

BFA in Acting

Student expectations

UMBC's Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Acting degree is for students interested in an intensive performance program leading to the pursuit of graduate study and/or careers in professional acting. While all UMBC students are welcome to participate in Theatre Dept performances and activities, BFA students immerse themselves in advanced technique in acting, voice, and movement courses, and learn the application of these skills to characterization in a wide range of productions in which they perform.

Information for prospective BFA students:

Admission to the BFA in Acting Major is [by audition and interview](#). Prospective majors may audition before coming to UMBC, or after enrolling, and we have a special accelerated BFA program for acting major transfers. All of the information can be found on the [UMBC Theatre website](#).

Expectations & policies for current BFA students:

How you're being evaluated:

BFA students are evaluated on their progress throughout the semester and their overall journey at UMBC. The acting faculty are invested in your growth, and meet regularly to discuss your individual progress. Progress in the BFA is evaluated in two ways:

1. Production auditions: all BFA students are required to audition twice per year for our fall and spring productions (even if given a casting exception, see below). They are expected to prepare thoroughly, read their feedback evaluations, and continue to improve from one semester to the next, applying the techniques developed in training. Audition announcements, including all information on schedules, sign-ups, material, etc. are distributed approximately 4-6 weeks prior to each audition.
2. Individual coursework. The [BFA degree](#) requires a B or above in all acting courses to graduate (production is considered an acting class). If a student receives less than a "B" in an acting course, they must initiate a meeting with the head of the acting program. At that meeting, they will discuss options for their degree completion.

Casting:

All BFA majors are expected to audition and perform roles as assigned in UMBC productions. There are, however, ways to share concerns or make requests regarding scheduling, boundaries, and/or "sitting out" a semester of casting. Note that links to all forms noted below arrive with the audition announcement each semester:

- Boundary/consent conflicts students may have with the material. Students are always welcome to discuss this with the Dept. Chair or head of the BFA **and** at their auditions via the **Audition Disclosure Form**. Students will not be cast in roles that are not in alignment with their stated boundaries at casting.
- Potential scheduling concerns. While schedule or time conflicts cannot always be accommodated, production management will share anything you list on the **audition sign-up form** with the directors to see if something can be worked out.

- A request not to be cast. Any BFA student may complete a **Casting Exemption Request** for approval by the Dept. chair, if they do not wish to be cast in the upcoming semester. So long as the request is made by the deadline, and the student has not had repeated exemptions, these are usually granted. Students exempted from casting are still required to audition for evaluation purposes.

Any BFA major not performing an acting role must still ensure they meet the production requirements for the [BFA degree](#) via other production responsibilities. This is up to the student to arrange, and should see Samantha Paradis, Assistant Production Manager ASAP when not assigned an acting role.

Outside Productions

BFA faculty wish to support majors in taking advantage of the major's substantial learning opportunities, and meet their graduation goals. Outside productions are therefore encouraged during the summer and winter break, but not during the fall and spring semesters. BFA students who wish to participate in productions during that time (and are not working on a UMBC production, or in excess credits), must get approval from the head of the BFA in acting program (csearls@umbc.edu) prior to accepting an outside role during the semester. For best consideration, please discuss the opportunity prior to auditioning or submitting for an outside project.

Study Abroad

If a student hopes to study abroad during an academic year, they should meet with their advisor to forecast their course load and requirements for subsequent semesters. Students choosing to study abroad do so with the recognition that this *may* result in an added semester(s) of enrollment at UMBC.

Questions?

Most information about UMBC Theatre, including details about the BFA auditions, productions, and degree requirements can be found on the [UMBC Theatre website](#). For questions specifically related to your training and interests, please speak with your academic advisor or Prof. Colette Searls, head of the BFA in Acting, at csearls@umbc.edu.