University of Wisconsin-Madison
Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies Program
M. A. / Ph.D. Handbook

2026-2027

Revised 5-18-2026, cl

Table of Contents

Important Contacts and Resources
- **Academic Policies and Procedures in the Graduate School**

Introduction

Overview of MA and PhD Programs
- **Degree Curricula and Requirements**
- **Learning Goals and Objectives for the MA and PhD**
- **Teaching and Project Assistantships**

Program Faculty and Administration

The MA Program
- **MA Requirements (30 Credits)**
- **MA Program Timeline**
  - MA Program: 1st Year
  - MA Program: 2nd Year
  - The Thesis
  - Choosing an MA Advisor

The PhD Program
- **PhD Program Timeline**
- **Area of Specialization**
- **Breadth Requirement (PhD minor/certificate)**
- **Portfolio Revision Credit**
- **Second Language**
- **Practicum Course Requirements**
- **Production Activities**
- **Preliminary Exam**
- **The Dissertation**
- **PhD Program Timeline**
  - PhD Program: 1st Year
  - PhD Program: 2nd Year
- **Choosing a PhD Advisor**

Advancement to Dissertator Status

Dissertator Status
- **The Dissertation Committee**
  - The Dissertation Proposal

Important Contacts and Resources

Program Website

https://english.wisc.edu/intertheatrestudies/

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Academic Policies and Procedures in the Graduate School

The Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies Program complies with the Graduate School's policies and procedures regarding such issues as curriculum and administration, student grievances and appeals, and incidents of discrimination or harassment**. If you have a question, concern or complaint about your experience as a student in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies, please contact your advisor, the appropriate program officer (see list above) and/or the Program Director.** For information about the Graduate School's policies on these and other administrative concerns please go to this link: Academic Policies and Procedures: http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/

Introduction

This Handbook provides you with general information about our programs, including requirements, opportunities, and timelines. While it offers an important overview of graduate studies in the department and on campus, it is only a guide. You should stay in close touch with your advisor, the Program Director, the Graduate Coordinator, the Department Administrator, and other administrators, professors, and mentors to gain the most from your experience at UW-Madison.

The Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies Program at UW-Madison prepares MA and PhD students to pursue innovative, interdisciplinary research in theatre studies, and to relate their scholarly research to production and/or teaching. The MA can serve as a preparatory degree for the PhD, or as a terminal degree for students seeking greater exposure to theatre studies beyond the undergraduate degree. Through rigorous coursework and participation in a variety of artistic production processes, the PhD program prepares graduates for positions as college and university researchers and instructors as well as public intellectuals, dramaturgs, and critics.

The program's faculty are leaders in theatre and performance studies, whose scholarship and engagement with the profession is recognized nationally and internationally. Our students work closely with faculty who have a teaching appointment in ITS, as well as affiliated ITS faculty members in such fields as African Studies, African-American studies, Art, Art History, Classics, Communication Arts, English, French and Italian, Gender and Women's Studies, German, Music, Spanish and Portuguese, Theatre and Drama, and Visual Cultures.

Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies attracts students from across the United States as well as internationally, and creates opportunities for students to engage in teaching and practice as part of their research. Many of our students participate in theatre and performance groups as actors, dramaturgs, directors, devisers, designers, and playwrights on and off campus, allowing them to experiment with a wide range of performance modes. At the same time, all students are expected to develop a strong foundation in current practices in theatre history, theatre and performance theory, and dramatic literature, in addition to their specific area of interest.

Coursework Schedule: The MA program requires completion of 30 credits, including 6 thesis credits taken in the final semester of course work. The PhD program requires completion of 69 credit hours of course-work and a dissertation. MA students who continue to the PhD may transfer up to 24 credit hours towards the PhD requirements. Incoming PhDs who have received the MA from another institution may transfer a maximum of 18 credit hours in consultation with the Program Director.

Overview of MA and PhD Programs

Degree Curricula and Requirements

During the first semester of study, all new MA and PhD students take the pro-seminar, Introduction to Research in Theatre, to familiarize themselves with the methods and materials of theatre research and writing. Thereafter, Master's students in ITS construct an individualized program of study culminating in a thesis. PhD students take a range of lecture/discussion and seminar-style courses in dramatic literature, history, and theory approved by the Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies Program and construct a Minor based on courses in other related disciplines. If they choose, they may also fulfill a foreign language requirement. They are admitted to dissertator status after an oral exam based on a selection of research papers (Preliminary exam), followed by a dissertation proposal defense, and the final dissertation defense. MA and PhD students also participate in the production process by serving as dramaturgs, assistant directors, performers, designers, or technicians, working on theatre and performance projects on and off campus.

Learning Goals and Objectives for the MA and PhD

MA

1. Articulate, critique, or elaborate the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry or schools of practice in theatre, drama and performance.
2. Identify sources and assemble evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the study of theatre, drama and performance.
3. Demonstrate understanding of theatre, drama and performance in historical, social, and global contexts.
4. Select and/or utilize the most appropriate methodologies and practices. Evaluate or synthesize information pertaining to questions or challenges in the fields of drama, theatre and performance.
5. Communicate clearly in projects that include collaborative theatre practice, writing seminar-level research papers, and a master's thesis.
6. Recognize and apply principles of ethical and professional conduct.

PhD

1. Demonstrate understanding of the theory, history, and practice of drama and theatre as collaborative cultural forms across historical periods.
2. Master the methods and materials of theatre and performance research and writing in order to produce original scholarly projects that range in complexity from term papers to dissertations.
3. Develop methods for theatre and performance practice and theory in order to test the reciprocal relations between research and practice through reflective participation in the production process.
4. Identify and distinguish among the diverse global locations of theatre and the intercultural contact among theatre traditions, especially as these multiply in the modern and contemporary periods.
5. Prepare for future careers combining theatre and performance scholarship, teaching, and/or practice.
6. Demonstrate professionalization in the discipline of theatre through participation in

conferences and submission of work to scholarly journals.

Teaching and Project Assistantships

The Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies Program supports its graduate students as much as possible through Teaching, Research, and Project Assistantships. It is our policy to provide financial aid, when available, for at least three years to PhD students. MAs matriculating into the PhD program may receive a total of four years of support if they had already received a year of assistantship during the MA, although assistantships for MA students are exceptional rather than customary.

Current Students interested in receiving any kind of assistantship must submit an application for a department assistantship to the ITS Graduate Coordinator, Brenda Weiss, by January 15 each year. Because of the quality and range of skills among our graduate students, an increasing number, after they finish course work, have received TA positions in departments other than Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies. We encourage qualified students to explore these options; however, it is important for graduate students receiving a PhD in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies to teach courses related to our program (if an assignment is available to them) for at least two or three semesters during their years of coursework and dissertation writing, in order to obtain teaching experience specifically in theatre studies. It is our policy that any TA/PA/RA support from other departments counts towards the five years of support offered to students as they progress through the doctoral program.

Program Faculty and Administration

The Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies Program is housed administratively in the Department of English, and is served by faculty members in two main categories.

- Throughout this document, the term "**ITS Core Faculty**" refers to members who have an administrative connection to ITS, regularly offer ITS courses, and have primary advising, mentoring, and governance responsibilities in the program.
- **Core Faculty** are de facto members of **the ITS Program Committee** (the administrative governing body for the Program), but may petition to request exemption from that role in a specific semester or academic year.
- "**Affiliate faculty**" refers to members in other units (departments or programs) who are formally affiliated with ITS, periodically offer courses appropriate for ITS students, and can serve on ITS MA and PhD committees. Affiliate status carries no automatic governance rights or duties; however, as specified in the Program Structure document. If need arises the Program Committee may invite Affiliates to serve on the Program Committee. In exceptional circumstances, Affiliate Faculty may serve as advisors upon approval by the Program Director and Program Committee.

The MA Program

The Master of Arts degree in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies can serve as the preparatory degree for the PhD, or as a terminal degree for students seeking greater exposure to theatre, drama, and performance studies beyond the undergraduate degree.

MA Requirements (30 Credits)

- ***Pro-seminar in Theatre Research ENGL 850 (1cr.):*** All students must take this course in the fall semester of their first year as part of their 30 credits.
- ***Engl 795 (2cr):*** taken in the Fall semester of the first year, by those teaching English Literature course
- ***ITS Coursework (21cr.) : 15 credits of ITS coursework*** *chosen in consultation with the faculty advisor;* ***6 credits of graduate course electives*** *from other departments may be selected in consultation with faculty advisor*
    - ***Optional participation in an approved theatre production or performance event*** as dramaturg, director, assistant director, stage manager, assistant stage manager, actor, designer, or technician ***(Engl 799).***
    - ***Thesis***. Students enroll in 1-6 credit hours of ***Engl 799***, for completing their thesis. A candidate for the MA degree must choose an advisor from the Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies faculty before the end of the second semester of study and prepare a thesis under their guidance. Before the degree can be conferred, the thesis must be approved by a committee consisting of three faculty members--the advisor, at least one more member from ITS or affiliate faculty, and one other member from an appropriate department or program. The approved thesis must be filed according to Graduate School deadlines. The thesis should represent independent research carried out by the student in consultation with the thesis committee.
    - ***A one-hour oral defense of the thesis***. At the defense, the student explains the contribution of the thesis to the field of study and responds to questions and critiques by the committee. Completion of the MA requires successful completion of the thesis and a satisfactory defense of it.
    - ***Review the Graduate School's Guide to Completing your Master's Degree*** This guide includes information about things you need to know and do, graduation information, deadlines, formatting requirements, depositing your thesis, etc.

MA Program Timeline

The MA program is designed to be completed in 3-4 semesters of full-time study.

MA Program: 1st Year

During Welcome Week of the Fall semester, all students receive the Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies MA and PhD Handbook which contains current policies about program requirements and progress. Students register for ITS Pro-seminar 850 and are advised by the Program Director about other appropriate courses. Because MA students must choose an advisor by the end of their second semester, they are encouraged to take courses with various members of the regular teaching faculty during the first year of study. All first-year MA students are assessed informally during the spring semester of the first year. Students who are struggling with coursework or research writing must meet with the Program Director and their advisor to discuss courses for the following semester, and strategies for improvement.

MA Program: 2nd Year

Second year students continue completing course requirements and begin work on a thesis

proposal in consultation with their advisor. After the advisor has approved the thesis proposal, the student selects a thesis committee consisting of the advisor and two other faculty members, including at least one other member from ITS Core or Affiliate faculty. Students petition for a thesis defense by writing to the Program Director, and schedule a date in coordination with their thesis committee and the Graduate Coordinator.

The Thesis

The MA thesis is a scholarly contribution to knowledge that attests to the student's ability to define, research, and articulate in writing a topic related to the field of Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies. Topics should be discussed with the advisor, and may focus on any aspect of theatre, drama, and performance studies, depending on the student's interests. Students who plan to petition for admission to the PhD program may choose a topic related to their possible area of focus in the PhD program. The MA thesis is typically 75-90 double-spaced pages in length, including the bibliography. *Students must distribute the thesis to committee members and request a degree warrant form from the Graduate Program Manager at least three weeks prior to the thesis defense date.*

Choosing an MA Advisor

The Graduate School requires every graduate student to have an academic advisor. The advisor is the primary contact person within the department and the faculty member who will guide the student most closely through their degree program. MA students work with the Program Director during their first semester in the program. In addition to meeting with the Director to plan the fall course schedule, students begin to discuss possibilities for a thesis advisor.
The Director and the Graduate Coordinator continue to serve as the liaison between the Graduate School and graduate students, working closely with the student's advisor on such issues as graduation requirements. , for Students are expected, however, to stay informed about both Graduate School and program requirements, and are responsible for making sure they are on track and meeting deadlines

The PhD Program

The PhD program in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison prepares students to assume professional positions as scholars, educators, and researchers in theatre and performance studies. The degree requirements are designed to balance theoretical and critical investigations with practical applications, and to allow for interdisciplinary studies that enhance the value and possibilities of the degree. Students are encouraged to participate in national and international professional meetings, and to publish in the field.

PhD Program Timeline

PhD coursework is usually completed within five or six semesters. Most students complete their dissertations four to six semesters after finishing their coursework. The number of MA credits transferred, the time taken to complete coursework requirements, and other factors can affect this timeline.

Coursework: 69 Credits, ITS, PhD Guide (effective June 2026)

Courses numbered 300 and above count toward a graduate degree. Courses numbered from 301-699 may carry both undergraduate and graduate credit, but the course must provide a separate

syllabus for graduate students. Courses numbered from 700-800 carry graduate credit only. Seminars offer in-depth study of specific areas of faculty expertise with a focus on scholarly discussion and research-based writing, and are listed as English 859: Seminar in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies.

- Engl 850 Pro-seminar (2cr) in Theatre Research, taken in the Fall semester of the first year.
- Engl 795, (1cr.) seminar, taken in the Fall semester of the first year, by those teaching English Literature course
- Engl. 859, 3 course (9cr) Seminar in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies; taught by ITS Core faculty during the student's period of coursework. In exceptional cases, a student may petition the ITS Program Committee for approval of a seminar that falls outside these categories but is demonstrably appropriate to their course of study.
- Graduate Seminar Electives: 10 courses (33cr.) related to Theatre Studies
- 9 credits minimum PhD Minor/Certificate: Courses in fields other than Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies, grouped as a Minor to complement the area of specialization and the major. Students, in consultation with their advisor, might choose a focused PhD minor supervised by another department or program, or they might select to complete a distributed minor in several departments or programs; see, *The Minor* section below
- Theatre Performance / Practicum, 3 courses (9cr) related to theatre performance or practicum
- Research: Engl 890, Pre-Dissertator Preliminary Exam Research
- Dissertator Research Engl. 990, students with dissertator status complete 3 credits of the following course every term up until degree completion

Over the course of the PhD program, students must acquire comprehensive knowledge of the field by taking at least two courses at the 500-level or above in each of the following areas of theatre research: dramatic literature, theatre history, and theatre and performance theory. Students must work with their advisors to ensure that both depth and breadth are achieved through the balance of courses and the final papers written for the courses. Of the six total courses, four courses should be taken with Core faculty; two courses may be taken with Affiliate faculty and with the advisor's approval, one may be taken in any department or program appropriate to the student's course of study. Upper-level courses taken at another university and Independent Study courses do not count towards satisfying this requirement.

Up to two Engl. 799 Independent Study research courses may be taken with individual ITS Core or Affiliated faculty members during the PhD coursework. Only one Independent Study may be taken with any one faculty member from the Core or Affiliate list. A student who wishes to request an exception due to special circumstances must apply to the ITS Program Committee for a waiver of this policy.

Area of Specialization

In selecting their coursework, students develop an area of specialization, based on the focus of their scholarly work. The area of specialization may be defined by a genre, a theoretical approach or methodology, a time period, and/or a geographical or linguistic area. It should be focused, yet broad enough for students to take eight courses relevant to it. At least four of the eight courses in the area of specialization must be taken with ITS Core faculty (the usual number is six). Generally, students define an area of specialization only when they are near the completion of course work, and it is possible to reorganize the checklist at that time to reflect the emerging area of specialization.

Breadth Requirement (PhD minor/certificate)

PhD Students must complete a Doctoral Minor or Graduate Certificate in consultation with their advisor, who will help them make the choice most appropriate for their research and career plans. Options include:

1. ***External minor*** or ***Graduate Certificate***

Students must have approval and advisement from the external minor department.

Distributed Minor: At least 9 credits outside the fields of theatre and performance studies, grouped to complement the area of specialization and the major. These courses are determined in consultation with the student's advisor. The breadth requirement must be completed prior to the Preliminary A exam which leads to dissertator status. (Effective term Fall 2024, 9 credit minimum distributed minor). The student's ITS advisor will approve a distributed minor course-work.

To declare a minor**:** go to MyGradPortal https://my.grad.wisc.edu/ select Add/Change Programs > Enrolled Programs > Add doctoral minor

2. ***Graduate Certificate*** **:** Please contact the specific certificate program directly for requirements and approval process

Please declare the PhD minor / Graduate certificate prior to Preliminary Exam A.

Portfolio Revision Credit

In their final semester of course work, students may enroll in a directed study (English 890) for one to three credits and use that time to revise their portfolio papers for the Preliminary Exam (described below).

Second Language

Although no longer a program requirement, strong second language ability expands possibilities for future research and teaching significantly, and the Program strongly recommends that PhD students who are not fluent in a second language should pursue language study during their coursework. Students who elect to pursue dissertation projects that require knowledge of other languages will be expected to develop reading knowledge in these languages to the satisfaction of their dissertation advisor.

Practicum Course Requirements

PhD students are required to take three practicum courses. A practicum course is defined as a course that substantively incorporates practice into its curriculum. Recommended courses for the fulfillment of this requirement include 3-credit courses in Playwriting in English; production courses in the Department of Theatre and Drama; performance courses in Art; Arts Institute guest residency courses; and foreign language department courses that include the production of a play. In lieu of *one* of their three required practicum courses, students can participate in three pre-approved production activities as playwrights, dramaturgs, assistant directors, performers, designers, technicians, etc.. See the description of production activities, below, for more information.

Production Activities

Students are encouraged, but not required, to engage in production activities which further their research as part of their graduate studies. Particular production activities may be taken for one credit of ENGL 799. If you wish to get credit for a production activity, discuss the matter with your advisor for approval so that you can arrange the ENGL 799 registration. Students should sign up for the credit as early in the semester as possible, and certainly before the course registration deadline.

Three credits of such production activities may count as one of the three practicum courses students are required to take. Production credits accepted for 799 credit are usually for performances produced by University Theatre, University Opera, or the Dance Department. In some cases, student or off-campus productions may count toward this credit, if the project offers the opportunity for students to work with professional artists, or will broaden the student's production skills. However, such productions must be vetted at least by the beginning of the student's involvement in the project, with an ITS Core or Affiliate faculty member observing the student's activity and discussing the process and outcomes with the student. The more clearly the student can demonstrate that work on a production will gain them new and important insights into performance practice, the more likely it is that this credit will be approved. Students will also be required to write a 1000-word reflection essay on their production activity and submit it to the instructor of record for the Eng. 799 credit. In some cases, a 4-credit course involving research and production may allow students to use 3 credits for a practicum course credit, and 1 credit for a production activity.

Preliminary Exam

After the final semester of coursework, and after fulfilling all the course distribution, practicum requirements and breadth requirement (PhD minor or graduate certificate) PhD students need to pass the Preliminary Exam to be advanced to Dissertator status. A request for the Preliminary Exam warrant form must be submitted to the Graduate Program manager for distribution to attending faculty at least three weeks prior to the exam. Students will defend their annotated bibliography and a research paper with the ITS Program Committee which involves an oral defense of approximately 90-120 minutes.; this is considered the Preliminary Exam Defense. See details below.

The Dissertation

The culminating project of the PhD degree, the dissertation is an original and substantial contribution to knowledge that establishes the student as a scholar and professional in the field of theatre studies. The PhD degree is awarded after a successful two hour defense of the dissertation led by the candidate's doctoral committee. Students may request permission from their advisor to invite family members or other doctoral students to the defense as auditors, but participation is limited to committee members.

PhD Program Timeline

PhD Program: 1st Year
During Welcome Week of the Fall semester, all students receive the MA and PhD Handbook which contains current policies about program requirements and progress. Students enroll in the Pro- seminar in Theatre Research (unless already taken for the MA degree in ITS) and are advised by the Program Director to take as many Theatre Research classes as is feasible during the first year.
Incoming students are encouraged to look at the online timetable and have a proposed schedule of classes in mind before meeting with the Director. Students holding Teaching Assistantships may wish to register for only three courses (including the 2-credit Pro-seminar in the Fall semester of their first year), while non-TAs (including Fellowship students) may take four courses per semester**.** Students who TA in the English department must enroll in Engl. 795.

Transfer Credits: All new PhD students should meet with the Program Director (or their advisor, if they have already selected one) early during the Fall semester to discuss transfer credits. Current MA students in the ITS program, who continue into the PhD, may use 24 credits of MA coursework towards the PhD curriculum; for new PhD students, up to 18 credits may transfer. All first year PhD students are assessed formally at the end of the spring semester and receive a written progress report.

PhD Program: 2nd Year

Students continue taking mainly Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies courses, but are also advised to begin fulfilling other requirements (e.g. Practicum courses, courses for the Minor, and courses relating to their areas of interest taught in other departments). *Students must select an advisor by the end of their third semester on campus*, and meet with them to discuss the process of writing and revising portfolio papers for the Preliminary exam. All portfolio papers must be written during the period of coursework for the PhD program.

In addition to their course-based assessments and grades, second-year students are assessed formally in the late Spring. The second-year assessment letter is based on written comments from the advisor and the faculty members with whom the student has taken courses during that year. It documents that the student is either (1) making satisfactory progress; or (2) deficient in some areas (research skills, writing, conceptualization, etc.); or (3) not making expected progress and likely to be placed on probation.

Choosing a PhD Advisor

The Graduate School requires every graduate student to have an academic advisor. The advisor is the primary contact person within the department, and the faculty member who will guide a student most closely through their degree program.

The Program Director serves as the advisor for PhD students during the student's first three semesters or until the student selects an advisor from among ITS faculty.

The choice of advisor is an important one, and students should reflect on the best fit with their own scholarly pursuits. They are encouraged to decide on a permanent advisor by the beginning of their third semester, and are *required* to do so by the end of that semester. After a student has chosen an advisor, they should write a memo to that faculty member confirming the agreement, with copies to the Program Director and the Graduate Coordinator (this second copy will be added to their permanent file). Students who graduated from the MA to the PhD within the ITS program may change their advisor for doctoral work. Students who wish to change their advisor after the Preliminary exam may also do so after appropriate consultation with the current and future advisors.
The Program Director and the Graduate Coordinator continue to serve as the links between the Graduate School and graduate students, working closely with each student's advisor on such issues as fellowship competitions, graduation requirements, transfer credits, and residency requirements.

However, students are responsible for making sure they are on track, meeting deadlines, and filling out appropriate applications.

Advancement to Dissertator Status

Preliminary Exam/Dissertation Preparation

In their final year of coursework (usually their third academic year), students will complete the following:

1. During the semester before the prelim exam (usually spring of the third year), students will take English 890 with their advisor, where they will develop their list as well as design their prospectus.

2. During spring term of the third year (in the course of Engl. 890), students will develop an annotated bibliography list of 100 works in consultation with their dissertation advisor. The annotated bibliography will be divided into three or four subsections, each with a theme to be covered by theoretical studies as well as primary materials. These subsections will also include rhetorical questions that show the PC how the student is creating their list.

3. **Prelim Exam:** An oral exam with the ITS program committee will take place during welcome week of the fourth year. This exam will consist of an oral defense (90-120 minutes) of their reading list and a research paper of approximately 10,000 words on a topic related to their dissertation (done during Engl.890). The defense of the reading list will show breadth and understanding of theatre and performance studies as well as the student's own area of interests. Students who pass the Preliminary Exam Defense, will achieve dissertator status. Students who do not pass this defense will be required to retake the defense by the end of the Fall semester of their 4th year in the program. Students will obtain ABD status once they pass this exam.

4. **Prospectus:** By their first semester of the fourth year of study, students will form their dissertation committee and prepare a dissertation proposal. This work must be completed and circulated to the committee at least three weeks before the end of the first semester of the fourth year. In exceptional circumstances, students may request an extension to the PC.

5. Students will defend their dissertation proposal in an oral defense (90-120 minute) with their dissertation committee by the end of their fourth year.

Dissertator Status

Dissertator status is achieved when a student meets all the requirements on the PhD checklist and has passed the Preliminary exam. Dissertators register for a maximum of three credits each semester, usually for 990: Thesis/Dissertation Research. A dissertator registered for three credits of graduate- level coursework is considered a full-time student, although in some departments a student must take 6 credits to hold a TA appointment.

The Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee consists of four or more members, including the Dissertation Advisor and one other member of the ITS faculty. Of the two remaining members, at least one member must represent a unit outside ITS (possibly including ITS Affiliate faculty), and one may be a graduate faculty member from another institution. The dissertation advisor must be a Core faculty member in the ITS Program, and may in exceptional circumstances serve as advisors. If approved by the Program Director and Program Committee may participate in the intellectual life of the program through teaching and mentoring of graduate students, and other Program activities and events.

A committee may have two co-advisors, but at least one of the co-advisors must be a Core faculty member or an affiliate member approved by the PC. At least three committee members must serve as readers, responsible for reading the entire dissertation closely. In some circumstances, a dissertation committee might include a member who is not expected to assess the dissertation with the same degree of engagement as a reader. With the approval of the ITS Program Committee, one Academic Staff member who holds a terminal degree may also serve on a dissertation committee. The committee is formed by the dissertator in consultation with the advisor, and the dissertator is responsible for obtaining written confirmation from the committee members that they have agreed to serve on the dissertation committee.

The Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal is prepared under the guidance of the student's dissertation advisor. The proposal may vary from 20-25 pages depending on the candidate's topic. It should be accompanied by a substantial *bibliography* of 3-5 pages and a one-page *abstract* that summarizes the project. The proposal should be a focused and coherent document that clearly identifies and conceptualizes the subject of the dissertation, its relation to existing scholarship, its principal research methodology, and its contribution to the scholarly field. It should also include at least a brief outline and description of the various chapters. The bibliography need not be exhaustive but must demonstrate that the student is familiar with the relevant major primary and secondary sources.

Completed dissertations must meet accessibility standards so everyone can access these works quickly, easily, and independently. As you create graphics, write, and format your dissertation, pay attention to the digital accessibility fundamentals and follow the document accessibility guide.

The Final Dissertation Defense

Dissertators should notify the Program Director and the Graduate Coordinator of their intention to defend at least one month in advance to request the "PhD Final Defense Warrant". Students must 0submit their dissertation to committee members at least three weeks before the defense date. The student is responsible for providing a hard copy of the dissertation to any committee member who requests it.

The defense usually lasts about two hours. It assesses the dissertation in regard to its completeness, coherence, and contribution to the field. The dissertation may be accepted without revisions, accepted with minor revisions, accepted with major revisions, or rejected altogether. Most dissertations are accepted with either minor or major revisions. If committee members recommend that the dissertation can be deposited with minor or no substantial revisions, they will sign the "PhD Warrant" and the "Committee Page" form. Revisions have to be completed before the dissertation can be deposited. In the rare instance that a dissertation is rejected, a new defense will need to be scheduled within a time period stipulated by the committee.

Depositing the Dissertation

All dissertations that have successfully been defended must be deposited with the university. Once the Graduate School has generated a final defense warrant form, the program manager will send a link to all committee members, shortly before the defense date. Committee members will e- sign the final degree warrant after the defense. Once all signatures are in, the Graduate program manager will email the student with instructions on how to download the warrant form. Students will upload a copy of the signed degree warrant form with their dissertation at the time of submission.
Review the Graduate School's Guide to Completing Your Doctoral Degree this guide includes

information about things you need to know and do, graduation information, deadlines, formatting requirements, depositing your dissertation, etc.

Degree Deadline
The Graduate School requires Dissertators to complete the dissertation within five (5) years of having reached Dissertator status, and to complete and deposit the dissertation within one (1) year of the oral dissertation defense. It may be possible to get an extension on the five-year rule for completion of the dissertation. Petitions for an extension need to be made to the Graduate School and are subject to current policies. Please consult with the Graduate Coordinator and the Program Director for further information.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (est. Dec. 10, 2024)

Your continuation as a graduate student at UW-Madison is at the discretion of your program, the Graduate School, and your faculty advisor. Any student may be placed on probation or dismissed from the Graduate School for not maintaining satisfactory academic progress, and this can impact your academic standing (detailed below), financial aid (see this policy page: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1040), or funding (consult your sources of funding, as applicable).

Our Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies program has its own definition of satisfactory academic progress and related procedures that supplement Graduate School policy, as described in this section.
Students must uphold Satisfactory Academic Satisfactory progress by maintaining minimum degree requirements and academic expectations as defined by both the Graduate School and the Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies program.

In addition to the Graduate School's monitoring of satisfactory academic progress https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1218, this program regularly reviews the satisfactory academic progress and expectations of its students, defined as the following:
Academic Expectations:

1. Grades: https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grading-system/
   a. maintain **3.0 GPA** as defined by the Graduate School
   b. (I) incomplete grade in any course will be resolved during the subsequent semester of enrollment; an instructor may impose an earlier deadline. Failure to resolve an incomplete grade may result in an enrollment hold and a warning from the Graduate School/program. In consultation with the program, a student may be dismissed from Graduate School for failure to complete coursework and receive a final grade in a timely fashion. All incomplete grades must be resolved before a student may take the preliminary examination or before a degree is granted.

2. Expected timeline for course progression
   a. PhD: Required coursework completed within the first three years
   b. MA: Required coursework completed in the first two years, including defense of MA thesis in the final semester

3. Expectations for quality scholarship and research
   PhD Students will complete satisfactory course research papers, compile reading lists for preliminary exam and research towards the dissertation topic. Students are also encouraged to participate in national and international professional meetings, and to publish in the field as well as participate in production activities as dramaturgs, assistant directors, performers, designers or technicians.

Annual review for Academic Satisfactory progress:

PhD Students: The program committee will conduct annual reviews for satisfactory academic progress and expectations. Formal review of academic progress with written evaluation in the first two years. Milestone review in year 3-5 will also include review of Graduate School and ITS academic expectations.

Year one and two, formal written evaluation:
1. Review student academic progress: timely coursework completion, grades, scholarly activity, research, student goals, GA appointments/fellowships
2. Review a course research paper (two distinct papers, one per annual review)
    a. The program committee members will review research papers and student progress. Then students will receive a cumulative evaluation from the PC.
    b. Students who present satisfactory reports will continue in the program. Students whose work is identified as needing improvement may be asked to complete extra work.

Year three:
1. In the student's final year of coursework, they will complete the following which will be reviewed by the program committee:
    a. In consultation with advisor, submit and defend a reading list
    b. Develop dissertation committee, prepare dissertation proposal

Year Four:
a. defend proposal and achieve dissertator status.
b. Students who pass the Preliminary Exam Defense, will be appointed dissertator status. Students who do not pass this defense, will be required to retake the defense by the end of their fall semester of their 4th year of

Year five:
Dissertators work towards completion of the dissertation in coordination with their committee.

MA students: The program committee will conduct annual reviews for satisfactory academic progress and expectations. Formal review of academic progress with written evaluation in the first year. In year two, semester two, the student will take six credits of thesis and defend their MA thesis by April 1.

Not Meeting Academic Expectations and Dismissal from program (est. Dec. 10, 2024)

Students who are not meeting overall satisfactory academic progress and expectation will meet with the Director of the Program to discuss options and create a timeline to meet expectations. If it is clear that a student cannot meet the expected requirements for progress by the agreed upon timeline/deadline then the student may be dismissed from the program in consultation with the ITS program committee and Graduate School.

Student progress is reviewed yearly. If the faculty advisor and ITS program committee find, during the annual review or at any other time, that a student has failed to achieve satisfactory progress in the academic expectations set in this handbook, the student will be notified and given an opportunity to submit a response within a set time period (typically 2 weeks). The faculty advisor and program committee will review the response within 2 weeks and determine if further action is needed.

Students may be dismissed from the program. Students may, alternatively, be placed on probation for one semester and then reviewed by the Program Committee following the probationary semester. Students placed on probation may be dismissed or allowed to continue based upon review of progress during the probationary semester. If a student wishes to appeal any decision stemming from this review process, they can do so within 2 weeks of the date of the decision letter through submitting a letter to the Director of the

Program and requesting a new hearing with the addition of a faculty member external to the original program committee.

Coursework Schedule for PhD Students who have completed at least of 18 credits advanced of coursework in ITS related fields. These courses must be approved by ITS as appropriate for transfer. Students who are not transferring credits will need to spend extra time—usually a fourth year--in coursework. Students who have completed the MA in ITS may transfer 24 credit hours of their MA coursework toward their PhD. They can expect to complete their coursework within three years.

First Year	**Fall Courses** 9 credits total including Engl. 795 and Engl.850	**Spring Courses** 9 credits total	**Assessment (in addition to course grades)** By April 30: Student submits a sample paper, and a statement of academic progress to committee. Passing this review allows students to stay in the program. Not passing requires the student to respond to faculty concerns about students' work through meeting certain goals by the end of the following semester.
Second Year	**Fall Courses** 9 credits	**Spring Courses** 9 credits	**Assessment (in addition to course grades)** By April 30: Student submits a sample paper, and a statement of academic progress to committee. Passing this review allows students to stay in the program. Not passing requires the student to respond to faculty concerns about students' work through meeting certain goals by the end of the following semester.
Third Year	**Fall Courses** 9 credits	**Spring Courses** 6 credits: Students shall spend 3 of these 6 credits taking Engl.890) to prepare for their preliminary exam.	**Assessment (in addition to course grades)** By End of spring Semester: Students complete draft of their reading list, which needs to be approved by Program Committee. By End of Spring Semester: Student presents the approved reading list and their research paper of approximately 10,000 words related to their dissertation to committee and takes an oral exam to show their preparedness for dissertation work. Student who passes this exam attains dissertation status.
Fourth Year	**Fall Courses** Dissertator enrolls in 3 cr. Engl.990	**Spring Courses** Dissertator enrolls in 3 cr. Engl.990	**Assessment (in addition to course grades)** Fall: As early as welcome week of year 4, students take the preliminary exam which will consist of oral defense of their reading list and research paper of approximately 10,000 words related to their dissertation to the PC committee. Students who pass this exam attain dissertation status. By their fall semester of the fourth year of study, students will form their dissertation committee and prepare a dissertation proposal. This work must be completed and circulated to the committee at least three weeks before the end of the first semester of the fourth year. In exceptional

			circumstances, students may request an extension to the PC. Dissertation proposal defense will take place with a dissertation committee, any time before the fall semester is over. This defense will take between 90-120 minutes.
Following Semesters	**Fall Courses** Dissertator enrolls in 3 cr. Engl.990	**Spring Courses** Dissertator enrolls in 3 cr. Engl.990	**Assessment** Dissertation advisor assesses dissertation progress each semester and gives student grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Dissertator needs to stay in close touch with advisor and program manager, and be aware of university policies around dissertation expectations.
Dissertation Defense Date	**At time selected by committee**		**Assessment** Dissertator defends dissertation. Upon successful defense and completion of any revisions required by the committee, student becomes a Doctor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies.