

University of Florida  
School of Theatre and Dance  
THE 4959: BFA Senior Project

**Meeting Times:** To Arrange

**BFA Acting Coordinator:** Susan Schuld

**BFA Musical Theatre Coordinator:** Prof. Tony Mata

**BFA Design/Production Coordinators:** Stan Kaye, Mihai Ciupe, Jennifer Dasher

**Instructor:** To Arrange

**Office Hours:** Varies with Instructor of Record

**Credits:** 2

**Prerequisites:** Senior BFA student, Approval of Project Advisor or BFA Faculty Coordinator

**Course Description:**

Final project presented in public performance demonstrating expertise in declared area of specialization.

Completion of a paper that details the performance or design/production project and/or preparation of a role(s) undertaken in a realized production with advisor's consent in the student's final academic year.

**Purpose Of Course:**

The Senior Project in the BFA is designed as a capstone project for the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting, Musical Theatre, or BFA Design/Production tracks. Students enroll in THE 4959, usually during their senior year.

**Description of Projects:**

The Senior Project shall consist of a significant piece of work that will demonstrate the students' expertise in both the academic and practical fields of the theatre, resulting in a document of substantial length (usually 10-20 pages).

The Senior BFA student will select a final project in his/her major area of interest.

- BFA Acting and Musical Theatre students will use roles won through the SoTD block auditions. If not cast in a SoTD main stage play, students may elect to use a role from a Florida Players or Hippodrome production. Only under extenuating circumstances and on a case-by-case basis may students develop a project of sufficient scale and scope in a Studio Showcase.
- Design/Production students may elect to use projects in design or assistant design/technical direction on SoTD productions. Off-campus projects are discouraged, as shop and personnel support is often unpredictable.

**Objectives:**

In this course students will:

1. Identify and refine a creative research topic for investigation;
2. Develop an appropriate methodology for researching and responding to the needs of their role/assignment in the production;
3. Conduct a review of pertinent literature and research that supports this

- performance/production project;
4. Demonstrate the knowledge acquired through research and creative process in a paper that documents the findings, methodology and implications of the production assignment.

**Coordinator/Instructor of Record:**

The Undergraduate BFA Acting Coordinator is Judith Williams, BFA Musical Theatre Coordinator is Tony Mata, and the BFA Design Coordinators are Mihai Ciupe (Scenic), Stacey Galloway/Jennifer Dasher (Costumes,) and Stan Kaye (Lighting).

All BFA Senior Project proposals must be approved by the appropriate coordinator.

However, every student is free to choose an alternate faculty member as the Project Advisor.

**Scheduled Meeting Times:**

Meetings are to be arranged between the BFA Student and the Project Advisor.

The student is responsible for keeping the Project Advisor up-to-date on his/her progress.

Prior to starting the project, BFA students must clarify with their Project Advisor all the expectations for the BFA Senior Project including draft deadlines and submission dates.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**Senior Project Proposal Form:**

A BFA Senior Project Proposal Form is required that describes a rationale for the project, goals or questions that guide its development, a proposal of related literature, methodology, discussion, and conclusions. The form is to be submitted to the SoTD Academic Advisor and the project Faculty Advisor.

**Basic Requirement/Expectations:**

The student will:

1. Provide a written proposal to his/her Academic Advisor and senior Project Advisor that must be approved prior to the start of his/her project, no later than two weeks into the semester;
2. Keep a complete journal and record of research, sketches, drawings, budget, and promptbooks, as appropriate to the project.
3. Clarify the approach and topics to be addressed in the paper (create a paper outline);
4. Consult with his/her Project Advisor on a regular basis to discuss the status of the creative project;
5. In consultation with the project advisor, establish meeting times and deadlines for drafts and final submission of the paper;
6. Submit the paper for review according to predetermined deadlines. In order to guarantee sufficient time for grading, the submission date will usually be no later than one week before the final day of classes.

The Project Advisor will attend rehearsals or performances, shop sessions, production meetings, fittings, etc. - within reason - upon the student's request.

Suggestions for Paper Format:

1. Title, Table of Contents

2. Introduction. May contain comments on the process of choosing the play and/or role; other pertinent comments.
3. Text analysis. A concise discussion of the text, placing it within its history, genre, critical tradition, etc., and including a brief performance history. Use of secondary materials (reviews, criticism if available) is strongly recommended. The point of the text analysis is to demonstrate the actor's awareness of the problems and possibilities of the role as they emerge from the text.
  - a. Script Analysis (includes basic plot summary, as necessary)
  - b. Dramaturgy: Historical Context of play & relevance today
  - c. Style of Production (comment on pertinent production modes, especially if they deviate from default realism)
4. Documentation and analysis of rehearsal process and performance preparation. This is main section of the thesis report, which allows the actor to demonstrate his or her sophistication in thinking about the acting process and using techniques learned in the BFA program for constructing a performance. In this section, the actor should be explicit about his or her methodology and refer to standard terminology and acting literature. The approach can be either chronological (charting progress) or thematic (documenting selected areas of concentration). The writer should avoid being merely anecdotal and should draw on the rehearsal journal to establish a clear sense of the process of understanding and exploring the role. The emphasis should be on problem-solving and how the specific challenges of the role were met. The section should conclude with an analysis of the methods used and their adequacy to the project.
  - a. Voice (problems, solutions investigation/explorations)
  - b. Movement (problems, solutions, investigations/explorations)
  - c. Scene Study/Acting approach
5. Performance. A brief discussion of the performance of the role should note whether the rehearsal period accomplished a comprehensive preparation for the live performance (and if not, why?), how the performance progressed from opening to closing, and cite verbal feedback and criticism as well as any written reviews.
6. Conclusion. Final summary evaluation of the thesis project.
7. Appendices used as needed, but might consist of programs, posters, reviews, pictures or slides.
8. Bibliography should contain all materials (books, articles, videos and films, manuscripts, etc.) that are either directly cited in the text or were used in the actor's preparation and performance in some central way. Exclude materials merely referred to.

## **Grading:**

The project grade is assessed by the Project Advisor, based primarily on the quality of the written work submitted. Credit toward graduation is granted only if the student's work results in the grade of "B" or better.

**Academic Honesty Policy:**

UF students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in an honest and ethical manner while pursuing their studies. They are expected to abide by the UF Academic Honesty Policy, which defines an academic honesty offense as "the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage." In the context of this course, this includes conducting original research and properly citing sources for any materials (both printed and online) used in writing the supporting research paper. *Submitting work that has been plagiarized will result in a failing grade.*

For more information on the UF Academic Honor Code see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

**Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

**University Counseling Services:**

Contact information:

**Counseling and Wellness Center**

Phone: 352-392-1575

Web <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

**Course Evaluations:**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

**Course Fees:**

Information about associate course fees can be found at <https://one.ufl.edu/soc/2188>