

# MFA Acting Program | Frequently Asked Questions

## HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE ACCEPTED EACH YEAR INTO THE MFA ACTING PROGRAM?

A cohort of 14 MFA actors are chosen from a competitive pool of applicants each year.

## HOW LONG IS THE MFA ACTING PROGRAM AT DEPAUL?

The MFA is a two-year, full-time, in-person program.

## DO I NEED AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE TO ATTEND THE MFA ACTING PROGRAM?

Yes. An applicant must possess a four-year bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution or an international equivalent.

## IS IT NECESSARY TO HAVE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN THEATRE OR ACTING/PERFORMANCE TO BE ADMITTED INTO THE MFA ACTING PROGRAM?

No. An MFA candidate's undergraduate degree can be in any subject. Our students come from a wide variety of backgrounds.

## WHAT TYPE OF SCHEDULE CAN I EXPECT? IS IT POSSIBLE TO HOLD AN OUTSIDE JOB WHILE IN THE PROGRAM?

While classes are in session, the training and performance schedule requires time commitment morning through evening, often 9:00am-10:00pm. Rehearsals are scheduled on Sunday afternoon and/or evenings, and performances run on weekday and weekend evenings, with some weekend matinees. For these reasons, any outside work must be carefully managed and *considerably* flexible.

Students are welcome to work during the winter break, which runs from Thanksgiving to just after New Year's Day, and summer break, which runs from mid-June to just after Labor Day.

## WHAT IS TRAINING LIKE AT THE THEATRE SCHOOL (TTS)?

TTS is a rigorous conservatory. Training encompasses a variety of acting techniques and methodologies prioritizing physical body, voice, and ensemble work. It is a highly collaborative program with tight-knit cohorts where students support one another, negotiate personal relationships with good boundaries, and respect ensemble agreements.

## WHAT TYPE OF PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES CAN I EXPECT?

TTS hosts over 30 productions annually, which includes a wide-ranging season of venues, genres, and directors and serves students in both the BFA and MFA performance programs. MFA and BFA actors audition twice a year for the production season and are considered equally for roles in productions. All students share combined, competitive casting with rigorous rehearsal and performance requirements.

All casting is assigned by the Chair of Performance and the Head of MFA Acting based on the developmental needs of each student, the needs of each production as articulated by its director, and the desire to achieve a

balance of collaborative opportunity between all students. MFA students are guaranteed to be cast in four productions, but the size of roles and/or venues are not promised.

In the first year, MFA students perform in the winter and spring quarters, and in the second year, they perform in the fall and winter quarters. Additional opportunities for collaborative projects with other TTS departments are available in the spring quarter of the second year.

### **IS THERE AN INDUSTRY SHOWCASE NEAR THE END OF THE PROGRAM?**

In the winter quarter, under the guidance of faculty, graduating actors prepare Digital (screen) and Live (stage) [Graduate Showcases](#). The Live Showcase consists of a series of theatrical scenes, which are presented in Chicago (and may also be shared in Los Angeles) for casting directors, talent agents, producers, and directors from theatre, film, and television. The Live Showcase also includes a series of alumni networking events to introduce and connect our graduates with our large alumni network. The Digital Showcase is a series of professionally filmed scene work, which is posted online and disseminated widely to industry professionals.

### **CAN I WORK PROFESSIONALLY WHILE ENROLLED IN THE MFA PROGRAM?**

In the first year, the rigor of the program limits outside acting/performance jobs when class is in session. If an opportunity arises, students should seek council and written permission from the Head of the MFA program. In the second year, outside work may be considered *only if* it avoids conflicts with classes and rehearsals. If a longer commitment is needed for an outside opportunity, a full-year leave of absence may be required due to curriculum sequencing.

### **ARE THERE ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES NOT COVERED BY TUITION?**

Students should expect to spend \$1,500 or more for expenses related to Graduate Showcase in the second year. This could include auditions and/or events that require headshots, websites, travel, etc. These expenses are not covered by TTS and are the responsibility of the student.