About the Program

Theatre students at Slippery Rock University develop their art through a synthesis of hands-on experiences in academic classrooms, design and acting laboratories, and public performance spaces. Theatre at SRU is a liberal arts program, which serves to enrich students’ understanding of and appreciation of, and connection to the outside world. The theatre department is committed to providing strong pre-professional training and preparing students both for careers as performers, designers, writers, technicians, and for potential graduate studies.

Acting

Actors at SRU receive top-flight pre-professional training. In addition to fundamentals of acting, acting II and acting shakespeare, students can take up to three sections of acting technique, a course focusing on specialized topics such as auditioning, Meisner technique, dialects, and stage combat. Central to SRU’s theatre program is the “Shakespeare Emphasis,” in which students receive intensive training in the particular skills needed for performance of the classics. Play seasons are chosen to give students a wide range of experiences - from performing the classics, to musicals, to cutting-edge contemporary world premieres.

Arts Administration

The arts administration track prepares undergraduate students for careers in administration, arts advocacy, and support services for nonprofit cultural agencies, institutions and performing arts organizations. Students gain hands-on experience through theatre department productions, internships, and the annual Kaleidescope Arts Festival. The track is enhanced by relationships with the Midwestern Arts and Humanities Foundation, the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, and numerous other local and regional arts organizations and artists.

Design and Technology

By having the opportunity to design and assist both on the main stage and in another experimental lab space, students gain skills that enable them to make, justify and execute original production and design choices. Students can specialize in one area of design and technology while gaining additional skills in another. Scene, costume, lighting and sound design are all options for students as well as costume technology, stage management, scenic construction and scene painting. Hands-on learning is the focus of this program. Skilled students are hired onto student staff to bring the main stage productions to life.

International Travel

Every other year, the SRU theatre department travels to Edinburgh, Scotland to participate in the renowned Edinburgh Fringe Festival – the largest theatre festival in the world. All of our student cast and crew partake in a truly life-changing
Facilities
The SRU Department is looking forward to moving into a completely renovated Performing Arts Center in 2019. Plans for Miller Auditorium include renovations to the proscenium theatre, which will include seating for 753, two new dance studios, an orchestra pit, a scene shop and a new, expanded lobby space. Pearl Stoner Complex improvements will include enhanced classroom and studio space for the dance and theatre departments and will have a new flexible, black box theater with seating for 296, a new costume shop, acting and design classrooms and a dance studio.

Productions
Auditions for the theatre department productions are open to any registered SRU student. The department produces four main stage shows, and 3-4 student productions every year. We like to see new faces, and directors generally aim for a blend of established majors and newcomers. The department produces the Brave New Plays Festival every year, showcasing student writing, acting, directing and design. Recent productions include Spring Awakening, Julius Caesar, Doubt, Ghosts, and Christmas Carol. Our 2017-2018 season will include Honky, Frost/Nixon, and Heathers, The Musical.

Career Opportunities
Theatre majors will find a variety of career opportunities in theatre and related fields. Our graduates have performed, designed and stage managed productions in regional theaters, as well as on film and television. They have formed their own companies, worked on Broadway, gone on to graduate studies, and become theatre educators, playwrights and producers.

Jobs and Internships held by our alumni:
- American Players’ Theatre
- Carnegie Science Center
- City Theatre, Pittsburgh
- Civic Light Opera
- Glimmerglass Opera
- Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812, Broadway
- Orphan Girl Children’s Theatre
- People’s Light and Theatre
- Pittsburgh Public Theater
- Pittsburgh Symphony
- Saturday Night Live
- Squonk Opera
- Steppenwolf Theater
- Three Rivers Entertainment