utilizing theatre, usually during the summer. Areas of emphasis include acting, playwriting, stage management, lighting and sound, and box office/house management.

TH 465, 466  Independent Research in Theatre (1 - 4)
When a faculty-directed production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, an outside evaluator chooses two students to participate in the regional Irene Ryan Scholarship Audition. In conjunction with their director, they research and prepare scenes to present at the festival.

TH 480  Honors Project (4)
Completed in either the junior or senior year, this course represents a milestone in the student’s development and is intended to prepare them for professional work in the field. Typically this will be a significant role or design for a faculty-directed show. For students not strictly in the acting or tech tracks, alternative possibilities will be considered, such as writing and/or directing a play, stage managing a challenging faculty-directed show, or working as the department’s business manager in an arts administration capacity.
TH 485  Senior Capstone: Theatre Directing (4)
This course examines the role of the director and how he or she translates technique and theory into the world of the text with a focus on exploration and collaboration with actors and designers. Additionally, we will practice the organizational and communication skills required to helm a production. The final outcome of the course for each student will be a fully realized production of a one-act play in the ICEBOX. Prerequisites: TH 222, Junior standing, and consent of the instructor. Offered fall semesters.

TH 495  Showcase and Portfolio (0-1)
In the semester prior to graduation, students will prepare a 20 to 30 minute Senior Showcase and an electronic portfolio of writing demonstrating achievement of learning outcomes.