

# School of Design & Production

*Michael Kelley, Dean*

## I. Overview of School

In recognition of the primary importance of designers, craftsmen, and managers as full collaborators in the performing arts, the School of Design and Production offers a unique and comprehensive program of instruction and practice in ten different concentrations at the master's degree level in theatrical and entertainment design, production, management, and specialized crafts.

At UNCSA, students design and execute the sets, properties, costumes, lighting, wigs, makeup, and sound. Our students manage all production aspects for more than twenty productions each year. The School of Design and Production partners with the Schools of Dance, Drama, Filmmaking, and Music in mounting productions and projects, including operas, musicals, plays, films, ballets and contemporary dance performances.

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) is a terminal degree professional training program consisting of three years of advanced study. This program is open to college graduates holding an undergraduate degree who wish to specialize in one of four design concentrations, or one of six production concentrations. Studio, coursework and production assignments escalate in scale and complexity to prepare students to take full responsibility for productions as professional designers, managers and technicians.

### Design and Production Concentrations

Classes are small and the resident faculty members are both working professionals and full-time participants in the training program. The faculty regularly gives guidance and evaluation to each student throughout the three-year program.

#### **Design Concentrations:**

- Costume Design
- Scene Design
- Sound Design
- Wig and Makeup

#### **Production Concentrations:**

- Costume Technology
- Scenic Art
- Stage Automation
- Stage Properties
- Technical Direction
- Production and Project Management

## II. Specific Admissions and Transfer Requirements

The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program in Design and Production is a three-year graduate program offering specialization in costume design, costume technology, scene design, scenic art, sound design, stage properties, stage automation, technical direction, wig and makeup design, and production and project management.

Admission to the MFA Programs in the School of Design and Production is by application, interview, and portfolio assessment. Candidates must have completed an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university (or the equivalent if the institution is located outside the United States). To apply, candidates must submit the following:

- a completed application form and application fee,
- two letters of recommendation,
- an official transcript with a seal or registrar's signature from each college attended (copies are unacceptable and international students must submit a certified English translation for each transcript),
- a résumé detailing the applicant's artistic experience and educational objectives, and
- a TOEFL test (if the candidate is an international student.)

The following must occur before a student is officially admitted to the program:

- the applicant must attend an interview and portfolio evaluation with faculty from the School of Design and Production,
- a "take-away" of portfolio samples must accompany the interview (usually in the form of a print-out, disc or thumbdrive, but other forms may be acceptable),
- the faculty submits a written evaluation of the applicant's interview. The application is then sent to the Dean of the School of Design and Production for final approval. To assure a safe and collegial campus, background checks of applicants may be required.

All students in the School of Design and Production must be able to physically, artistically and intellectually participate in all phases and activities of the program area in which they are enrolled. In general, students in the School of Design and Production must possess the ability to communicate clearly with faculty and other students in classes and production activities; and must be able to watch and hear theatrical productions and possess the ability to analyze and discuss them. The various professional fields of design and production have specific physical demands. The School of Design and Production embraces inclusiveness and will make reasonable accommodations for students showing professional promise and the ability to handle the rigorous work of the program and of the field. It is important to note that not all disabilities can be accommodated.

**Transfer Credit or Advanced Placement:** Transfer and/or advanced placement credits will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## III. Specific Standards of Achievement, Evaluation, and Continuation

### A. Portfolio Review

All students are required to present their work to the entire faculty at the Portfolio Review at the end of the Spring Semester each year. The faculty uses this presentation to further develop an understanding of the student's progress and steer the student's future in the program.

## **B. Production Evaluations**

Students enrolled in Production must participate in the Production Evaluation process at the end of each semester of enrollment. More specific information concerning the Production Evaluation process is available from the faculty of each concentration. All work covered in the course entitled Production will be graded and evaluated at the end of each semester by the entire D&P faculty

## **C. Residency and Placement**

The residency requirement for the MFA is a minimum of two years as a full time student at UNCSA. A full time student is one who is enrolled for a minimum of nine graduate credits per semester. The MFA degree must be completed within five years of the graduate student's initial enrollment in the program.

Placement in the program is based on the faculty's assessment of a student's prior training, abilities, and proficiency.

## **D. MFA Thesis Requirement**

As a terminal degree, the MFA requires a rigorous thesis. Each MFA concentration in Design and Production has thesis requirements and guidelines specific to the concentration and field. For further information, consult the director of the specific MFA concentration. The MFA thesis must be successfully completed within five years of the student's initial enrollment in the program.

## **E. Continuation**

Graduate students in the School of Design and Production MFA programs must maintain a Grade Point Average of 3.0 each semester. Earning less than a 3.0 is grounds for dismissal. Students may not carry more than six credit hours of C on their transcript. Exceeding the limit of six credit hours of C will be grounds for dismissal from the program. Graduate students receiving the grade of D or F in any course will be subject to dismissal from the program. In some cases, MFA students earning a grade of D or F may petition the Dean of Design and Production for continuation in the program as a student under Probation. The decision of the Dean as to continuation under Probation or Dismissal from the program is final.

Continuation from one academic year to the next in all concentrations in the School of Design and Production is not automatic, and is based on several factors. Among these are: faculty assessment of professional potential, class grades, production assignment evaluations, growth in artistic and/or technical abilities as applicable, academic growth, professional demeanor and creative discipline. If a student is found to have interacted inappropriately with the UNCSA or School of Design and Production community, or to have failed to follow UNCSA or School of Design and Production policies and procedures, he or she will be dismissed from the program. Please see the Graduate Policy on Student Probation and Continuation.

An Invitation to Return from the School of Design and Production is required each year. Students exhibiting satisfactory grades, growth and performance will be invited to return to the program. Students who do not exhibit satisfactory grades, growth and performance will be dismissed.

## **F. Additional School of Design and Production Policies**

Students must read and comply with all policies and procedures in the School of Design and Production Student Handbook. Students must sign a Student Agreement at the beginning of each school year verifying that they have read the Design and Production Student Handbook and yearly affirm they accept the policies and procedures contained therein.

## **IV. Additional Costs, Materials, and Equipment**

Students are personally responsible for obtaining the supplies and equipment required by their MFA concentration, such as drafting equipment, shop hand tools, drawing and design supplies, as well as required (or recommended) textbooks for courses. Expenditures will be heaviest during the first year, as students make major investments that they will use for the rest of their professional careers. Students not already owning some of the necessary major equipment and supplies needed should be prepared to spend \$750 or more during the early part of their first year. Computer and software requirements and recommendations are specific to each program and field. Please see the director of the specific MFA concentration for further information.