

Theater and Dance

Theater and Dance hold center stage within the Exeter curriculum. Each art explores its own disciplines and techniques, while teaching students an array of creative skills that will enhance their lives at the Academy and beyond.

These two performing arts join in our department's central mission to help our students better know themselves, to thoughtfully explore their imaginations, to experiment creatively and effectively express their ideas within the larger community.

Whether in a rehearsal room, on a film set, or in a dance studio, the growth of each student occurs in the context of Harkness learning, a group dynamic that is highly collaborative.

Our collective mission remains to inspire students towards greater understanding of their unique potentials through thorough and disciplined research into the creative process.

The Dance Program welcomes all students who are interested in dance. It strives to offer students of all levels and interests the opportunity to study, choreograph, perform and explore various dance forms. Participation in and exposure to the arts is an integral part of education, expanding one's horizons and encouraging tolerance and understanding.

Dance courses grant physical education credit. The dance studio is located in the Thompson Gymnasium. Performances are held on the main-stage in Fisher Theater.

Unless otherwise stipulated, all courses are open to students at all grade levels and require no previous experience.

► Theater

Major Productions: All students who choose to participate in a major production should plan to enroll in PEC109 or choose the Sports Option for the term in which the production is scheduled.

PEC109: PLAY PRODUCTION SPORTS

All students involved in a major dramatic production must enroll in Play Production Sports to fulfill the physical education requirement. Students begin rehearsals with a vigorous physical workout. *This course does not carry academic credit and does not count toward the student's five-course load. Open to all students by audition or crew assignment. Juniors (Preps) may audition and participate as performing cast members, and in the Fall Term must have permission from the chair of the drama department before signing up for the course.*

THR210: INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATER

In this hands on course students investigate many facets of the process of making theater, from directing, acting, or designing from a script, to the creation and use of masks, puppets, or a soundscape for storytelling. Performance texts from ancient Greece, Africa, Japan, and Europe compliment theoretical writings, works by authors such as Stanislavsky, Artaud, and Brook are used to offer a historical overview. Intro. To Theater is a team-taught course, which provides an intensive study of various theater techniques offered in the department. It enables the curious or interested student to discover what it takes to produce a play and provides the framework for more in-depth theater courses, offerings a student might want to explore through the course of an Exeter career. *Offered: Fall Term.*

THR211: FUNDAMENTALS OF ACTING

Through individual and ensemble work, this course introduces students to the essential tasks of the actor's craft. We develop vocal and physical technique, and engage in exercises to develop imagination and characterization skills. Students apply this work to scenes from 20th-century American plays that they select and perform for each other in class.

THR214: STAGECRAFT

This course explores past and present techniques of creating and manipulating scenery, properties, costumes, light, sound and makeup to enhance the theatrical event. Lecture demonstrations and hands-on laboratory experience are featured. Three single-class periods and one 75-minute lab per week.

THR215: THE PLAYWRIGHT'S CRAFT

This course explores the work of the playwright in theater. It is a foundation course designed to introduce young writers to the distinctive demands of this genre, with emphasis on character and plot development through conflict and dialogue. By studying work of 20th-century American playwrights, with the different cultural voices that they bring, students learn to cultivate their own theatrical voices and craft their own short scenes. As a final project, students will stage a reading of their own short plays. *Offered: Winter Term.*

THR216: SCREENWRITING

In recognizing the important role that film has in the life of our culture today, this course focuses on the skills particular to writing in that medium. Using the Robert McKee classic text, *Story*, as our guide, we learn about elements of story substance and structure; we look at principles of story design

and style in screenwriting. We also analyze the way these principles reveal themselves in significant modern and classic films, as we read and discuss screenplays ranging from *Casablanca* to *Brokeback Mountain*. Viewing of these films accompanies class discussions. An important part of the course revolves around guest speakers working in the field today as screenwriters and/or producers, who come and participate in workshops with our students. Students complete the course with a portfolio of scenes and the treatment and outline for their own original film. *Offered: Winter Term.*

THR311: INTERMEDIATE ACTING

This course continues the training of the actor. It allows students to develop an approach to character and text beyond their own culture and experience. Exercises build on Fundamentals of Acting and encourage in-depth interpretation and character choices. Vocal and physical training focuses on developing techniques to explore dramatic texts from different cultures and time periods: from the Naturalism of Chekhov to the rhyming couplets of Moliere and the iambic pentameter of Shakespeare. *Prerequisite: Fundamentals of Acting or permission of the department chair. Offered: Fall and Winter Terms.*

THR312: DIRECTING

This course offers the essential theory and practice of stage direction with emphasis on the leadership skills inherent in creating a constructive ensemble rehearsal environment. Beginning with a series of independent exercises aimed at honing the director's aesthetic sensibilities, the course then invites each student to select and direct a short play of his/her choosing. Students proceed step-by-step through the entire production process: from play selection, script analysis and casting through the detailed work of a rehearsal period. All plays receive a public performance at the end of term. This course is a prerequisite for all senior projects or field courses in directing. *Offered: Spring Term.*

THR411: DESIGN FOR THE THEATER

This course covers the theory, history, and practice of technical scene design. We teach the basic techniques of script analysis, research, model making, drafting, and color and style selection. When possible the students will work on a current theater production. *Offered: Spring Term.*

THR412: ADVANCED ACTING—SENIOR ACTING ENSEMBLE

This course invites the intensive analysis and rehearsal of the work of a major playwright. It may culminate in a series of fully explored scenes or in a full-length production. The course offers Seniors the opportunity to build on skills acquired throughout their Exeter career and immerse themselves in a rigorous, thoughtful ensemble process. *Prerequisite: an earlier department acting course or permission of the department chair. Open to Seniors. Students must sign up for PEC109, or opt out of sports. Offered: Spring Term.*

THR490: SPECIAL TOPICS

This course is offered at student or departmental initiative. Examples of special topic courses include Dance History and Choreography, Stage Management, Mask and Puppetry, Lighting Design, Costume Design, Stage Carpentry, or any other topic from Theater and Dance that has sufficient interest from students. *Open to Lower, Uppers and Seniors or with permission from the department chair.*

► Speechmaking

THR212: SPEECHMAKING

This course offers theory and practice in writing, preparing and delivering speeches. We emphasize effective communication skills between speaker and audience, looking at selection and structure of material and at the vocal and physical skills necessary for effective delivery. Students learn to critique themselves and each other to produce the results they desire.

► Filmmaking

THR213: FILMMAKING

This course provides practical experience in basic cinematography without dialogue. Using digital video equipment, students learn about the use of the camera and editing techniques to create their own short films. Sequences from student and professional films are studied and critically analyzed.

► Dance

DANCE COURSES OFFERED FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION CREDIT

The dance program includes ballet, modern dance, and jazz. Technique, flexibility, strength, control, coordination, and cardiovascular exercise are stressed at all levels. Each class includes an extensive warm-up (barre in ballet class, stretching and conditioning in modern dance/jazz classes), followed by center-and across-floor exercises and combinations. Choreography for upcoming performances is often introduced in class. Intermediate and advanced students are offered the option of participating in informal performances such as the Parents' Weekend program and the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. The Dance Company is involved in additional performances. The Dance Concert Ensemble presents the annual Spring Dance Concert.

Each level builds upon technical expertise gained in the previous level(s). New material is introduced each term so that a student may retake a course until technically ready to move towards the next level. If unsure of your appropriate level, or for more information, contact the instructor.

The following technique classes meet four days per week (two days of ballet technique and two days of modern dance/jazz technique) for the duration of the physical education term. They are open to Lower, Uppers, and Seniors.

Note: Although the dance program is structured for Lower, Uppers, and Seniors, there are a few spaces made available in the technique classes, as well as the Spring Dance Concert, for Juniors with extensive dance backgrounds. Interested students should speak with the dance instructor prior to registering for classes.

DAN100: BEGINNING DANCE

*Little or no previous dance training required.
Offered: Fall and Winter Terms.*

DAN200: INTERMEDIATE DANCE

Previous dance training, which must include ballet, required. Offered: Fall, Winter and Spring Terms.

DAN300: ADVANCED DANCE

Prerequisite: Extensive dance training, which must include ballet, required. Offered: Fall and Winter Terms.

DAN400: DANCE COMPANY

In addition to four days per week for advanced-level technique classes (MTThF), DAN400 includes two days per week (usually Wednesdays and Saturdays) for choreography rehearsals, tech rehearsals and/or performances. *Prerequisite: Extensive dance training, which must include ballet, required. Offered: Fall and Winter Terms.*

DAN430: DANCE CONCERT ENSEMBLE

The PEA Dance Ensemble's annual Dance Concert is one of two mainstage productions in the spring term. Performance and/or choreographic opportunities are available to intermediate and advanced-level dancers. Rehearsals are held five days per week. *Prerequisite: DAN100, 200, 300 or 400. Offered: Spring Term.*

Dance Courses not satisfying the Physical Education requirement.

DNC010: SEMI-PRIVATE DANCE CLASSES

Upon request, small group lessons (5-10 classes per term) are given in a particular dance technique, for a minimum of four students. Students must be at a similar level of proficiency. Adequate weekly practice is expected. When a ten-class session is offered, a student may request 1/3 credit which would appear on the student's transcript, but this credit would not be applicable toward the graduation requirements. (*Contact the Director of Dance for more information.*) *Open to all grade levels.*

Note: The cost for semi-private lessons in 2009-10 will be \$100 if a five-class session is offered or \$200 if a 10-class session is offered. This is in addition to the regular tuition.