

Drama and Dance*

Department Location

Fine Arts Building, Room 130

Special Entry Requirements

None

Placement Examinations

None

Goals

The Department of Drama and Dance, unique among historically black colleges and universities, encompasses two theatrical disciplines and offers a rigorous curricular and co-curricular program in theatre arts with an emphasis on gender explorations in African diasporan performance. We provide students with conservatory-level training as they pursue a liberal arts education.*

The Department's instructional emphasis is performance—the creation and presentation of theatrical experiences in drama and dance—and includes courses in acting and dance technique, directing, production, playwriting and choreography. Other courses give students contexts within which to understand and present current theatrical practices. Our primary goal is to prepare students for graduate study and professional work as theatre arts performers and creators. We seek to make Spelman College the undergraduate first choice of Black students interested in careers in the theatre.

Objectives

1. Articulate-orally and in written form-historical, literary, cultural and theoretical knowledge of drama and dance.
2. Analyze and evaluate scholarship and performance in drama and dance
3. Demonstrate well-rounded developments in drama and dance by exhibiting high-level critical thinking and performance skills, and uniquely expressed creativity
4. Utilize effectively media/technology in performances and presentations
5. Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively with others to create thoughtful, well-executed works.
6. Create original works or an interpretation based on research, analysis and a clear, creative vision.
7. Demonstrate the skills necessary for advanced academic study or professional careers in drama, dance or related fields.

* Major program requirements are under review. See Department or Spelman College web page for current requirements.

In August 2016, the Department of Drama and Dance was separated into two departments. The Curriculum Committee approved (fall 2016) a name change for the Department of Drama to the Department of Theater and Performance. Major program requirements are under review. See the Department web page on the Spelman College website for current requirements.

Requirements for the new Dance major are pending approval of the Curriculum Committee.

General Core Requirements

Fine Arts

The following courses fulfill the Fine Arts division requirement for non-majors:

- DAN 105 Dance Appreciation
- DAN 209 Contemplative Practices and the Arts
- DAN 222 Black Dance and Pop Culture
- DAN 241 Black Presence in American Dance
- DAN 242 Twentieth Century Concert Dance
- DRA 101 Theatre Insight for Non-Majors
- DRA102A Acting for Non-Majors
- DRA 121 Introduction to Technical Theatre and Design
- DRA 210 Studies of Women in Theatre and Drama
- DRA 300 Contemporary Drama

International/Women's Studies Requirement

Courses that satisfy the International/Women's Studies requirement are listed in the Course Sequence Booklet on the Spelman Web page.

Major Requirements

The drama major consists of 48 semester credits. The major is divided into four areas: the Core; Literature, History and Criticism; Performance; and Technical Theatre/Management. Students majoring in drama are required to take all of the courses offered in the core (36 credit hours) and one elective from each of the other three areas (12 credit hours).

Drama Major Core (36)

- DRA 101 Theatre Insight
- DRA 102 Principles of Acting
- DRA 121 Introduction to Technical Theatre and Design
- DRA 206 History of Theatre I
- DRA 207 History of Theatre II
- DRA 302 Theatre Management
- DRA 306 Monologue and Scene Study
- DRA 407 Script Analysis
- DRA 408 Play Directing

The drama major's major electives must be drama, design, or management courses in areas A, B and C.

The drama major with a concentration in dance consists of 48 semester credits. As with the drama major, students take classes in the drama major core (36 credit hours) and one elective from each of the other three areas (12 credit hours).

Drama Major with Concentration in Dance Core (36)

- DAN 105 Dance Appreciation
- DRA 102 Principles of Acting
- DRA 121 Intro to Tech Theatre and Design
- DRA 206 History of Theatre I
- DRA 207 History of Theatre II
- DRA 302 Theatre Management
- DAN 201 Choreography I
- DAN 301 Choreography II
- DAN XXX 4 credit hours of Dance Technique classes (at least 2 at the intermediate level)

The dance concentrator's major electives must be dance, design, or management courses in areas A, B, and C.

Other Requirements

Departmental Productions

All majors are expected to participate fully in the life of the department by either performing in or doing back-stage work in at least four productions.

Auditions

The audition process provides invaluable learning opportunities. Therefore, students are required to attend general auditions at the beginning of each academic year and to audition for each departmental production to gain auditioning experience.

Internships

Students are encouraged to participate in at least one internship during their time in the department. While internships will earn students credit toward graduation, they will not count as area A, B, or C elective credit.

Departmental Honors

To be eligible for departmental honors, a student must

1. have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average
2. have a 3.3 departmental grade point average
3. have no initial course grade in the major below "B"
4. pass the department's junior exam with a grade of "B" or better
5. participate in at least six departmental productions

Drama Minor Requirements

The Drama Minor consists of 20 semester credits. Required courses are

- DRA 101 Theatre Insight
- DRA 102 Principles of Acting
- DRA 121 Introduction to Technical Theatre and Design
- DRA 206 History of Theatre I
- DRA 207 History of Theatre II

Dance Minor Requirements

The Dance Minor consists of 20 semester credits. Required courses are

- DAN 105 Dance Appreciation
- DRA 121 Introduction to Technical Theatre and Design
- DAN 201 Choreography I
- DAN XXX I Dance History Course
- 4 hours of dance technique (at least 2 at the intermediate level)

Note: Students minoring in drama or dance are expected to participate fully in department productions.

General Electives

The Department of Drama and Dance offers the following courses for the college community as general electives.

- DRA 101A Theatre Insight for Non-Majors
- DRA 102A Acting for Non-majors
- DAN XXX All dance technique classes

Drama Course Descriptions

DRA 100 – INTRODUCTION TO SPEECH (4)

This course is designed to enhance the student's ability to communicate by developing the ability to share thoughts, ideas, and attitudes effectively and fluently in a variety of speaking situations-public, interpersonal, group, business, and professional.

DRA 101 – THEATRE INSIGHT (4)

A preliminary course acquaints the student with the various theories, principles, arts and activities that make up the theatre. Aspects of dramatic structure, acting, directing, theatre design, play production and theatre history will be explored. Required of all drama majors and minors. Offered every semester.

DRA 102 – PRINCIPLES OF ACTING (4)

This introductory course is designed to acquaint students with various movement and acting exercises and techniques that are necessary in developing the total instrument of the actor. This course prepares the student for further performance study. Required of all drama majors and minors. Prerequisite: DRA 101. Offered every semester.

DRA 102A INTRODUCTION TO THE ART OF ACTING/ ACTING FOR NON-MAJORS (4)

In this course, student with little or no acting experience will be introduced to relaxation techniques, improvisation and scene work, which will give them the basic principles of acting a rich performing arts experience. This course does not count towards the drama major but may fulfill the fine arts core requirement.

DRA 121 – INTRODUCTION TO TECHNICAL THEATRE AND DESIGN (4)

This course provides students with foundational information and experiences related to the stage, its equipment, and concepts of production and design. Required of all drama majors and minors. Prerequisite: DRA 101. Offered every semester.

DRA 200 – PRODUCTION LABORATORY (2)

This course is designed to enhance the student's theatrical knowledge by providing hands-on experience in several areas of theatre production. Required: Laboratory hours. Does not satisfy area C requirements. Offered every semester.

DRA 203 – SURVEY OF WORLD DRAMA (4)

This course provides an overview of theatre history through the study of plays from a broad range of cultures. (Area A)

DRA 206 – THEATRE HISTORY I (4)

This comprehensive course combines the dramatic literature criticism and history of a given period with the actual theatrical practices and productions of that period. Attention is paid to all of the active participants who create theatre: actors, playwrights, dramaturgs, designers, and public. Required of all drama majors and minors. Prerequisite: DRA 101. Offered each fall.

DRA 207 – THEATRE HISTORY II (4)

This course is a continuation of Theatre History I. Prerequisite: DRA 101, 206. Required of all drama majors and minors. Offered each spring.

DRA 208 – BREATH, VOICE AND MOVEMENT (4)

This course is an introduction to vocal technique and movement that promotes greater sensory perception of the whole body. Students will explore their own creativity, investigate various processes involved with improvisation and basic vocal technique, develop an authentic movement vocabulary, and experience fundamental performance technique. Prerequisite: DRA 101 and 102, or DAN 105, or permission of the instructor. (Area B)

DRA 210 – STUDIES OF WOMEN IN THEATRE AND DRAMA (4)

This course focuses on the contributions of women from the Benedictine Nun, Hrosvitha to the contemporary African American playwrights. The student will be introduced to the female playwrights, managers, actresses, directors, producers, and critics of the past and present. Female approaches to societal problems and their solutions as reflected in drama by and about women will be examined in relation to man's philosophical, political, sociological, and psychological impact. (Area A)

DRA 221 – STAGECRAFT (4)

This course to provide practical experience in the various technical skills required in the construction of scenery, costumes, and properties, and

the operation of lighting and sound equipment for theatrical productions. Required: A minimum of four laboratory hours each week. Prerequisite: DRA 121. (Area C)

DRA 300 – CONTEMPORARY DRAMA (4)

This course is a study of the principal playwrights, movements, and trends in European and American drama to the present. Prerequisite: DRA 101, 206 and 207 or permission of the instructor. (Area A)

DRA 302 – THEATRE MANAGEMENT (4)

This course examines and applies management theories in the development of theatres and performing arts centers. It emphasizes financial planning, strategic planning, and managing human resources. Required of all drama majors. (Area C)

DRA 306 – MONOLOGUE AND SCENE STUDY (4)

In this second level acting class, students will learn advanced techniques and approaches to selecting and mastering monologue and scene work. Prerequisite: DRA 101 and 102. Required of all drama majors. Offered every fall. (Area B)

DRA 309 – PLAYWRITING (4)

This course explores the fundamental techniques and resources of playwriting. Students are required to write a play under the supervision of the instructor. (Area B)

DRA 310 – STYLES OF ACTING (4)

This course is an introduction to the movement, mannerisms, gestures, and speech of various periods through directing and acting scenes from representative periods of drama. Prerequisite: DRA 101, 102 and 306. Offered each spring. (Area B)

DRA 311 – ADVANCED PLAYWRITING (4)

This course is a continuation of DRA 309 with emphasis on the full-length play. Prerequisite: DRA 309 or consent of the instructor. (Area B)

DRA 326 – LIGHTING DESIGN (4)

This course covers basic principles of electrical wiring and stage illumination as they are used in the theatre and teaches the rendering of lighting designs, light plots, and light color theory. Required: Laboratory practicum on the mainstage production. Prerequisite: DRA 121. Offered as needed. (Area C)

DRA 327 – COSTUME DESIGN (4)

This course is a study of historical styles of dress as applied to costuming for the theatre. Instruction in techniques of planning, rendering, and constructing costumes. Required: Laboratory hours. Prerequisite: DRA 121. Offered as needed. (Area C)

DRA 328 – SCENE DESIGN (4)

A comprehensive course in the art and craft of scenic design, this course emphasizes the use of design principles of line, mass, and color and their application to the stage. The student is required to master simple drafting techniques and to design at least one complete stage setting, including floor plan, construction drawings, and color rendering or scale model. The final project consists of the design of a complete play approved by the instructor. Required: Laboratory hours. Prerequisite: DRA 121 and 221. Offered as needed. (Area C)

DRA 329 – STAGE MANAGEMENT (4)

This course exposes the learner to the basic duties and responsibilities of a production stage manager. Students will complete course readings and will actively participate in the productions of the department by serving as stage managers, assistant stage managers, and crew chiefs. Prerequisite: DRA 101 and 121. (Area C)

DRA 407 – SCRIPT ANALYSIS (4)

This course is study of the intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic qualities of the script (emotional tonality, style, kind of play, characterizations, etc.) preparatory to its actual production. Production book required. Prerequisite: DRA 101, 102, 206 and 207. Required of all non-dance drama majors. Offered each fall.

DRA 408 – PLAY DIRECTING (4)

The director's approach to the play is developed through the use of basic principles, movement, pantomime, composition, picturizations and rhythm. Each student is required to direct a one-act play. Prerequisite: DRA 101, 102, 206, 207 and 407. Required of all non-dance drama majors. Offered every spring. (Area C)

DRA 409 – SEMINAR IN AFRICAN AMERICAN THEATRE AND DRAMA (4)

This course is a history of the theatre and drama of African Americans and the analysis of that theatre within the framework of African American values. Prerequisite: DRA 101, 206, and 207. (Area A)

DRA 415 – SHAKESPEARE IN PERFORMANCE (4)

This advanced level course examines Shakespeare's plays through performance. Students will read and analyze five of Shakespeare's classic works and will be challenged to prepare, memorize, and perform scenes from each of them. The course will begin with teaching techniques to help students perform Shakespeare's texts and will culminate in true Elizabethan tradition, with an outdoor viewing of the students' very best work. Prerequisite: DRA 101, 102, 306 and 310. (Area B)

DRA 420 – DESIGN PORTFOLIO (2)

Intensive individual work in a major area of design--lighting, scenery, or costumes. Projects culminate in a portfolio representative of the student's work. Prerequisite: DRA 121. Also DRA 221, 326, 327 and 328 or permission of the instructor.

DRA 421 – PROBLEMS IN PERFORMANCE (4)

This course provides intensive individual work or special course offering in an area of performance studies.

Dance Course Descriptions: Studio/Technique

DAN 105 – DANCE APPRECIATION (4)

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the discipline of dance as an art form and as a life experience, encouraging growth and success within their undergraduate career. This course is designed to familiarize students with the many facets of dance, including dance history, music appreciation, improvisation and choreography. Required for all dance concentrators and dance minors. Offered every semester.

DAN 111, 112 – BEGINNING BALLET (1,1)

This course is introduction to ballet for the beginning student or those at the elementary level. It covers ballet technique, style, vocabulary and background information.

DAN 121 – AFRICAN DANCE FORMS (1)

This course is an introduction and practice of movements from various African (usually West African) countries.

DAN 131, 132 – BEGINNING MODERN DANCE (1,1)

This course is an introduction to modern dance, including basic concepts of time, space, and dynamics, and the development of basic movement skills and improvisations.

DAN 161 – TAP DANCE I (1)

This course is an introduction to tap dance-its vocabulary, fundamental steps, style, and historical traditions.

DAN 162 – TAP DANCE II (1)

This course continues development of tap skills, style, and performance of routines. Choreography included.

DAN 171 – IMPROVISATION (1)

This course is an investigation of abstraction and chance in the creation of new and original dance patterns that lead to composition. It includes practice of spontaneity in the use of the elements of dance.

DAN 200 – DANCE PERFORMANCE (1)

This course is designed for students who have dance skills beyond the elementary level of accomplishment in ballet, modern or jazz and who wish to continue their development through participation with the Spelman Dance Theatre. Concentration will be on performance techniques, clean execution, and the high disciplinary standards expected of professional performers. This course may be taken with credit for three years. Admission to course by audition.

DAN 209 – CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES AND THE ARTS (4)

This course introduces students to the world of contemplative practices (such as meditation and journaling), to artists who create through inward-focused processes, and to the art they produce. Both practical, hands-on learning experiences and analytic learning experiences will enable students to experiment with their own creativity as they explore artistic processes and learn about and experience contemplative practices. This course fulfills the fine arts core requirement.

DAN 213, 214 – BEGINNER INTERMEDIATE BALLET (1,1)

This course continues the progressive development of ballet technique, style, and vocabulary.

DAN 215, 216 – INTERMEDIATE BALLET (1,1)

This course continues training in ballet technical skills.

DAN 233, 234 – BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE MODERN DANCE (1,1)

This course continues development of movement and improvisation skills. Introduction to specific modern techniques and styles such as those of Graham, Horton or Limon.

DAN 235, 236 – INTERMEDIATE MODERN DANCE (1,1)

This course continues training in modern technique skills.

DAN 251 – JAZZ DANCE I (1)

This course is an introductory practice of jazz dance technique.

DAN 252 – JAZZ DANCE II (1)

This course is a study of jazz dance at the intermediate or advanced level. Work in choreography.

DAN 313, 314 – ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE BALLET (1,1)

This course continues training in ballet technical skills. Work in ballet repertory.

DAN 333, 334 – ADVANCED INTERMEDIATE MODERN (1,1)

This course continues study and training in modern technical skills. Choreography included.

Dance Course Descriptions: History and Theory**DAN 201 – CHOREOGRAPHY I (4)**

This course gives the student basic knowledge and experience in the elements and craft of choreography. Students will experiment with their own movement invention. It emphasizes creative and critical thinking. Prerequisite: DAN 101 and two dance technique classes. Required of all dance concentrators and dance minors. Offered every fall.

DAN 241 – BLACK PRESENCE IN AMERICAN DANCE (4)

This course is a chronological study of the function and structure of dance, principle events, developments and personalities from late Renaissance to the present. Emphasis on the dance created and performed by African American artists. Offered every other fall. (Area A)

DAN 301 – CHOREOGRAPHY II (4)

This course continues development of the craft of dance composition. More advanced course projects. Prerequisite: DAN 101, 201 and two dance technique classes. Required of all dance concentrators. Offered every spring. (Area B)

DAN 377 – WOMEN IN DANCE: SEXISM, SEXUALITY AND SUBVERSION (4)

This course examines women's history in dance by investigating gender dynamics in the art form-including the relationships between gender and power, and issues of the body, race, and sexuality within the context of the exploration of concert dance history. Prerequisite: Upper level standing. (Area A)

DAN 396 – CHOREOGRAPHING LIVES: WOMEN'S AUTO/BIOGRAPHY AND DANCE (4)

This dance history course employs biography, autobiography and feminist theory to explore selected women choreographers and the ways their work expresses their own and other women's concerns, issues, and challenges in society. Prerequisite: upper level standing. (Area A)