THE PERFECT HOME FOR THEATER

Theater is an essential act—the bringing together of people with different backgrounds, worldviews, and ideas to challenge and influence the way we think, feel, and relate to each other. The diversity of our campus—and our community—makes AIC a natural place for these type of exchanges to take place.

With plays and musicals that address such themes as counterculture (Hair: The Musical), gender inequality in the workplace (Top Girls), the AIDS epidemic (Angels in America), mental illness (Proof), and hate crimes (The Laramie Project), theater at AIC is an integral part of Springfield’s ongoing cultural conversation. This type of engagement is at the heart of the AIC experience; your talent and commitment will help our theater arts program continue to provide our campus with a platform to address the pivotal issues that affect us all.
A MAJOR THAT GOES BEYOND THE STAGE

Under the guidance of program director Frank Borrelli, the mission of AIC’s theater arts major is to support the development of well-rounded, scholarly theater artists who can compete in the marketplace, while also providing the skills needed for a wide range of other career options that will ensure financial, spiritual, artistic, and personal growth.

You will be immersed in courses focusing on performance directing, theory, history, criticism, and technical theater. The program also provides assistance with job placement, networking, and resume development, as well as prepares you for graduate study in theater arts.
IT’S ALL ABOUT OPPORTUNITY

In addition to a core liberal arts education, students in the theater arts program have the opportunity to audition for and take part in three main stage productions each academic year including comedic, dramatic and musical productions. You can also participate in various additional academic and co-curricular activities, including:

- Directing a full scene and a one-act play as part of the Directing course
- Interning with area arts organizations
- Joining the AIC student theater organization, the Garret Players
- Taking part in professional summer theater opportunities

Most college majors prepare you for a career, but a theater arts major also prepares you for life. If you want a course of study that will provide you with insight, empathy, and a broad understanding of our complex world, consider studying theater arts at American International College.
WORLD-CLASS FACILITIES RIGHT IN THE HEART OF SPRINGFIELD

The Esther B. Griswold Theatre for the Performing Arts, which opened on the AIC campus in 1984, is a state-of-the-art performance and rehearsal space that is at once both expansive and intimate. The 500-seat theater area is equipped with a proscenium stage, computerized lighting and sound equipment, and quality acoustics to enable the presentation of both student and professional musical and dramatic productions.

The Theatre is the centerpiece of the Karen Sprague Cultural Arts Center, which is devoted to the fine and performing arts. Located at the northeast corner of campus, the Center houses a spacious lobby area, studios, galleries, and performance areas, as well as classroom, conference and seminar facilities.

Taken as a whole, the Griswold Theatre and the Karen Sprague Cultural Arts Center serve as a continuing and vital cultural and social hub for not only the AIC campus but also the Springfield community.
A WELL-ROUNDED EXPERIENCE

While acting is usually the first (and sometimes the only) thing that comes to mind when people think theater, the courses that make up AIC’s theater arts program provide students with a wide range of learning opportunities, including performance, technical theater, theory, and the history of theater.

Taken together, these courses emphasize creative critical thinking, intellectual approaches to production and design, and physical strategies for acting, movement, and vocal performance. This curriculum, paired with liberal arts courses in the humanities and sciences, provide the foundation for an expansive, well-rounded education that will prepare you as both an artist and scholar.

Theater at AIC—where we show a higher dedication to our students and to our community!
THR1400: Introduction to Theater (3)
This course introduces students to theater as an interdisciplinary, collaborative art. Students will read and analyze plays from varied periods of theater history. The course content includes study of the art, craft, business, and historical roots of drama, as well as theater’s relationship to the fine arts. Students will attend the fall or spring play and write a formal theatrical critique and whenever possible will attend outside theatrical productions. Over the course of the semester, students can expect to engage in a number of group projects including re-writing a scene from a classical play in their own contemporary vernacular and writing a short play using only three words. PREREQUISITE: None

THR1420: Fundamentals of Acting/Acting I (3)
This course introduces students to the study and practice of acting for the theater. They will participate in physical and vocal warm up activities to better understand acting’s demand on the body. Students will read plays and will develop one monologue and one scene over the course of the semester from one of the plays read. Students will engage in acting exercises to enhance focus; clarify thought; better understanding text; and better understand objective-driven action, vocal and physical transformation, and character development. For each character played, students will create a character biography and character journal prior to final performance of scene and monologue. This course also
provides a space in which students can harness skills in public speaking, development of confidence, and poise and focus in any given situation. PREREQUISITE: None

**THR1430: Theater Workshop I (3)**
*Theater Workshop I* is the first of three courses under the theater workshop designation. This course is an introduction to the play development process. Students can assume the duties of an actor, crew technician, crew costumer, and crew props master. Students will be encouraged to work out of their areas of interest to gain a better understanding of the areas they know little about. As this section of *Theater Workshop* is meant for the student who is newly engaging theater, each student will be working as an assistant and/or supporting player in the process. This course is structured like a crew and company at a professional theater in that hierarchy is of great importance. There will be a lead in each area of study and the students in *Theater Workshop I* will assist and/or apprentice under the more experienced theater students. In addition to other assigned work, each student will write a formal evaluation of their work at the end of the semester. PREREQUISITE: None

**THR2420: Styles of Acting/Acting (3)**
This course is the second course in the acting curriculum. The focus of this course will be on the identification and study of the varied styles of acting. In *Fundamentals of*
Acting, we learn the importance of focus, center, objective-driven action, understanding of text, the relationship between the voice and the body, improvisation, and transformative tools for character development. In this course we will study the varied styles of acting including but not limited to kabuki, commedia, poetic realism, realism, absurdist, etc. We will dive into world theater styles and acting for the theater by watching video of actors training in such areas and engaging in some of the same exercises and assignments we do. We will write about such styles and debate the relevance or lack of relevance and how an actor can adapt to changing styles of performance. One major project will be assigned at the end of the semester and will culminate with the performance of a monologue or scene from one of the plays we have read in class in one of the styles studied in the course. The performance will be accompanied by a written explanation of the student process in developing the performance and a self-evaluation of their work. PREREQUISITES: THR1420, sophomore standing

THR2430: Theater Workshop II (3)

Theater Workshop II is the second of three courses under the theater workshop designation. This course is an intermediate course and is meant for students who have taken Theater Workshop I. Students can assume a larger role in the production in terms of the hierarchy of theatrical production. Students can work as an actor,
technician, assistant stage manager, publicity director, assistant costumer, assistant lighting designer or light board operator, props master, or dramaturg (theatrical researcher). Students will be expected to lead by example for the students involved in Theater Workshop I and will develop work that is reflective of their level of understanding of the subject and their professional title. In addition to other assigned work each student will write a formal evaluation of their work at the end of the semester. PREREQUISITE: THR1430

THR2500: Scene Study (3)
This course is the study of scene development and text analysis for the actor. Students read six plays over the course of the semester and chose a scene to work on from each play assigned. Students will engage in conventional and non-conventional scene development and analysis while intensely studying subtext, hidden meanings, and character background. There will be many written and research based assignments related to each character developed. With a scholarly knowledge of the text and its origination, students will harness a deep understanding of how a scene is conceived, written, and performed. PREREQUISITES: THR1420, sophomore standing

THR2600: Movement for the Actor (3)
This course focuses on the development of each student’s understanding of their own body as performers.
This course can be taken by actors, dancers, students interested in physically harnessing their center, and athletes looking to improve upon their ability to exhibit focused and graceful action on the field. Students will learn how to harness energy and sustainability while engaging in physical theater exercises that focus on the brain-body connection. Students will read texts and articles focused on specific movement styles and will engage in physical exploration of these styles, which will further their understanding of each style’s purpose. Students will develop movement topographies and an understanding of stage combat, and will journal about their experiences. An attempt is made to bring in a movement-based theater company for workshop training. PREREQUISITE: THR1420

THR2610: Costume Design (4)
In this course, comprised of both lecture and laboratory, students will learn the fundamentals of costume, hair, and makeup design for the stage. Students will learn techniques for stage makeup and wig design, how to design costume sketches, and the techniques necessary to design and build a garment. Students will also learn costume history, the importance of costumes and makeup, and how they serve contemporary productions. Students will learn all aspects of caring for and storing costumes and how to organize the dressing room for productions. Final projects will include makeup plots, styling wigs, and building a garment for the department production. Students will also learn how to develop a portfolio of their work. PREREQUISITE: THR1430
THR2611: Costume Design Laboratory (0)

THR2620: Play Production (4)
This course is the fundamental technical theater course in the theater arts curriculum. There is a lecture and lab component to this course and students should be prepared to work hard as both scholars and crew members. During lab time, students will learn how to correctly use tools and saws, develop a theatrical flat, paint sets using various techniques, recognize the basic parts of a lighting instrument, rig lighting, gel lighting, design a set, and create a set model. Students will be introduced to the basics of set, light and sound design while learning about the history of technical theater and how spectacle can be used most effectively. Students in Play Production will use their skills to develop the set, lights and sound for the theatrical production that semester. In conjunction with students in the theater workshop course, Play Production, students will lead the development of spectacle for the play. PREREQUISITES: THR1400, THR1402, THR1430

THR2621: Play Production Laboratory (0)

THR3200: Voice and Articulation (3)
This basic voice and articulation course and accompanying lab are designed to help students improve their speaking voice both onstage and in professions such as...
as teaching, management, marketing, public relations and law just to name a few. In this course, students will gain an understanding of vocal health and the physical demands placed on the vocal apparatus. Content covered will include the Linklater Vocal Warm Up, study of The International Phonetic Alphabet, and basic dialect (accent training). Students will develop the tools needed to recognize and start to deal with their own individual vocal challenges, including sustainability and moving beyond impediments of all kinds. PREREQUISITE: THR1420

THR3210: Theater History I (Ancient Greeks-1750) (3)
This course is a history of theater course and will focus on the time periods of ancient Greece through to 1750. Students will read plays from each era of theater history studied and will research the life of work of each playwright read. There is a strong lecture component to this course coupled with a written assignment for each play assigned. There will be an exam for each section of the course material divided by period and will culminate with a major research based project at the end of the course. PREREQUISITES: ENG1201, THR1400

THR3430: Theater Workshop III (3)
Theater Workshop III is the third of three courses under the theater workshop designation. This course is an advanced course and is meant for students who have taken Theater Workshop I and II. Students can assume leadership roles in the production, including working as the set designer, costume designer, stage manager, publicity director,
lighting designer, makeup designer, and upper-level acting student. Students will be expected to lead by example for the students working with them, making up their crews and apprentice groups. Students in Theater Workshop III must be prepared to take on leadership roles that give them the opportunity to experience the level of work and commitment needed to perform such duties in the real world of the professional theater. Students in this course must also have a focus in terms of their area of study within the course and it must correlate with something they have worked with in the past in the other theater workshop courses. PREREQUISITE: THR2430 or permission of the instructor.

THR3610: Theater History II (1750 - Present) (3)
This course is a history of theater course and will focus on the time periods of 1750 through the present. Students will read plays from each era of theater history studied and will research the life and work of each playwright read. There is a lecture component to this course coupled with a written assignment for each play assigned. There will be an exam for each section of the course material divided by period and will culminate with a major research-based project at the end of the course. PREREQUISITE: ENG1202

THR3820: Dramaturgy (3)
This course is based on theatrical research of dramaturgy. If a student has an interest in theatrical research and would like to serve as the dramaturg for a production
on campus, they will be instructed to take this course in theatrical research. Students will learn the basic approach to theatrical research and why it is integral to ensure a scholarly theater production. The course will focus on the development of the dramaturg’s writing skills and formation of a dramaturgical notebook. PREREQUISITES: junior or senior status and permission of the instructor.

THR3830: Stage Management (3)
This directed study course is based on the development of stage management skills. If a student has interest in working as a stage manager, he or she will be instructed to take this one-credit course. Students will learn to develop a stage manager’s box of tools as well as a stage managers prompt book including any and all information about the production being worked on. Students will learn to develop necessary forms for auditions, actor biography, and production meeting minutes, as well as rehearsal report notices. Sections focusing on how to work with challenging actors and crew members will be offered as well as how to work with directors and designers of varied style. PREREQUISITES: junior or senior status and permission of the instructor.

THR4610: Theater and Society (3)
This course is a theory-based course and will focus on the relationship theater shares with the society. As theater reflects the world we live in, we must as theater artists
take an interest in our communities. We will study the work of Augusto Boal, The Living Theater, the GLBT, Women’s and Black Theater Movements. Students will be assigned readings and will research a theater and society movement. There will be a major final research project assigned that will be presented to the class. The course will culminate with the class volunteering at a local school and will offer ensemble and community-building workshops to students. There is an attempt made to bring in a guest theater artists to engage students in discussion of their work as a socially conscious theater artist. PREREQUISITES: ENG1202, THR1400

THR4810: Directing (3)
This course is focused on the fundamentals of directing for the theater. This culminating experience should be taken during a student’s senior year. The basic fundamentals of directing will be covered, including staging, styles of directing, history of directing, text analysis, scene study, directing theory, working with actors, and development of a prompt book. Students will choose one scene to direct for the mid-term exam and, for a final exam, a one-act play that they must direct as part of a one-act play festival that will culminate at the end of each semester in which this course is offered. Students will be given examples of each major fundamental and will be given multiple writing and reading assignments. There will also be a series of
workshops during class time that will engage students in physical development of stage pictures and will allow them time to rehearse their approach to actors in the formal rehearsal process. Student actors can be used from the *Fundamentals of Acting* and *Styles of Acting* courses. PREREQUISITES: THR2420, THR2500, THR2430, senior standing

**THR4899: Theater Arts Internship (3)**

One of the assets of the theater program is our close relationship with area arts organizations and professional theaters that provide internship opportunities to our students. These internships will be production based and will include work in the following areas: acting, directing, stage management, costume, light, sound and set design, theater administration, and casting. Theater arts majors will be required to take six credits of professional learning experience in theater. Students will take this course once as a junior and once as a senior. Students will document their professional learning experience through daily journals and three written self-evaluations. This course can only be taken with the pre-permission of the department chair and approval of the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. PREREQUISITE: senior status
For more information on the program, visit www.aic.edu/theatre.

For information on applying, contact:

AIC’s Office of Admissions at 413.205.3201, visit www.aic.edu/admissions
or contact program director Frank Borrelli at 413.654.1486.