



# **Undergraduate Student Handbook 2024/2025**

# Contents

03	<a href="#"><u>Mission Statement</u></a>
04	<a href="#"><u>Welcome from the Department Chair</u></a>
05	<a href="#"><u>General Information</u></a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Department Offices / Contact</li><li>Production Facilities</li><li>Communications</li><li>Events</li></ul>
06	<a href="#"><u>Requirements for Majors &amp; Minors</u></a>
06	<a href="#"><u>Class Auditions &amp; Interviews</u></a>
08	<a href="#"><u>Advising &amp; Expectations for Students</u></a>
09	<a href="#"><u>Steps for Success</u></a>
10	<a href="#"><u>Additional Academic Opportunities</u></a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Double Majors</li><li>Transferring Units</li><li>Education Abroad</li></ul>
11	<a href="#"><u>Getting Involved Outside the Classroom</u></a>
12	<a href="#"><u>Careers &amp; Professional Preparation</u></a>
12	<a href="#"><u>Department Prizes</u></a>
13	<a href="#"><u>Department Policies</u></a>
13	<a href="#"><u>Links to Campus Resources</u></a>

# Mission & Vision

The Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies (TDPS) teaches performance as a mode of critical inquiry, innovation, creativity, knowledge production, and public engagement.

Within our active experiential learning spaces, our students develop strong analytical and technical capacities. Our graduates are uniquely equipped to bring a just, creative, interconnected, and relational approach to the pressing challenges of our time.

# Welcome from the Department Chair

Located within the College of Letters and Science, the Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies—and the allied Graduate Group in Performance Studies—houses faculty, students, and staff who pursue a wide spectrum of research and production activities. We see performance as an interdisciplinary form, exploring verbal, visual, spatial, and embodied registers of experience. We see performance as a transnational cultural form, exploring the politics and poetics of social life in all parts of the world. We see performance as a public forum for contemporary ideas, allowing us to test and debate the central concerns of our time in a space that is at once critical, emotional, and collective.

The faculty is nationally and internationally known, both for its scholarly research and for its artistic work in design, directing, choreography, acting, playwriting, and experimental performance. Our curriculum ranges from the classics to the contemporary; it cuts across theatrical, dance, and visual art forms; it spans all corners of the globe, using the site of performance to deepen UC Berkeley's critical education in the humanities. Indeed, at a time when scholars and educators call for more cross-disciplinary intellectual collaboration and project-based learning in higher education, we take pride in our daily commitment to the kind of rigorously critical, team-based projects we develop with our students, staff, and faculty both in the classroom and in our production season.

Separate undergraduate degree programs are offered in Theater and Performance Studies (TPS) and Dance and Performance Studies (DPS). While all students fulfill core requirements in theater or dance and performance studies, each student may choose electives to focus their studies in one or more areas. Undergraduate majors and minors will be well prepared for the future, both as artists and engaged citizens of the world. The flexibility and integration of our TPS and DPS programs makes our majors excellent candidates for a variety of professions in the social, corporate, legal, and arts sectors as well for admission to graduate programs in the arts and in professional schools. We are proud of the ways our graduates have used their critical and expressive skills toward successful careers as professional artists and designers in dance, theater, and experimental performance as well as in law, advertising, human resources, publishing, radio, technology, social work, and in all aspects of business and nonprofit administration.

Through the course of their studies, students may choose to pursue a focus in acting, design, directing, technical production, dance technique, choreography, or playwriting while simultaneously taking critical and cultural studies courses that set the literary, historical, political, theoretical, and aesthetic concerns of performance in dialogue with other disciplines. Faculty members teach at all levels, and students have ample opportunity to study with eminent scholars and practitioners.

The department offers a performance season of classic, modern, and new theatrical works along with Berkeley Dance Project, an annual concert of new choreographic work. Entry-level performance courses in acting, directing, dance technique, playwriting, choreography, and design are open to all students. Advanced students hone their skills with “capstone experiences” in performance practice, performance studies, directing, choreography, playwriting, arts administration, design, pedagogy, internships and field studies, graduate school preparation, study abroad, and undergraduate seminars. Capstone courses are designed for TPS and DPS majors and minors seeking depth and engagement with topics related to their focus of study.

Welcome to our inclusive and energetic department. Here you will find small class sizes, inspiring faculty, engaged staff, talented peers, and ample opportunities to pursue your artistic and intellectual creativity!

— Professor SanSan Kwan, Department Chair





## Department Offices

The TDPS Main Office, 15 Dwinelle Hall, houses all faculty and advising offices. For a directory of staff, faculty, and graduate students, visit [tdps.berkeley.edu](https://tdps.berkeley.edu). Contact the main office at (510) 642-1677 or [tdps@berkeley.edu](mailto:tdps@berkeley.edu)

## Production Facilities

Our performance spaces include the 500-seat Zellerbach Playhouse, the 140-seat Durham Studio Theater, and Zellerbach Room 7, a 60-seat black box theater. Zellerbach 170 and Bancroft Studio also serve as dance and performance spaces. In addition, the department has several rehearsal rooms, design studios, a variety of shops (scene, paint, costume, etc.), and an extensive properties and wardrobe collection.



## Communications

### WEBSITE & ONLINE CALLBOARD

The TDPS website ([tdps.berkeley.edu](https://tdps.berkeley.edu)) has the most up-to-date information about all facets of our program. Audition sign-ups, callback lists, production and class audition results, and production assignments are listed on the [Callboard](#), found on the website's main menu.

### EMAIL UPDATES

Once you declare a major or minor in TDPS, you will be added to the department's email lists. During the academic year, you will receive TDPS Weekly emails with announcements about events, courses, scholarships, upcoming auditions, performance opportunities, and other useful information. The Department Chair and Undergraduate Advisor may also communicate with you throughout the semester.

### OFFICE HOURS

Take advantage of faculty office hours and meet with your current professors, or others in the department you would like to get to know. Hours change every semester, so please refer to the directory under the People menu at [tdps.berkeley.edu](https://tdps.berkeley.edu)



## Events

TDPS is a vibrant community and we host many events where undergraduates and other members of the department may gather. Events include a fall undergraduate welcome, a speaker series, class showcases, a season planning forum, commencement, and many others. We encourage you to attend as many events as you can. Check your email for event announcements, or see the department calendar under the Events menu at [tdps.berkeley.edu](https://tdps.berkeley.edu)



# Undergraduate Academic Program

## Course Sequencing & Planning Your Schedule

The department's undergraduate course offerings are divided into lower division (course numbers 1–99) and upper division (course numbers 100–199). Graduate courses are numbered 200 and above and are normally not open to undergraduate students without special permission. It is important to take lower-division courses before taking related upper-division coursework to ensure your success at both levels. This takes careful planning, especially for transfer students. Juniors and seniors quickly discover that upper division classes are often scheduled at the same time as the lower division classes.

## Course Requirements for Majors & Minors

- [MAJOR: Theater and Performance Studies](#)
- [MINOR: Theater and Performance Studies](#)
- [MAJOR: Dance and Performance Studies](#)
- [MINOR: Dance and Performance Studies](#)

## Important Notes for Majors

- Letter-graded courses that majors may repeat for credit:  
Theater 40, 45, 141, 142, 143, 145, 146, 147A, 147B, 166, 167, 168, 169, 172, 176, 179, 180, and 181
- Some dance courses have repetition limits (see [guide.berkeley.edu](http://guide.berkeley.edu) for more information).
- P/NP courses 197, 198, and 199 may be repeated for majors. For minors, all coursework must be letter-graded, so these courses would not count toward your minor.
- Performance Studies courses 114, 119, 121, 125, and 126 may be repeated as long as they are different topics and taught by different instructors.



# Class Auditions & Interviews

## Accommodation Policy for Auditions

All students are invited to audition for TDPS acting and dance courses. If a disability-related accommodation is needed for a class audition, please contact the Undergraduate Academic Advisor ([tdpsugadvisor@berkeley.edu](mailto:tdpsugadvisor@berkeley.edu)) at least one week prior to the start of the semester.

Please Note: Some audition spaces are not readily accessible for those with mobility impairments. With advance notice, we are happy to make arrangements for an alternate venue. Those in DSP, please contact your DSP specialist well in advance of the audition so there is time for the accommodation process and notify the department to make arrangements. Please ask DSP to also send disability accommodation notices for auditions to the Undergraduate Academic Advisor at least one week prior to the start of the semester.

## Acting Sequence Courses That Require An Audition: Theater 10, 109, 110A, 110B, 111

- The acting sequence consists of the following courses: Theater 10 (Fundamentals of Acting I), Theater 109 (Fundamentals of Acting II), Theater 110A (Intermediate Acting: Scene Study and Style), Theater 110B (Intermediate Acting: The Power of Language), and Theater 111 (Advanced Acting Studio I and II).
- All acting courses must be taken in sequence. For those with advanced training, equivalent courses from a college or university class, successfully completed and for which transcript credit has been granted, may be considered and allow beginning the sequence at a more advanced level. Freshmen should consider taking all six.
- All acting courses require an audition for entrance. Acting students do not enroll in 10, 109, 110A, 110B, or 111 through CalCentral before the beginning of the semester. If you are unable to audition at the scheduled time, plan to take the course during another semester. Sign-ups for auditions open on the [TDPS Callboard](#) two weeks before the start of each semester.
- After auditions, class lists will be posted on the Callboard. If you are accepted into the course, the instructor will give you instructions on how to add the course via CalCentral. All students admitted to the course must attend the first day of class in order to secure placement.
- For the audition, please prepare a one-minute monologue from a play. Memorization of the piece is strongly encouraged for Theater 10 and is required for all other classes.

## Theater Courses That Require An Interview or Writing Sample: Theater 105, 112, 139A, 139B, 162, 163

- Admission to Theater 105 (Movement for Actors) and 112 (Voice and Speech) is based upon an interview with and at the discretion of the instructor. All candidates must attend the first day of class. The class enrollment number will be provided upon admission.
- To be considered for Theater 139A (Fundamentals of Playwriting), submit a sample of creative writing (up to five pages) by August 14 for fall and January 6 for spring to the instructor's mailbox in 15 Dwinelle Hall. Include your name, year, major, phone number, and email address. For those who miss the deadline, you are advised to attend the first class. Enrollment is limited.
- Admission to Theater 162/163 (Stage Directing) is based upon an interview with and at the discretion of the instructor. Be prepared to talk about your interest in the course and any relevant experience. The class list for 162/163 will be posted on the [TDPS Callboard](#), and the course control number will be provided once the class list has been determined.

# Advising & Expectations for Students

**You are encouraged to meet with the Undergraduate Advisor at least once a semester to create an academic program plan and track educational progress in TDPS.**

The goal of advising is to create the optimum educational and artistic experience, and prepare you for whatever path you choose to take. As a major or minor, you are responsible for your progress in the program. We also expect you to have knowledge of your college requirements, major and minor requirements, basic university policies on incomplete grades and repeated courses, and the practices of enrolling in classes (including add/drop procedures). You should also be aware of the policies governing any financial aid you may receive, and the various deadlines imposed by the Registrar or by the department.

You can otherwise meet with the Undergraduate Advisor on an as-needed basis throughout the semester. She can assist you with many things:

- Declaring a major, double major, or minor
- Approving most documents for majors/minors for the College of Letters & Science and Office of the Registrar
- Course selection and sequence of classes
- Information about honors projects (Theater H195A/B)
- Information about workshop proposals (Theater 196)
- How to complete an internship or field study (Theater 197)
- How to teach a DeCal course (Theater 198)
- How to complete an independent study (Theater 199)
- Study abroad opportunities (UCEAP)
- Peer advisor opportunities for departmental leadership
- Graduate school information
- Transfer coursework and facilitating your experience as a transfer student

Additionally, all faculty members are here to support your growth and offer guidance. Find their contact information through the [department directory](#) to schedule an appointment during their office hours. You can also find the names and contact information for [Peer Advisors on the TDPS website](#).

## Course Accommodations

For course accommodations, please work jointly with the [Disabled Students' Program \(DSP\)](#) and the course instructor to make arrangements for any needed accommodations in course participation or testing. Be sure to do this in advance. The Undergraduate Advisor and Departmental Equity Advisor are available for any additional assistance you might need.



**Laxmi Kumaran**  
**Undergraduate Advisor**

15B Dwinelle Hall  
(510) 643-4050  
[laxmik@berkeley.edu](mailto:laxmik@berkeley.edu)



# Suggested Steps for Success in TDPS

**1** Meet with the Undergraduate Academic Advisor regularly (at least once per semester). Make a plan and choose classes that help you accomplish that plan.

**2** Take prerequisite courses as soon as you can to lay the foundation for your upper-division coursework and progress toward graduation. Theater 26, in particular, becomes a scheduling challenge for juniors or seniors, as it is typically offered only once a year and conflicts with required upper-division coursework.

**3** Take advantage of office hours to get to know your instructors.

**4** Get involved right away with the department's productions or research opportunities. If you already have an area of specialization, contact staff or faculty working in that area as soon as you arrive on campus. Our faculty and staff are here to serve you as teachers and mentors, so don't be afraid to reach out to them either before or at the beginning of your first semester and talk.

**5** Take advantage of all that UC Berkeley and TDPS have to offer as you build your experience, credentials, and work experience — involvement in shows, internships, teaching a DeCal, pursuing research, independent study courses, work study jobs, honors projects, and student leadership opportunities.

**6** If you have transferred, get involved in the Transfer, Re-Entry, and Student Parent Center on campus. They offer a multitude of programs, including those connecting you with continuing transfer students in your major, academic planning and enrichment workshops, service learning internships and courses that will help you transition to UC Berkeley.

**7** Use CalCentral to track your graduation progress.

# Additional Academic Opportunities

## Double Majors

Some Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies majors elect to complete a second major. Some students choose to double major in both Theater and Performance Studies and Dance and Performance Studies. Declare your two majors early! Students are required to meet with the advisor in both their major departments at least once a semester to discuss their progress and their plans for the following semester. You can share two courses between your majors, and are advised to keep the unit ceiling and semester ceiling in mind when planning your program.

## Transferring Units

It is rare that a course from a community college or other university will transfer into the major or minor. Since your major or minor will be from the Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies, expect to do most of your major and minor coursework here.

Exception: Courses equivalent to Theater 10 transfer into the major. For other courses that may fulfill another lower-division requirement, transfer students may bring a copy of previous transcripts and course descriptions to the Undergraduate Advisor for evaluation.

## Education Abroad Opportunities

Students in TDPS often go to England, South Africa, Australia, or Italy to study theater while dancers often go to France, Thailand, or Ghana. EAP units can count as elective coursework toward our majors and minors. For more information about EAP opportunities, speak with the Undergraduate Advisor, see the [Study Abroad website](#) or go to the EAP office in 160 Stephens Hall.

A maximum of 8 units of equivalent upper division coursework transfer into the major or minor from EAP or other 4-year colleges as electives upon departmental approval. All L&S-approved units from other colleges transfer toward your degree, but rarely into our major. Bring a copy of course descriptions to the Undergraduate Student Advisor for evaluation before going abroad, if possible. Make sure your credits abroad are upper-division courses, letter-graded, and will transfer back to UC Berkeley to be added to your transcript.

In the UCDC or UC Center Sacramento Internship Programs, students from all majors live and study in Washington, D.C. or Sacramento, CA for a semester or summer, participating in an internship in public service/non-profit centers. For UCDC, this could be of particular interest to students interested in arts policy or arts administration (examples of potential sites include the Folger Shakespeare Library, Arena Stage, or the Kennedy Center for the Arts). For UC Center Sacramento, whether for a semester or a summer, allows you to engage your interest in politics, healthcare, education, environment, business, international affairs, law, arts, and culture directly while learning through direct governmental experience and service-based internship placements. Contact the Undergraduate Advisor if you are interested in UC Center Sacramento Programs.

# Getting Involved Outside of Class

## Participation in Productions

You have a unique opportunity to participate in TDPS productions as actors, dancers, designers, assistant directors, choreographers, stage managers, or crew members. Details about production opportunities are posted to the [TDPS Callboard](#). Auditions for actors and dancers generally take place during the first few weeks of each semester.

Students are required to enroll in the appropriate course and receive credit for all work during the semester in which the production takes place. This course counts as either an upper-division elective for the majors or as one of the upper-division electives for the minors. Students should register for the appropriate course number as soon as they are cast, or as soon as it is determined that they will be formally participating in the production. You may consult the Undergraduate Advisor or the director/faculty sponsor of your show to find out the appropriate course and section in which to enroll.

Participation in any production carries responsibilities; the success of a production depends on the commitment of all involved. Once a cast, design team, and crew have been selected, the absence of any member of that team is detrimental to the production. Such absences have an immediate and negative effect on both the educational and artistic aims of the production and are therefore unacceptable.

## University-Wide Research Opportunities

- [The Haas Scholars Program](#) gives students up to \$12,500 to carry out research in any major.
- [The Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program \(URAP\)](#) partners students with faculty members who are engaged in research projects in their field of interest.
- [The Judith Lee Stronach Baccalaureate Prize](#) supports intellectual and creative pursuits that heighten awareness of issues of social consciousness and the public good through research after graduation.
- [The Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship](#) is for sophomores interested in pursuing teaching and research.
- [The Big Ideas Contest](#) supports inspired innovative and high-impact student-led projects aimed at solving problems that matter to this generation.
- [Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships \(SURF\)](#) are designed to help students to do concentrated research in preparation for a senior thesis or other major capstone research project.

Contact the Undergraduate Advisor for more information on these and other research opportunities.

## Leadership Opportunities within TDPS

Each year, several TDPS majors are invited to use their natural service and leadership skills by becoming Peer Advisors. This generally entails willingness to talk about the department, the courses, the opportunities, and the experiences you have had here with current students or prospective students and their parents/guardians. Peer Advisors are asked to be available for department's Student Welcome, Season Announcement, Cal Day, or as "on-call" advisors for fellow students or visiting students. Contact the Undergraduate Advisor for more information.

## Student Performing Arts Groups on Campus

Visit [tdps.berkeley.edu/student-groups](https://tdps.berkeley.edu/student-groups) for links to more than 70 performing arts groups on campus.

# Careers & Professional Preparation

## Career Counseling

Career counseling is available at Berkeley Career Engagement (2111 Bancroft Way), and job and internship listings can be found on the [Career Engagement website](#). The Undergraduate Advisor and TDPS faculty are also very good resources. They are happy to answer questions and provide advice about careers in the arts, feedback on resumes, and professional development.

## Alumni Mentorship

TDPS alumni from all walks of life are happy to speak with you about career possibilities. If you are interested in connecting with someone from a particular career field, please ask the Undergraduate Advisor and they will try to put you in touch.

## Work-Study Opportunities

Have you been awarded a campus work-study award? Working in TDPS is a great way to gain experience. The scene shop, costume shop, and production office hire students for paid work-study positions. Contact the [TDPS Program Associate](#) for available opportunities at the beginning of each semester.

## Graduate School

The Undergraduate Advisor has information about graduate programs and other theater programs available after completing a B.A. degree. She can also advise you on steps to take now that will make you a more successful applicant.

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# Department Prizes & Scholarships

The department bestows a variety of prizes, scholarships, and awards each year at the commencement ceremony to recognize our students' achievements and to support their future endeavors. Monetary awards vary from year to year and may be reduced by other maximum award amounts already received. One award allows faculty, staff, and students to recommend and/or nominate themselves or others for an outstanding social justice endeavor within TDPS during that academic year. An invitation to submit nominations for this prize will be requested in March each year. Visit [tdps.berkeley.edu/prizes](https://tdps.berkeley.edu/prizes) for a full list of prizes.

# Department Policies

## Appeals & Exceptions

Students who wish to request an exception to departmental policy should first meet with the Undergraduate Advisor to discuss options. After this meeting, the advisor may ask the student to submit his or her request in writing or set another meeting to meet with other appropriate parties to come to a solution.

## Concurrent Enrollment, Extension, and International Students

- **Acting and Directing Classes:** Priority is given to full-time UC Berkeley students. International study abroad students, for 1 or 2 semesters, are exceptions to this rule and may be prioritized.
- **Productions:** Priority in casting is given to UC Berkeley students. International study abroad students, for 1 or 2 semesters, are exceptions to this rule and may be prioritized.
- **All Classes:** Priority is given to full-time UC Berkeley students. Berkeley Extension students (through concurrent enrollment) are considered only after all eligible UC Berkeley students have enrolled and room permitting.
- An individual Berkeley Extension student is only eligible to take 2 semesters of dance technique as an Extension student.

## Casting & Productions

For up-to-date information on productions and auditions, visit the [TDPS Callboard](#).

## Complimentary Tickets

Declared TDPS majors receive one complimentary ticket to each TDPS production. TDPS minors and Theater 60 students are eligible for discounted tickets. Instructions on claiming your ticket/discount will be emailed to you each semester.

## Student Rehearsal Space

TDPS students may reserve use of Zellerbach Rooms 7, 133, 135, and 413 for TDPS class projects or rehearsals. For more information, visit [tdps.berkeley.edu/resources/space-use](https://tdps.berkeley.edu/resources/space-use).

## Student Conduct

Students are expected to abide by UC Berkeley's [Code of Student Conduct](#). The Student Affairs website addresses issues concerning behavior on campus, in the classroom, and in homework and research.

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# Links to Campus Resources

[Academic Advising \(L&S\)](#)

[Academic Calendar](#)

[Admissions](#)

[Career Advising](#)

[Class Schedule](#)

[Concurrent Enrollment](#)

[Course Catalog](#)

[Education Abroad Programs](#)

[Financial Aid](#)

[Graduate School Preparation](#)

[International Student Office](#)

[International Student Housing](#)

[Registrar's Office](#)

[Scholarship Search](#)

[Student Housing](#)

[Summer Sessions](#)

[Transfer Credit \(Course Search\)](#)

[Transfer Student Center](#)

[University Extension](#)

[University Health Services](#)