

2022

Graduate Student GUIDELINES

SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE



FROM THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Welcome to the School of Theatre and Dance at Kent State University's College of the Arts!

You are about to begin an exciting time of study and exploration. This is one of the best stages of your life as a student, artist and scholar. It is a time for knowledge, inquiry, experimentation, and growth. Seize the opportunity to learn as much as you can from some of the best faculty in the nation and engage them in an on-going dialogue about your art, craft, and scholarship.

Your time at Kent State University is what YOU make it. Take advantage of what KSU has to offer in the arts, recreation and diverse culture. Explore, inquire, reflect and be open to learning.

The faculty and staff of the School of Theatre and Dance will support and assist you in achieving your goals during your study at Kent State. Your success is very important to us. Feel free to call on us any time with questions or just to talk.

We are all glad you have joined the school.

Break a leg!!

F. Eric van Baars
School Director
School of Theatre and Dance

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I. GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OF THE MFA PROGRAM

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- [CANVAS](#)

CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Graduate Assistantships (Appointment, Expectations, and Review)

Assignments scheduled the week prior to classes will be outlined in the letter of offer.

The School of Theatre and Dance awards Graduate Assistantships (with tuition remission) to students demonstrating excellence in the field (tuition remission without a stipend may also be available). Excellence is measured by a combination of academic performance, creative/scholarly work outside the classroom, demonstrated success and promise for future achievement in the field, the ability to take and give instruction and guidance and to execute assignments, and the collegial behavior appropriate to a learning environment. Only full-time students maintaining at least an eight-hour load of graduate credits each semester and a 3.00 grade point average are eligible to be considered for graduate assistantships. (See also the regulations specified in the Graduate Studies Catalog.)

Students on assistantship may not undertake any work outside the School of Theatre and Dance without petitioning the appropriate area faculty and receiving written permission prior to auditioning/interviewing.

Students on an assistantship must participate in university-wide Graduate Orientation preceding the first semester of the assistantship, and participate in School level orientation workshops, typically held the week prior to the start of classes. Students on assistantship also register for THEA 61094 College Teaching in Theatre.

All graduate assistantships in the School carry work assignments. At least 30 days prior to the beginning of each semester, graduate assistants receive a workload statement outlining all GA responsibilities.

Full assistantships carry an expectation of 20 hours of service per week, determined by the School Director, consisting of teaching or service assignments. Graduate assistants are evaluated each semester and provided a written response to progress and assistantship duties. Teaching assignments may include service as the instructor of record for a course, a co-instructor with full-time faculty, or a teaching assistant, working with full-time faculty. Independent classroom teaching (Art of the Theatre, Art of Acting, and Special Topics) is evaluated through observation by supervisory faculty and via the University's standardized S.S.I. questionnaire. Laboratory and assistant teaching is supervised and evaluated by the instructor/staff of record, your advisor, and through administration of the University's standardized S.S.I. questionnaire, where appropriate. Service assignments (publicity, box office, administrative, research) are evaluated by the supervisory faculty or staff.

Residency requirements: Graduate Assistantship contracts begin the week prior to the start of classes and extend through final exam week each semester. Graduate Assistants are on contract same as the faculty and staff and may expect to have responsibilities during these times. Please get confirmation from area coordinators prior to finalizing travel plans before the end of final exam week. Full residency requirements are outlined in the university catalog. <http://catalog.kent.edu/colleges/ca/thea/theatre-studies-mfa/#programrequirementstext>

All graduate assistants receive evaluations by the area faculty by the end of each semester. Instructors in THEA11000, the Art of the Theatre receive evaluations from the Art of the Theatre supervisor when possible, and these are shared with the heads of areas (Acting or Design and Technology).

The M.F.A. programs (Acting, Intended for the Returning Professional and Theatre Design/Technology) issue a single, written evaluation of the student's total performance at the end of each semester.

Academic Warnings concerning grades of "C" or lower in graduate coursework and/or grade point averages below 3.00 will come from the Coordinator of Graduate Studies. Evaluations concerning performance and degree progress within areas come from those areas (Acting or Design/Technology), and may extend to warning, probation, or dismissal.

Graduate students in Design and Technology must successfully pass an annual portfolio review.

Policy on Additional Employment

A graduate assistantship during graduate study carries a full workload. While the faculty work to support outside opportunities for students, these considerations are reviewed individually and evaluated so as not to hinder students academic progress nor conflict with assistantship expectations. Within the University: Graduate Assistants are Part-time employees of the university, and as such are able to be employed up to 28 hours per week by the university. Students should have a conversation with the faculty advisor to ensure

they are not over committed prior to accepting additional work hours outside the University.

II. Graduate Assistantship/Teaching Assignments

Art of the Theatre (AOT)

THEA 11000, Art of the Theatre satisfies Kent Core and a university diversity requirements. This introductory course focuses upon the relationship between theatre and culture throughout history. Graduate assistants teach independent sections of this course following a syllabus drawn up by the course supervisor, who will visit classes during the semester to monitor performance and provide out-of-class counseling for graduate teachers seeking advice or encountering problems. (Mentoring by experienced graduate teachers will also be available.) AOT Teaching Assistants are expected to attend special instruction sessions during orientation week, and to participate (as first-time teaching assistants) in the University's Graduate Orientation. Service as instructor of this three-credit course carries a workload of nine nominal clock hours.

Art of Acting (AOA)

THEA 113030 Art of Acting is the introductory acting course for majors, minors, and some integrated language arts majors. Graduate assistants teach independent sections of this course following a syllabus drawn up by the course supervisor, who will visit classes during the semester to monitor performance and provide out-of-class counseling for graduate teachers seeking advice or encountering problems. AOA Teaching Assistants are expected to attend special instruction sessions during orientation week, and to participate (as first-time teaching assistants) in the University's Graduate Orientation. Service as an instructor of this three-credit course carries a workload of nine nominal clock hours.

Sections of Fundamentals of Production and Other Design/Tech related Classes

Design Technology Graduate assistants are expected to teach sections of Fundamentals of Production and corresponding labs following a syllabus drawn up by the course supervisor. The courses are structured in both lecture and lab formats. Teaching Assistants may be assigned either the lecture or lab portion of the course, or both lecture and lab. The course/section supervisor will visit classes during the semester to monitor performance and provide out-of-class counseling for graduate teachers seeking advice or encountering problems. Service as instructor of a one credit lab carries a workload of two nominal clock hours. Service as instructor of a two-credit lecture course carries a workload of six nominal clock hours.

In some cases, graduate students have opportunities to teach other design/tech related classes, depending on expertise and interests. The course/section supervisor will visit classes during the semester to monitor performance and provide out-of-class counseling for graduate teachers seeking advice or encountering problems.

Teaching Assistants assigned to these courses are expected to attend special instruction sessions during orientation week, and to participate (as first-time teaching assistants) in the University's [Graduate Orientation](#).

Shop Hours/ Additional Assignments:

In addition to teaching assignments, Graduate Assistants may be assigned shop hours to complete the 20 work hours of the assistantship. Grads will check in with Shop Supervisor and Faculty advisor for each shop hour period. In addition to Assistantship hours, all Design Technology Graduate Assistants must attend strike.

II. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

A Code of Ethics for Theatre Professionals

- I will meet all deadlines and responsibilities as assigned.
- I will accept artistic responsibility, and will never blame my co-workers or inanimate objects for my own failure.
- I will be patient and avoid temperamental outbursts, for they create tension and serve no useful purpose. I will never engage in caustic criticism of another's work. I will not speak from jealousy or an urge to increase my own prestige.
- I will communicate regularly with my advisor, faculty and student colleagues and keep them apprised of my work progress.
- I will earn respect for my craft, and myself, through my gracious acceptance of both praise and constructive criticism.
- I will direct my efforts in such a manner that, when I leave, the theatre will stand as a better place for my having labored there.
- I will avoid behavior that is detrimental to the well-being and reputation of myself or others.
- I will accept the director's advice in the spirit in which it is given, for they are able to view the production as a whole. My role or position—regardless of its size or importance—is only a portion of that whole.
- I will look upon the production as a collective effort that demands my utmost cooperation.
- I will forgo the gratification of my ego for the demands of the play.
- I will forego social activities that interfere with, or in any way compromise, my ability to participate in rehearsals and work calls.
- I will observe backstage courtesy and will adhere to the rules of the theatre in which I work.
- I will always be on time and always endeavor to keep my own work on or ahead of the established production schedule.
- I will notify my advisor in a timely manner if I encounter any problems in completing my work.

A Few Words Regarding Feedback

- I understand that public feedback of my work is necessary as theatre is created in a public forum.
- I understand the assessment is a part of my education as an artist and professional.

- I will give and take feedback in a positive manner.
- I understand that artistic feedback from directors and faculty is of my work as an artist and a professional is not to be taken as personal.
- I understand the role of my faculty is to further my development as an artist and professional. I further understand that faculty are also responsible for upholding the artistic standards of the School of Theatre and Dance.
- I understand the director's role in creating a unified production. I will support the director's vision with my artistry. My own vision is to assist and support the director's vision.
- I understand that a "note" from a director or faculty member is not personal criticism.
- I will not engage in temperamental outbursts or defensive or argumentative behavior.
- I understand that the best and most respectful way to deal with problems is by direct communication with my faculty and my student colleagues.

III. TEACHING RELATED INFORMATION AND RECREATIONAL/CULTURAL VENUES

Teaching: Rights and Responsibilities

- [Office Hours, Grading, and Main Office Policies](#)
- [EMAIL](#)
- [Dispute](#)
- [Graduate Student Orientation](#)

Office Hours, Syllabi, Grading, Cancellation, and Main Office Policies

All faculty at Kent State University are required to post and maintain at least one hour per assigned class per week of office hours (e.g. if you are teaching two sections of AOT, you must maintain at least two office hours per week). There is a **graduate office** with a phone (330-672-5978), shared desks and some computer and printing capacity. The School clerical staff will collect office hours of all instructors. Shared facilities require consideration for other occupants, with respect to quiet, privacy, security, and hygiene, and consideration for the office as a professional space for meeting with students. The School also maintains a secure Computer Lab (B042) for use by Theatre students doing class and school-related design work.



Course syllabi for each course are collected and maintained by the School. In the beginning of the semester, you are required to electronically submit a copy of your syllabi to the administrative clerk. The course syllabus for a class should explain University plagiarism and disability policies. Please visit the Plagiarism site for details. It should also make clear how classwork and behavior will be evaluated.

[SAS Syllabus statement](#)

Grading at Kent State University is done electronically through Flashline (www.kent.edu). Go to Flashline, then type your username and password. Click on Faculty & Advisor tools. From the site, you are able to retrieve course roster and submit grades. Those teaching 10000 and 20000-level courses will also need to submit mid-semester grades.

In addition to grades, instructors are required to submit Academic Presence verification for each student, every semester. Details and instructions will be provided.

Class Cancellation Policy: Classes must be held every day that the University is in session. When emergencies happen, the School will provide reasonable accommodation. If you must miss class, you must notify your students, area or concentration coordinator, and School Director in writing (e-mail) when you cannot teach class.

Planned Absences: The notification must be in advance and include a plan for covering the class. Graduate Assistants must submit an authorized absence form for any planned

absences such as bereavement, medical leave or conference attendance. Such absences must be cleared by the supervisor prior to the absence, preferably two weeks in advance.

Instructional Supplies: The Theatre Office supply room (B141) has supplies (envelopes, paper, grade books, pens, pencils, paperclips, and the like) for the conduct of School business. Supply cabinets are kept locked (see the clerical assistant) and the copy room itself is locked after hours (5:30PM-8:00AM). There is a communal microwave and coffee service available to graduate assistants, and a to-be-shredded box, and other equipment. Please do not bring personal documents from home to be shredded.

Course Fee Materials

Certain courses carry course fees for undergraduates. For instructors of Fundamental Lab courses, please confer with Design Technology faculty prior to purchasing any course materials.

Keys: All Teaching Assistants are issued keys appropriate to their duties. The School does not issue keys to other buildings or to the classrooms in the CPA that are under the control of other departments. Assistants teaching in other buildings may want to, in consultation with the School's administrative assistant, locate the nearest departmental office to their teaching spaces, in the event of an emergency including their classrooms locked or need a notice.

Textbooks for the courses most Teaching Assistants teach are ordered by the course supervisor (desk copies may be provided by the supervisor). Instructors are provided copies of all required textbooks used in the courses they are instructing.

Textbook orders for Fall need to be completed by the previous April 1st for Fall courses and. by the previous Oct.1st for Spring courses. KSU students and faculty are entitled to a discount at the bookstore in the Student Center on books they buy. Ask about protocols before you go through the cashier.

Paychecks

Graduate Assistants must have **paychecks** electronically deposited. To arrange direct deposit, go to your flashline and go onto your HR tab at the top. There is a direct deposit place where you can input your banking routing number and account number. Checks are issued on the 15th and on the last working day of the month. **Note:** Graduate Assistants are paid on a 9-month cycle. Sept 15 is the first pay date. May 31 is the last pay date.

EMAIL

The University assigns all students an email address. The School, the University, faculty, and students will communicate with you electronically (if you have difficulty with your e-address, call the [HELP desk](#) at 672-2031). The School also maintains a box of three-by-five cards with contact information for all Theatre majors and minors, which they are asked to fill out at the start of each academic year and to keep updated.

Disputes

Disputes between students and instructors, whether over grades or other matters, should be handled so as to discourage escalation. Not every college student has been socialized to behave appropriately in a university environment and may interpret legitimate evaluation as intimidating, hostile, or offensive behavior. It is the Graduate Assistant's responsibility to preserve decorum and a professional atmosphere in attempting to resolve disputes. The supervisors of AOT and AOA and experienced peer teachers have many strategies to share concerning how to manage a contentious student. Should intervention be required in a dispute or situation which has not been resolved between you and your student, consult the course supervisor. Intervention works up the academic chain of command, always with the intention of resolving a dispute at the lowest level possible.

In the same way, graduate students should seek to solve their own academic disputes through honest, face-to-face conversation first with their professors and supervisors.

Production Assignments

- Acting for Intended Returning Professional are expected to audition for all mainstage theatre productions.
- Design and Technology- Students must pass semester reviews and are expected to participate in at least one main-stage production each semester, which may be in addition to any production design assignment.

The Comprehensive Project for Acting, Intended for Returning Professional

Intensive work in the development of the practical aspects of production; includes performance or exhibition of work, documentation of that work in a format appropriate for area and project, and an exit interview. Prerequisite: THEA 61000; and graduate standing; and special approval of instructor.
1.000 to 3.000 Credit hours

The Culminating Project and go to #20

IV. PREPARING FOR GRADUATION

Students applying for graduation should complete the online graduation application available through FlashLine by published deadlines. The online graduation application is used for all degree and certificate programs. Visit: [Application for Graduation Processing Dates and Procedures](#)

V. SCHOOL COMMITTEES

In addition to the above organizations, there is also a need for representatives on school committees. Please see the Director of the School of Theatre and Dance for details.

VI. OTHER IMPORTANT SITES

[Discrimination and Harassment](#)

[Buy Tickets](#)

[KSU Theatre and Dance Website.](#)

<https://www.kent.edu/porthouse>

[Flash Alerts](#)

[Center for Student Involvement](#)

[Libraries](#)

[Performing Arts Library](#)

[Fashion Library](#)

[Student Multimedia Studio](#)

Campus Bus Service: The best way to figure out how to use the bus service is to go to their online site at [PARTA](#).

Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) (sas@kent.edu, 672-3391) assists students with disabilities by providing such services as note-takers, readers, interpreters, preferred registration, test proctoring, audio-taped books and class materials, academic and personal counseling, and special parking. Documentation of disabilities must be presented to the SAS staff, which will provide University teachers with a prescription for the accommodation of students approved as disabled. The following statement is to appear on all course syllabi:

[University policy \(3342-3-18\)](#) requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodation, to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a disability, verify it through Student Accessibility Services and contact your instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments.

Health Services

[Counseling and Human Development Center](#) in White Hall (appointments (330) 672-2208). Services through all departments are free for Kent State University students.

Psychological Services--To schedule an appointment, contact them at (330) 672-2487 or visit <http://www.kent.edu/psych/scheduling-appointment>

Psychological Clinic--provides a complete range of confidential psychological services and long-term care. Services are provided by masters and doctoral students under close supervision of clinical faculty members. The Clinic is located at 176 Kent Hall (330-672-2372), or online at <http://www.dept.kent.edu/psychology/clinic.cfm>

STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES

Academic Success Center

Writing Commons--provides assistance with writing skills, rough drafts, and college English courses, at Writing Commons, 4th Floor Library, phone 330-672-1787, writing@kent.edu.

Center for Adult and Veteran Services--provides pre-admission counseling, academic advising, career guidance, assistance with University procedures and special workshops. Adult Services are available to students 21 or older. 181 Michael Schwartz Center, phone 330-672-7933.

Commuter & Off-Campus Student Organization-- provides information on landlord complaints, available housing lists, lease reviews, apartment quick guides, renter's guides, and commuter student meetings. Located on the 1st floor of the Student Center in the Student organization offices, phone 330-672-3768.

Residence Services-- oversees the residence halls, and provides a bunch of really great programs (some available to you even if you're not in a residence hall).

Women's Center

Kent Student Center

Parking Services

Theatre Student Organizations

Theatre Graduate Student Forum

All graduate students in Theatre are members of the graduate Forum, a recognized student organization with five officers and a bank account, and the Coordinator of Graduate Studies as its Advisor. Forum exists to provide graduate students a place to meet and discuss issues of common concern, to learn policy, protocol, and customs, and to present matters they would like their fellow students or the faculty to consider. Forum was created by students to further open discourse, discourage complaining, and to socialize. It is the representative body to which the Director and faculty go for information and to hear the views and concerns of graduate students. Forum also elects representatives to School Committees, including the Graduate Studies Committee, the School Faculty and Staff meeting, the Student Production Board, the Curriculum Committee, and the like. Forum also selects a representative to the [University Graduate Student Senate](#) and to Roundtable, its undergraduate counterpart in the School and the sponsor of student productions.

VII. CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL VENUES

Student Recreation and Wellness Center Website.

On-Campus

- [The School of Music](#)
- [The School of Art](#)
- [The KSU Museum](#)
- [Kent/Blossom Music](#)
- [Porthouse Theatre](#) both located in [Cuyahoga Valley National Park](#)

Cleveland

- [Cleveland Play House](#)
- [Cleveland Public Theatre](#)
- [Dobama Theatre](#)
- [Ensemble Theatre](#)
- [Karamu Playhouse](#)
- [Convergence-continuum](#)
- [Playhouse Square Center](#)
- [Great Lakes Theatre](#)
- [Cleveland Orchestra](#)
- [Cleveland Museum of Art](#)

Akron

- [E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall](#)
- [Akron Civic Theatre](#)
- [Weathervane Playhouse](#)
- [Ohio Shakespeare Festival](#)
- [Akron Art Museum](#)
- [Gum Dip Theatre](#)
- [Rubber City Theatre](#)

Public Libraries

- [Kent](#)
- [Akron](#)
- [Hudson](#)
- [Stow/Munroe Falls](#)