

Theatre Arts Research

Pitt theatre's research opportunities

Pitt is an R1 (Research One) institution, which means that our faculty and staff engage in the highest levels of research activities in their fields. In theatre this can take many forms including qualitative research (archival, ethnographic, etc.) or practice as research (creative methods and techniques) and anything in between. You can take part in theatre research in several ways but most often this is done by either working on your own research with faculty oversight or working with faculty, staff, and graduate students on their existing academic research.

What kind of research are our faculty engaged in?

Below is a sampling of research conducted by our tenure stream faculty. To find more, follow this link to our faculty pages: <https://www.play.pitt.edu/people/theatre-arts-faculty>

Professor Croot's current research focuses on directing and devising operatic and music-centered pieces and socially engaged intercultural exchange.

Professor Duggan's research includes developing apps for theatre and practice-based research in professional Lighting Design, focusing on Musical Theatre productions.

Professor Granshaw's research focuses on U.S. and Irish theatre, popular entertainment, and performance; performances of race, ethnicity, gender, and class; global and diasporic performance; historiography; and dramaturgy.

Professor McKelvey's research includes U.S. Theatre and Performance; Disability Culture, Politics, and Aesthetics; Queer and Feminist Studies; as well as Histories and Theories of Performance Labor.

What kind of research are our graduate students engaged in?

Graduate student research explores theatre and performance around the world, including North America, Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. Current graduate students are researching race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, gender, and disability in performance, musical theatre, Americana and popular culture, Yiddish theatre, immersive horror performances, devising and ethnodrama, cognitive science and acting, and Noh theatre among other topics. To find more specifics, follow this link to our graduate student pages: <https://www.play.pitt.edu/people/theatre-arts-graduate-students>

Contact us to get involved:

Contact any of the faculty above whose research most closely aligns with your interests, or email the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Gianni Downs, at gdowns@pitt.edu to discuss opportunities and placements.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities in Theatre Arts

Frequently, students are uncertain about what conducting research in theatre entails. It is crucial to acknowledge that student-initiated research can take various forms, such as pursuing personal interests in a theatrical subject, elaborating on a paper studied in class, honing design or performance abilities through departmental productions, or bridging knowledge gaps within the industry. Students can apply for research awards, grants, fellowships, and academic credit in the form of Directed Projects. Examples from earlier student research includes:

- Exploring the Intersections Between the LGBTQ+ Liberation Movements
- Observing how language can be a barrier or entrance to Shakespeare
- Examining how female producers have navigated the challenges of gender roles and expectations
- Connecting Psychology and Set Design in Film Production
- Recreating an 18th century Versailles court gown
- Designing scenery, costumes, sound, or lights for a theatrical production
- Dramaturgy for a play
- Working with the university library to catalog acquisitions
- ASL (American Sign Language) interpretation for live productions

Theatre Arts classes that build research skills

The Theatre Arts curriculum at Pitt supplies a valuable foundation for developing essential research skills applicable across diverse disciplines. Researchers often underscore the importance of effective verbal, written, and visual communication, and the vital roles that creativity and collaborative abilities play within their teams. Pitt's Theatre Arts program is well-equipped to nurture the cultivation of these vital skills and the following supplies just a few classes you might consider to build these skills.

Entry-level Theatre Arts courses that build research skills

THEA 0505: Enjoying Performances	THEA 1100: Voice and Movement
THEA 0804: Theatre and Collaboration	THEA 1341-1343: World Theatre
THEA 0810: Introduction to Dramatic Art	THEA 1349: Disability and Performance
THEA 0825: Contemporary Global Stages	THEA 1365: Playwriting 1
THEA 0830: Introduction to Performance	THEA 1390-1392: Special Topics in Theatre
THEA 0840: Introduction to Theatre Design	THEA 1903: Theatre Seminar

Funding opportunities and university outlets

There are many funding opportunities open to students engaged in research at Pitt. Many come from the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) or through the Honors College but can also come from sources out in the public. Below are a listing of typical Pitt funding sources and awards:

Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) <https://www.asundergrad.pitt.edu/research>

First Approaches to Research (FAR)
First Experiences in Research (FER)
Continuing Experiences in Research (CER)
London Field Studies
Summer Undergraduate Research Awards (SURA)
Curiosity Grants
Archival Scholars
NYC Scholars in Residence
Forbes and Fifth Magazine

University Honors College (UHC) <https://www.honorscollege.pitt.edu/research>

Brackenridge Fellowship
UHC Research Fellowship
Creative Arts Fellowship
Community Research Fellowship
Health Science Fellowship
Chancellor's Undergraduate Research Fellowship
Chancellor's Undergraduate Teaching Fellowship
Dick Thornburgh Fellowship
BPhil
Pitt Undergraduate Review

Recent undergraduate Theatre Arts research projects funded by the UHC or OUR:

Quinn Murphy's UHC Research Fellowship "Race and the Theatrical Representations of HIV/AIDS"
Julia Rose Kreutzer's Brackenridge Fellowship "The Presence of Homonationalism in Contemporary American Theatre."
Maya Jones's SURA "The 19th Century Silhouette as Reflected in Garments and Illustrations"

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