



MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate **DATE** October 14, 2025
FROM Dilson Rassier, Provost and Vice-President Academic, and Chair, SCUP **PAGES** 1/15
RE: Full Program Proposal for a Theatre and Performance Minor (SCUP 25-49)

At its meeting on October 1, 2025, SCUP reviewed and approved the Full Program Proposal for a Theatre and Performance Minor.

Motion: That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for a Theatre and Performance Minor in the School for the Contemporary Arts within the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology.

C: James Long, Theatre and Performance Area Coordinator, School for the Contemporary Arts
 Arne Eigenfeldt, Associate Dean, Academic, Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology

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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION	Senate Committee on University Priorities	DATE	July 4, 2025
FROM	Paul Kingsbury, Vice-Chair	PAGES	1/1
	Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies		
RE:	Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (SCUS 25-111)		

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of July 3, 2025, gives rise to the following recommendation:

Motion

That SCUP approves the Full Program Proposal for the Theatre and Performance Minor in the School for the Contemporary Arts within the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology.

The relevant documentation for review by SCUP is attached.



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ENGAGING THE WORLD

**Theatre and Performance Minor
School for the Contemporary Arts**

Full Program Proposal

[May, 2025]

Faculty of Arts Communication and Technology

1. Executive Summary

A. An overview of the institution's history, mission, and academic goals:

As Canada's engaged university, Simon Fraser University is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded in 1965 with a mission to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today SFU is consistently ranked amongst Canada's top comprehensive universities and is one of the world's leading teaching and research institutions.

SCA's proposed Minor in Theatre and Performance will build on this history and develop a unique qualification that will enable students to engage in collaborative interdisciplinary discovery while pursuing another major from other schools or faculties at SFU; expand research practices in their chosen fields; and/or attain a second teachable subjects for high school teaching programs.

B. Credential to be awarded

Minor in Theatre and Performance.

C. Location

SFU Goldcorp Centre for the Arts for all courses in Theatre and Performance and Contemporary Arts.

D. Faculty offering the proposed new program:

School for Contemporary Arts, Faculty of Arts Communication and Technology.

E. Anticipated program start date

Summer 2026.

F. Anticipated completion time:

Students can complete the 30-unit Minor in six semesters through existing courses in the SCA and Theatre and Performance program. A key curriculum change in the recent re-build (2022) of the Major was removing the requirement to stay with a single cohort, allowing greater mobility and the integration of students from other areas. This flexibility also enables students to focus on their Major and rejoin the course sequence as needed.

G. Description of proposal program

Aims, goals and/or objectives

The revised Theatre and Performance program at SFU's SCA takes an expansive approach to traditional theatre-making, exploring how performance and art can reposition themselves and intersect with other academic disciplines and career trajectories. This Minor is designed to attract students from various faculties who are interested in integrating collaborative methodologies, social practice, and contemporary performance-making strategies into their own fields as tools for research, world-building, and inquiry.

Unlike conservatory or actor-training programs, we position theatre and performance in direct conversation with disciplines such as, but not limited to, sociology, anthropology, psychology, urban studies, and political science. Theatre and performance have the capacity to offer relational strategies and tools for peer collaboration and robust public engagement.

To support this interdisciplinary approach, we are fostering connections across faculties and schools through the SCA-led Institute for Performance Studies (IPS). IPS is a multidisciplinary research institute built on more than a decade of performance studies research at SFU. This interdisciplinary field uses performance theory and creation as a tool to examine a wide range of cultural expressions and social actions.

The inclusion of a Minor also matches the other areas at the School for Contemporary Arts, each of which offers at least a Minor or an Extended Minor. The Minor option also responds to current declines in enrollment in fine art Major programs. Conversations with students suggest that this decline can be attributed to a broader sense of financial instability felt by our students and their families. This concern is particularly relevant for students from the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley, who are already struggling with the rising cost of living.

Pursuing a Major in a field that may lead to precarious employment—such as the fine arts—is a bold decision for many students and their families. By offering the Minor alongside the Major and Extended Minor, we create opportunities for students engaged in other disciplines to continue their interest in the performing arts without committing to a singular career in the field. At 30 units, the minimum required as a second teachable subject and be particularly valuable for students seeking entry into the Faculty of Education's Professional Development Program (PDP).

As will be outlined in the academic calendar and advising sessions, the Minor will allow students to sustain a collaborative, community-based practice while

developing a robust set of creative strategies that can be applied to other fields of research.

Details, Minor in Theatre and Performance

- 30 total units.
- Students will be required to complete 15 lower division units including CA 151, 152, 251, 252 and 257W.
- At the Upper Level, Minors will be required to complete 15 units, in the program's third year including CA 350, 354, 355, 356 and 357W.

See attached course list with course descriptions.

Contribution to the mandate and strategic plan of the institution:

Following the SCA's mandate to support interdisciplinary study, and in support of the SCA's larger Educational Goals, the Theatre and Performance area has overhauled its pedagogical mission to survey performance making beyond the traditional discipline of theatre. This is in large part due to a full changeover of core faculty in the area and the arrival of three new assistant professors in performance, Dr. Ryan Tacata and Erika Latta (2020); and James Long (2022), all of whom continue robust practices in contemporary performance.

As a performance program housed within an interdisciplinary art school, we've shifted our focus away from traditional 'actor-training' towards original student-led performance creation and now have a stronger emphasis on performance based creative research. While histories and practices of experimental theatre are still taught, the new curriculum supports the study and practice of contemporary performance, drawing from the interdisciplinary fields of Live Art, Social Practice, Land Based and Urban Responsive Practices and Performance Studies.

Aligning with the multiple points in SFU's strategic plan, the new curriculum aims to break barriers normally placed between what we think of "stand and deliver" theatre and the performance of community engagement, protest and actions for global change. Our more expansive and inclusive pedagogical approach is also proving to be a viable vehicle for decolonizing our studio spaces and moving beyond the traditional European text based dominated canon.

Aligning with the larger interdisciplinary and community engaged goals of SFU, students from across the larger SFU community are invited to complete a Minor in Theatre and Performance and combine those learnings with their other courses of study.

Delivery methods:

All courses will be in person.

Linkages between program outcomes and curriculum design:

The 2022 curriculum changes to the Theatre and Performance program were made to align with trends in the professional theatre and performance world. Outside of the country's largest stages, contemporary performance practice is shifting away from traditional text- or script-based acting to embrace a diverse range of research approaches and practitioners.

In today's theatre and performance landscapes, artists are increasingly expected to collaborate not only across artistic disciplines but also with entirely different fields of research. There is a growing emphasis on innovative approaches and interdisciplinary methods, including qualitative research practices. Theatre artists are no longer confined to the stage—they are now expected to engage with communities and work alongside practitioners from myriad disciplines.

This shift is partly driven by major arts funding institutions that are prioritizing community engagement, decolonization, and diverse voices beyond the classical canon. It also reflects a new generation of artists moving away from traditional theatrical models.

Theatre and performance remain inherently expansive art forms. This Minor aims to provide access to practitioners from all backgrounds, including those outside the conventional definition of “arts,” to contribute to and expand performance-making processes and then, reciprocally, expand their own work in other fields.

By opening prerequisites and moving beyond the limits of traditional acting training, we have already welcomed students from diverse fields such as Sociology, Communications, and Economics into our studio classes. Just as their new lines of inquiry and approaches to performance-making have enriched the work of our Majors, we anticipate that the exposure to methodologies and critical discourses typically reserved for contemporary art courses have elevated their own subjects of study.

Level of support and recognition:

As per SFU's transfer credit procedures, students may transfer from BC colleges or universities to enroll in the Minor program.

Distinctive characteristics:

With its focus on a more contemporary definition of performance and creation methods, the SCA's Theatre and Performance program is unique in the region and

maybe, with the exception of some aspects of the York (Toronto) curriculum which has a more academic approach to creation, the country.

Regionally:

- UBC's Minor in Theatre is a lecture-based program that focuses on the history and theories of traditional theatre, rather than a studio-based program focusing on contemporary performance as above.
- Langara's Studio 58 Theatre Arts diploma program is a 3-year actor training program with a focus on developing actors for film and TV.
- Capilano University's performer training program offers diplomas (not degrees) in Acting for Film and Stage, as well as in Musical Theatre.
- The University of Victoria Theatre Minor is only 15 units and, like UBC, traditional in focus. Each class is 1.5 units with the majority focusing on the historical and theoretical aspects of theatre.

SFU's Theatre and Performance degrees are unique in how they seek to expand how performance might integrate and elevate other fields of research, practice and study.

Enrolment plan for the length of the program:

Unlike the Theatre and Performance Major, applicants will not be expected to audition. Students may declare a Theatre and Performance Minor path after completing CA 151 and 152 and achieving a minimum 2.5 CGPA in Contemporary Arts and a 2.0 overall CGPA. These GPA requirements are consistent with other areas at the SCA and supported by the lifting of the audition requirement to enter CA 151 for the Fall 2025 semester.

Student evaluation

Graded courses.

Current TandP Faculty members

Dr Ryan Tacata - 75-100% depending on grad class teaching.

Area of research: Performance Making, Performance Studies, Devised Theatre, and Social Practice.

Erika Latta - 100%.

Area of research: Acting, Directing, Interdisciplinary Performance, Devised Theater, Movement for Performers, Film, Viewpoints, Suzuki Method of Acting, and site-responsive work.

James Long 100%.

Area of research: Performance Creation, Text for Performance, Community Engaged and Urban Responsive Practice, and Methods of Collaboration.

Contact information:

James Long
Theatre and Performance Area Coordinator
Assistant Professor, School for the Contemporary Arts
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2. CURRICULUM/PROGRAM CONTENT

2.1. Program structure

Students must complete a minimum of 30 units, including 15 units from the core lower-level courses in Theatre and Performance and another 15 units in the third year of the program. CA 252 or CA 257 are the necessary prerequisites for all listed upper-level courses.

Students will complete:

LOWER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Students complete a minimum of 15 CA units, including all of:

CA 151 - Live Acts I (3)
CA 152 - Live Acts II (3)
CA 251 - Live Acts III (3)
CA 252 - Live Acts IV (3)
CA 257W - Context I (3)

UPPER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Students complete a minimum of 15 CA units, including all of:

CA 350 - Performance as Research I (3)
CA 354 - Social I (3)
CA 355 - Social II (3)
CA 356 - Environments II (3)
CA 357W - Context II (3)

2.2 Courses

LOWER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Students complete 15 Theatre and Performance 100 and 200 level units.

CA 151 - Live Acts I (3)

The first of four performance studio courses in the Live Acts cluster. A practical introduction to the foundations of live performance making from a variety of perspectives. With a rotating topic each term, students develop the foundational skills for creating original, contemporary live art.

CA 152 - Live Acts II (3)

The second of four performance studio courses in the Live Acts cluster. A continued exploration of the foundations of live performance making from a variety of perspectives. With rotating topics each term, students develop the foundational skills for creating original, contemporary live art. Prerequisite: CA 151.

CA 251 - Live Acts III (3)

The third of four performance studio courses in the Live Acts cluster. A continued exploration of the foundations of live performance making from a variety of perspectives. With rotating topics each term, students develop the foundational skills for creating original, contemporary live art. Prerequisite: one of CA 123, 131, 146, 152, 161, or 171.

CA 252 - Live Acts IV (3)

The fourth of four performance studio courses in the Live Acts cluster. A continued exploration of the foundations of live performance making from a variety of perspectives. With rotating topics, students develop the foundational skills for creating original, contemporary live art. Prerequisite: one of CA 123, 131, 146, 161, 171, or 251.

CA 257W (3)

The first of two courses in the Context cluster. With a grounding in performance studies, this course explores histories and theories of the avant-garde, live art, and theatre. With a rotating topic each term, students develop the foundational skills for analyzing, researching, and writing about contemporary performance.
Writing/Breadth-Humanities.

UPPER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Students complete the 15 Theatre and Performance 300 Level units.

CA 350 - Performance as Research I (3)

The first of two courses dedicated to the development of a new work of performance led by a faculty member or visiting artist. Introduces themes and concepts, develops processes and materials for a presentation in the subsequent term. Integrates the techniques acquired in context and studio courses. May repeat once for credit. Prerequisite: CA 252 and declared status in the theatre and performance major or honours, or by prior approval.

CA 354 - Social I (3)

The first of two courses in the Social Studio stream. Students will be introduced to contemporary practices, methodologies, and ethical considerations at play at the intersection of performance and social practice. Prerequisite: One of CA 221, 231, 246, 252, 261, 271, or 285.

CA 355 - Social II (3)

The second of two courses in the Social Studio stream. Building on CA 354, students will continue research and experiment with contemporary methodologies at the intersection of performance and social practice. Prerequisite: CA 354.

CA 356 - Environments II (3)

The second of two courses focused on the experiential production of space, Environments II introduces students to contemporary practices, concepts, and methods specific to creating site-specific and responsive performance. Prerequisite: One of CA 221, 231, 246, 252, 256, 261, 271, or 285.

CA 357W (3)

The second of two courses in the Context cluster. Work will include reading, writing and experiments in live performance creation. With a grounding in performance studies, this course offers a variety of frameworks and approaches to the histories and theories of the avant-garde, live art, and theatre. With a new topic each term, students develop skills for analyzing, researching, and writing about contemporary performance. Prerequisite: CA 257W. Writing/Breadth-Humanities.

3. PROGRAM RESOURCES

3.1. Target audience and enrolment plan

- A. Students from other SCA areas and other schools/faculties across SFU, interested in the creative, world-building and community connected/engaged approaches of the new Theatre and Performance curriculum.
- B. Students interested in attaining a second teachable subject for the Faculty of Education / PDP.

C. Once established the Minor will be promoted via the Academic Advisor network, SCA social media streams and the Theatre and Performance webpage as an additional program of study to the Major.

3.2 Resources

Faculty appointments

Students will integrate into the courses as already offered so there is no need to hire any new Full-Time Faculty.

4. PROGRAM REVIEW AND ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT

The Minor will be assessed during the mandated mid-term and 7-year cycle external reviews.

Program Consultation

The program has been developed with the input from Theatre and Performance faculty and staff across the SCA.

Evidence of Student Interest

As a result of curriculum shifts in the Theatre and Performance and Production and Design Areas—and unlike any of the other programs at the SCA—Theatre and Performance has neither a Minor nor Extended Minor to offer to students. The development of both the Minor will increase the appeal of the program and available offerings as well as provide on- and off- ramps to our other programs of study.

Since re-developing the Theatre and Performance curriculum to include a more expansive approach to theatre and performance practices and opening our prerequisites to encourage more disciplines to enter our courses we have had multiple inquiries regarding Theatre and Performance Minor and Extended Minor options from students both in the SCA and SFU at large.

5. APPENDICES

5.1. Calendar entry

Theatre and Performance Minor

The theatre and performance minor is a six-semester, part-time program designed to welcome students from across SFU to develop creative and collaborative skills grounded in theatre and performance and applicable to a wide range of career trajectories. In addition to performance-making, acting, and writing, students will explore community-engaged practice; site-specific and land-based creation; and innovative methods in creative research. The 30-unit Minor also qualifies as a second teachable subject for those interested in the Faculty of Education's PDP (K-12 teacher certification) program.

Admission Requirements

Students may apply to the theatre and performance minor after completing CA 151 and 152, achieving a minimum 2.5 CGPA in contemporary arts, and a 2.0 overall CGPA. Contact the School for Contemporary Arts office for details on procedures and deadlines or visit our website.

Although the university operates on a trimester system, most CA courses are planned in a two-term (fall and spring) sequence. Students are advised to enter in the fall term (September) and should contact the school in the preceding January for program entry and requirements information.

A minimum 2.5 SCA GPA and 2.0 CGPA is required to remain in good standing in the program.

Transfer Credit and Advanced Standing

Transfer credit awarded for courses completed at other recognized post-secondary institutions does not automatically entitle students to advanced standing in the program.

About the School's Course Offerings

Students are encouraged to take advantage of interdisciplinary offerings within the school. Since many programs follow a structured sequence of courses, students

should plan carefully to maximize their study benefits. Not all courses are offered every term; some are available on a rotational basis (e.g., every third or fourth term). Advisors are available to assist in planning study programs.

Students are reminded that the school is an interdisciplinary contemporary arts department and are strongly encouraged to explore courses across various disciplines.

Special Topics Courses

The subject matter (and prerequisites) of special or selected topics courses vary by term.

Prior Approval Prerequisite

Where a prerequisite includes ‘prior approval,’ students must obtain approval before enrolling in the course. Contact the school for further information.

Program Requirements

Students may apply to the theatre and performance minor after completing CA 151 and CA 152, achieving a minimum 2.5 CGPA in Contemporary Arts, and a 2.0 overall CGPA.

Students must complete a minimum of 30 units in the theatre and performance curriculum.

Students complete the **30 units** as specified below.

LOWER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Students complete a minimum of 15 theatre and performance units, including all of:

- CA 151 - Live Acts I (3)
- CA 152 - Live Acts II (3)
- CA 251 - Live Acts III (3)
- CA 252 - Live Acts IV (3)
- CA 257W - Context I (3)

UPPER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Students complete a minimum of 15 theatre and performance units including all of:

- CA 350 - Performance as Research I (3)
- CA 354 - Social I (3)

CA 355 - Social II (3)
CA 356 - Environments II (3)
CA 357W - Context II (3)

5.2. New Courses

No new courses are required for the minor.

5.3. Resources

No new resources will be required for this program.