



Theatre

Department of Theatre
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

KEY STRENGTHS

- The ACU Department of Theatre is committed to providing quality training and opportunities for the disciplined theatre artist in a nurturing environment that models Christian values.
- The program is highly competitive with larger universities. Emphasis is placed on the Christian viewpoint as it relates to contemporary theatre.
- The department produces seven productions each year: two dinner theatres, one classical production, one large-scale musical, one studio premiere and two shows in repertory during the summer Abilene Shakespeare Festival.
- The technical curriculum provides hands-on experience in all phases of backstage work; the practicum program makes accessible a well-rounded knowledge of theatre crafts.
- The department offers an excellent student-to-faculty ratio with seven faculty/staff members serving approximately 50 majors in small studio classes. Theatre is an auditioned major.
- ACU theatre graduates compete well in national auditions for graduate schools, professional theatres and internships.

DEGREES OFFERED

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Fine Arts

MAJORS AVAILABLE

- Theatre with the following focus:
 - acting
 - directing
 - design/technical
 - musical theatre
 - theatre ministry

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Arts management
- Design and technical support
- Playwriting
- Professional stage or film work
- Theatre ministry
- University or secondary teaching

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Community field internships and experiences

- ACU Theatre's outstanding reputation affords students the opportunity to play to full houses for nearly all productions.
- Students are allowed to stage manage, design, direct and write shows produced for the public.
- Practicum program gives students hands-on training in all aspects of theatre.
- Specialty areas give students the chance to learn grant writing, web design, box office management, house management and other important skills related to theatre.
- ACU Theatre has established relationship with theatres around the country that use our students.
- Frequent workshops in such varied areas as stage combat, auditioning, playwriting and Equity membership keep students abreast of new techniques.
- Networking with professionals via the visiting committee and guest artists.

Scholarships available

- Charlton Heston Family Theatre Scholarship Fund
- Fred Barton Scholarship Fund
- Gaylan Collier Scholarship Fund for the Performing Arts
- Harold and Jeannette Lipford Scholarship Fund
- John F. and Patsy Duncan Scholarship Fund for Drama Education
- Mary Prudie Brown Scholarship
- Melpomenean/Alpha Psi Omega
- Noma Gray Alexander Scholarship Fund
- Pat and Arradel Powell Scholarship Fund for the Performing Arts
- Rebecca McKay Morris Scholarship Fund for the Performing Arts
- Rex and Chris Kyker Scholarship Fund for the Performing Arts
- Shakespeare Scholarships
- Special performance and design/tech scholarships available for entering freshmen. (Auditions and interviews are held by appointment during five auditions throughout the year.)
- ACT/SAT Academic Scholarships

Please consult with your admissions counselor for details on these and other scholarships available to you.

FACILITIES

The Department of Theatre is housed in the 92,000-square-foot Williams Performing Arts Center. State-of-the-art theatre facilities include the 300-seat Lewis Fulks Theatre and the intimate multi-form Culp Theatre.

Scenic shop, costume shop and design offices are housed in Sewell Theatre. Wardrobe is housed in The Fire Station Theatre.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Majors in the 2005-06 school year: 59

2005-06 graduates with jobs by commencement:
8 of 12

Percent of 2005-06 graduates with jobs in their field or admitted into graduate/professional school within 12 months: 92 percent

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Lara Seibert, class of 2006; actress in national tour of "The Producers," New York, N.Y.

Lyndsey Goode, class of 2001; equity stage manager, Public Theatre, New York, N.Y.

David Utley, class of 1999; scenic designer and, most recently, assistant art director for two films, "The Express" and "Rendition," Chicago, Ill.

Tom Bain, Paden Fallis, class of 1998; nonprofit theatre, Rocketship, New York, N.Y.

Mark Smith, class of 1998; opened Legacy Theatre in Atlanta, Ga., south Metro Atlanta's only full-time, year-round professional theatre.

Ryan Swearingen, class of 1998; equity actor; national tours of "Titanic," "The Musical," "42nd Street," "Dames at Sea" and "Babes in Arms" at Goodspeed Opera; East Haddam, Conn.

Eric Harrell, class of 1995; head of graduate acting program, Regent University, Virginia Beach, Va. Created one-man show, "Inch of Rope."

Lisa Lawrence Holland, M.F.A., class of 1990; director of Education and Community Programs at Dallas Theater Center, LORT Regional Theater, Dallas, Texas.

Allen Robertson, M.F.A., class of 1988; composer and musical director, Austin, Texas.

Stan Denman, class of 1986; Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburg, Pa.; theatre department chair, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Steven Pounders, class of 1986; equity actor, theatre faculty, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Luanne Tyson, class of 1986; administrator, director, Stars Theatre Co. (children's theatre), North Richland Hills, Texas.

Nelson Coates, class of 1984; Hollywood production designer; voting member of Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Beverly Hills, Calif.

Jeff Berryman, M.F.A., class of 1981; author of the recently published book "Leaving Ruin"; tours nationally his one-man performances of original work, Seattle, Wash.

Curt Cloninger, class of 1976; Straight from the Heart theatre ministry, Atlanta, Ga.

Nan Gurley, class of 1975; equity actress, Nashville, Tenn.

Dr. Don Wilmeth, class of 1961; theatre department, Brown University, Providence, R.I.; author and historian.

RECENT GRADUATES

Thomas Chavira, class of 2007; fellowship for M.F.A. in acting at The University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Calif.

Peter Nolte, class of 2007; National Theatre for Arts and Education fall tour, Ferrum, Va.

Emily Savage, class of 2007; created show of monologues called "Conversations with Myself" to help churches become places of acceptance and healing, Abilene, Texas.

Ben Jeffrey, class of 2006; fellowship for M.F.A. in acting at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.

Annika Johansson, class of 2006; Chicago actress, most recently appeared in "Happy End and Moon Over Buffalo," Chicago, Ill.

Amanda McGee, class of 2006; wardrobe apprentice for Triad Stage, Greensboro, N.C.

Juliette Miller, class of 2006; performed lead roles on Disney Cruise Line, New York, N.Y.

Nathan Jerkins, class of 2005; won the B. Iden Payne Award for acting in Austin, Texas.

Ginger Morby, class of 2004; children's creative writing specialist (writes and produces film series) for Radiant Church in Surprise, Ariz.

Allison Seibert Rogers, class of 2002; won the Leon Rabin Award for acting in Dallas, Texas.

Deana Nichols, class of 1999; M.F.A. in theatre history and criticism, Indiana University; assistant dramaturg for ATHE New Play Development Workshop, Boulder, Colo.

Paige Reynolds, class of 1999; received Ph.D. in Shakespeare from University of North Texas, and appeared in the film, "War Eagle," Little Rock, Ark.

Thomas Ward, class of 1998; acting faculty at Baylor University; equity actor; playwright, "Keeping Watch," Waco, Texas.

Shea Weaver, class of 2004; S.A.G. actress in television and films such as "Six Feet Under," "Grey's Anatomy," "Miss Congeniality 2," Los Angeles, Calif.

Sandy Blue Parde, class of 2001; theatre management, Old Globe Theatre, San Diego, Calif.

Emily Cavasar, class of 2001; wardrobe assistant, Ballet Austin, member of IATSE, and freelance mural painter, Austin, Texas.

Nate Parde, class of 1999; Lighting Designer, Lamb's Players Theater, Coronado, Calif.

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Faculty members regularly attend workshops including Alexander Technique, Texas Educational Theatre Association, Southeast Theatre Conference and other unified auditions, Christians in Theatre Arts conferences, and United States Institute for Theatre Technology.
- ACU Theatre is a member of Christians in Theatre Arts and sponsors workshops at regional conventions.
- Received grants from Ann Bradshaw Stokes Foundation, Tobin Foundation, Target and the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council.
- Outstanding recognition at 1998 and 1999 American College Theatre Festival, receiving awards in directing, design and acting.
- The *Abilene Reporter-News* has awarded the ACU Theatre numerous acting and technical awards.
- **Dawne Swearingen Churchville** was credited as choreographer and lead role in published play, "Yankee Doodle Boy."
- **Sandy Freeman** and **Mike Fernandez** served on a panel for faith and art issues at the Christian Scholars Conference (2007).
- **Adam Hester** named College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher of the Year (1995 and 1999) and university Outstanding Teacher of the Year (2007).
- **Gary Varner** received the Faculty Scenic Design Nomination for the Kennedy Center in the American College Theatre Festival. Served as technical director in summer season for Creede Repertory Theatre in Colorado.

FACULTY

Dawne Swearingen Churchville, *assistant professor*; B.A., ACU, 1995; M.F.A., The University of Arizona, 1997; equity actor; SSDC.

Mike Fernandez, *assistant professor*; B.A., ACU, 1999; M.F.A., University of Houston, 2004.

Sandy Freeman, *associate professor, costumer*; B.A., Hardin-Simmons University, 1971; M.F.A., The University of Oklahoma, 1975; associate professor/resident costume designer, New Mexico State University, 1976-85; IATSE.

Adam Hester, *professor, chair*; B.A., ACU, 1977; M.F.A., Trinity University, 1982; SSDC.

Donna Hester, *adjunct faculty, box office and house manager, advisor*; B.A., Trinity University, 1978; M.A., ACU, 1989.

Gary Varner, *professor, scenic designer and technical director*; B.A., University of Central Oklahoma, 1978; M.Ed., Southeastern Oklahoma State University, 1989; M.F.A., Tulane University, 1992; associate professor and technical director, SOSU, 1992-96; production manager, Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival, 1992-96.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

About the Department

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About ACU and Admissions

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