

PERFORMANCE STUDIES (BA)

Department Website (<http://www.tisch.nyu.edu/performance-studies/>)

NYSED: 36114 **HEGIS:** 1099.00 **CIP:** 50.9999

Program Description

The undergraduate program at the Department of Performance Studies is a liberal arts degree focusing on the analysis and interpretation of a wide range of behaviors that could be understood as “performance.” Born in the 1980s from the pioneering work of Richard Schechner in fusing cultural anthropology with theater studies, Performance Studies has developed into one of the most innovative fields of interdisciplinary studies in the Humanities. Performance Studies critically investigates all sorts of performing and scenic arts in their cultural and historical contexts—dance, theater, body art, circus, opera and everything in between—as well “offstage” performances of social identity in everyday life.

The National Research Council has ranked Performance Studies at NYU #1 in the field of Theater and Performance Studies. Graduates of the program can use their degrees in several ways: Performance Studies can function as a liberal arts degree akin to Cultural Anthropology, Theater Studies, and Cultural/Gender/Ethnic Studies; or students can approach the degree vocationally as preparation for professional careers in academia or in the arts as Arts Administrators, Curators, Dramaturges, Critics and Analysts, and Artist/Scholars. Many of our students will want to pursue graduate studies in Performance Studies, Theater, and Dance Studies, Gender and Sexuality, Ethnic Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Social Work and Law.

Admissions

New York University’s Office of Undergraduate Admissions supports the application process for all undergraduate programs at NYU. For additional information about undergraduate admissions, including application requirements, see How to Apply (<https://www.nyu.edu/admissions/undergraduate-admissions/how-to-apply.html>).

Additional Admissions Requirements

Statement of Purpose

Please submit a 750-1000 word statement that addresses your interest in performance studies, why you think you are a good fit for this department, and what you hope to gain from the experience of studying with us. What do you hope to study and write about in the field of Performance Studies? Why are you applying to this program and not a more traditional program such as anthropology, dance, or theatre?

Program Requirements

The program requires the completion of 128 credits, comprised of the following:

Course	Title	Credits
Area I: General Education		
<i>Language and Literature</i>		
EXPOS-UA 5	Writing the Essay: Art in the World	4
ASPP-UT 2	The World Through Art Writing The Essay	4
<i>Foreign Language</i>		
8 credits or confirmed intermediate-level proficiency		8

Foundations of Contemporary Culture

CORE-UA 400	Texts & Ideas:	4
CORE-UA 500	Cultures & Contexts: Topics	4
CORE-UA 700		4
Societies and the Social Sciences		4

Foundations of Scientific Inquiry

CORE-UA 100		4
CORE-UA 200		4
CORE-UA 300		4

Area II: Major Requirements

PERF-UT 101	Introduction to Performance Studies	4
or PERF-UT 200	Performance Studies: An Introduction with Richard Schechner	
PERF-UT 102	Performance Theory	4
PERF-UT 103	Performance of the City	4
PERF-UT 104	Performance and Politics	4
Select two of the following:		8
PERF-UT 201	Performance Composition	
PERF-UT 204	Performative Writing Workshop	
PERF-UT 205	Performance Histories	
PERF-UT 206	The Performance of Everyday Life	
Select three of the following:		12
PERF-UT 302	Queer Politics and Performance	
PERF-UT 303	Theories of Movement	
PERF-UT 304	Performance and Technology	
PERF-UT 305	Topics in Performance Studies	
PERF-UT 306	Race and Performance	
PERF-UT 401	¹	4

Related Field Minor or Second Major

Select a related Field Minor or Second Major (see Additional Program Requirements below) 16

Electives

Other Elective Credits	28
Total Credits	128

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Students in this course will build on a research paper/project that they originated in another PS course, with the goal of extending, refining, and further developing it in order to synthesize what they have learned, as well as further hone their research, analysis, and writing skills.

Additional Program Requirements

In addition to the program requirements, students must complete a major or minor in another department or program. Given the large number of available elective credits, interested students should be able to work out a course of study that allows them to complete the requirements for a minor or second major in another department and have the option of spending one semester abroad. Courses applied toward the minor or second major could be taken in Tisch School of the Arts or other departments, schools, and colleges in the University excluding the School of Professional Studies (SPS). A minimum of four courses (at least 16 credits) in the minor, second major, or “Other Electives” category must be liberal arts courses. The minor or second major requires approval by the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS).

Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
1st Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 101	Introduction to Performance Studies	4
EXPOS-UA 5	Writing the Essay: Art in the World	4
Cultures and Contexts		4
FREN-UA 1	Elemen French Level I	4
Credits		16
2nd Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 102	Performance Theory	4
ASPP-UT 2	The World Through Art Writing The Essay	4
Texts and Ideas		4
FREN-UA 2	Elem French Level II	4
Credits		16
3rd Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 103	Performance of the City	4
Expressive Culture		4
Elective Course		4
Elective Course		4
Credits		16
4th Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 104	Performance and Politics	4
SOC-UA 205	Social Movements, Protest, and Conflict	4
Elective Course		4
Elective Course		4
Credits		16
5th Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 201	Performance Composition	4
Quantitative Reasoning		4
Life Science		4
Elective Course		4
Credits		16
6th Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 205	Performance Histories	4
Physical Science		4
Elective Course		4
Elective Course		4
Credits		16
7th Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 304	Performance and Technology	4
PERF-UT 306	Race and Performance	4
Elective Course		4
Elective Course		4
Credits		16
8th Semester/Term		
PERF-UT 305	Topics in Performance Studies	4
PERF-UT 401		4
Elective Course		4
Elective Course		4
Credits		16
Total Credits		128

recognize the specific force (ideological, affective, aesthetic, etc.) and social impact of performance in a given context.

2. Study the role of embodiment in knowledge production – how performance (theatrical, quotidian, ritual, linguistic, etc.) can structure knowledge, and vice versa; students will understand the ways embodied practices shape knowledge and constitute a crucial element of social interaction – what movement, gesture, vocalization and other sound-making, and other sensory modes, grounded in specific cultural contexts, contribute to knowledge (alongside, or over and above, textual or linguistic modes of expression/thought).
3. Analyze and interpret performance critically, theorize its impact, and articulate all of the above clearly and forcefully in writing; additionally, students will learn to perform primary and secondary research in the arts and culture more generally. Critical research, reading and writing skills will be emphasized.

Policies

Departmental Standards

Students must earn a course grade of C or better in departmental courses (or approved substitutions) in order to receive credit toward the major.

NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/>).

Tisch Policies

Additional academic policies can be found on the Tisch academic policy page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/undergraduate/arts/academic-policies/>).

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will:

1. Recognize the pervasive nature of performance in society, and understand the social, political, and aesthetic significance of performance; students will learn to discern the operation of performance in both theatrical and non-theatrical contexts, and to