

## **Ithaca College Theatre Arts BA Drama Interview Tips**

It is important to remember that, while surrounded by specialist degrees in theatre, the BA degree in Drama is purposely a generalist degree, treating theatre as a liberal art as well as a profession, and introducing BA Drama students to various aspects of the theatre, rather than focusing in on one aspect.

The successful candidate for the BA Drama degree should be clear in her/his desire for this generalist approach. We call interviewees who express a desire only to perform, for example, as "BFA wannabees" and as such students who would really rather specialize and probably not be happy in a BA degree.

Many good BA Drama majors focus lightly on several aspects of theatre, for example a person who wants to perform also has a keen interest in directing; a director is also interested in dramaturgy, as well as performing; a stage manager is interested in theatre management as in stage management. Many others have an equal interest in other majors. One of the great benefits of this program is that a student can easily minor, double minor, or double major in another subject. Popular choices recently have been English, Writing, History, and Sociology, but a few have reached out into different directions. Currently one sophomore is double majoring in Physics and BA Drama!

Questions will be asked in the interview about what aspects of the theatre interest the candidate, if the candidate has interest in other majors, or perhaps a minor. Candidates thought of as eager to specialize rather than generalize will be weeded out.

Finally, an important caution to all candidates: students who really want to specialize but who are skilled enough to play to the interviewer, convincing that person that they want a generalist degree when they really want to specialize, primarily hurt themselves. They arrive and don't see their names on a callback list, are frustrated that other students are taking more intense training in performance or design, or are not allowed to do advanced work in technical theatre, to cite just a few examples, and they become frustrated and unhappy. Frustrated, unhappy students shortchange first themselves, but also the program, and that is not good for anyone. The BA Degree in Drama at Ithaca College is a terrific program, and it has led to great success both in and out of the theatrical profession after college. But it is not for everyone, just as more specialized degrees are not for everyone.

Bring these attitudes and interests to an interview, along with good grades and enthusiasm, and you may well become a member of this exciting program.