

## POLICY FOR GRADUATION WITH DISTINCTION IN THEATER STUDIES

Students with at least a 3.5 GPA in their Theater Studies course are eligible to apply for a project. Students must complete 11 courses in total to graduate with distinction in the major instead of the standard 10. All distinction courses count toward the major.

The student's proposed project needs to be scheduled for discussion with the Theater Studies DUS no later than **February 9, 2024** for consideration. Following that conversation, the student must identify a project supervisor and receive signed consent of the project from the supervisor, a second committee member, and the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) on this application form. All applications must be submitted by March of the student's junior year (**March 8, 2024 for students graduating in 2025**).

A student may pursue a project in one of the following areas: writing, directing, design, acting, dramatic literature, theater history, or performance studies. Distinction projects should be undertaken in an area that the student has already studied intensively. All projects must include a substantial written component. They may also have a production component.

Students seeking Graduation with Distinction Outside of the Major (GWDOM) are encouraged to follow the same process as Theater Studies majors, scheduling a meeting with the Theater Studies DUS in the spring prior to the student's graduating year.

### Distinction Coursework

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the student must take either a Research Independent Study (THEATRST 493-1) or a "home seminar" in the first semester and the Senior Distinction Project (THEATRST 495) in the second semester.

*First Semester: Research Independent Study (THEATRST 493-1) or Home Seminar*

The Research Independent Study (THEATRST 493-1) option requires students to meet once every two weeks with their project supervisor. At least 15 pages of research must be documented and turned in by the end of the semester. This documentation can vary depending on the nature of the research, including but not limited to written notes, visual representations, and journal entries.

Home seminars entail enrolling in a course taught by the project supervisor which is closely associated with the topic. The supervisor's permission should be obtained prior to enrollment, arranging additional reading and writing assignments for the class as agreed with the instructor that will translate the course work into the terms of the distinction project. The home seminar option is only available during the first semester of the distinction project.

*Second Semester: Senior Distinction Project (THEATRST 495)*

All distinction candidates must submit a thesis paper.

- Candidates with a distinction project in theater history, performance studies, or dramatic literature are required to submit a 40-70 page thesis paper.
- Candidates with a distinction project in acting or directing are required to submit a 25-page paper supplementary to their acting or directing project.
- Candidates writing original scripts, adaptations, and/or translations are required to turn in a 15-page paper supplementary to their playwriting project.

### Evaluation Procedure

Upon approval by the project supervisor, the completed thesis is submitted by email to the Director of Undergraduate Studies by **March 25, 2025** for evaluation by a committee comprised of the DUS, the project supervisor, and one other faculty member. Please courtesy copy the DUSA at [katja.hill@duke.edu](mailto:katja.hill@duke.edu). A thesis defense will be scheduled for the student and committee.

**DISTINCTION PROJECT APPLICATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Project Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to this form, please supply an application portfolio for your Distinction Project including:

1. An accurate and current Theater Studies advising sheet;
2. A basic bibliography (one page single-spaced, except in the case of an original play);
3. A two to three paragraph description of your project including: your motivation for pursuing this project; budgetary considerations for research or production; a timeline for completion; and a list of potential collaborators if proposing a performance component;
4. A letter of recommendation from your project supervisor, who must be a Theater Studies faculty member;
5. One writing sample of approximately 10 pages from a Theater Studies course OR a production sample (e.g., script, reel);
6. A note from Thomas Quintas, Director of Theater, stating that you have made necessary booking and budgetary arrangements for rehearsals and performances if your proposal has a performance component.

**DEADLINES FOR APPLICATION PROCESS**

**February 9, 2024:** Juniors planning to graduate in 2025 must meet with the Theater Studies DUS Torry Bend by this date to declare intent and discuss possible projects. Contact Professor Bend by email to schedule the meeting ([torry.bend@duke.edu](mailto:torry.bend@duke.edu)).

**March 8, 2024:** The project proposal with signatures from project supervisor and second committee member must be submitted to the Theater Studies DUS by this date. The project supervisor must be a member of the Theater Studies faculty. Decisions to approve or decline proposals are made before the end of registration for the following semester.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Project Supervisor signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Second Committee member signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Undergraduate Studies approval \_\_\_\_\_

*Please email this completed form to Katja Hill at [katja.hill@duke.edu](mailto:katja.hill@duke.edu) no later than March 8, 2024.*