

## 2023-2024 PENN STATE B.F.A. MUSICAL THEATRE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

AFTER AUGUST 1 -

1. Apply to Penn State using either the [Common App](#), the [Coalition App](#), or the [Penn State Undergraduate Admissions](#) application.

IF YOU NEED A FEE WAIVER -

Application fee waivers

Penn State honors College Board and ACT fee waivers, Coalition fee waivers, and requests from school counselors documenting extreme financial hardship for the applicant.

Copies of College Board or ACT fee waivers can be faxed to 814-863-7590 or mailed to:

[Penn State Undergraduate Admissions](#)  
201 Shields Building  
University Park, PA 16802

All other fee waiver requests should be sent to [admissions@psu.edu](mailto:admissions@psu.edu). Please include the student's PSU ID number (if known), date of birth, and address to ensure that the waiver is applied to the correct application.

Please note that a student must start an application in order for a fee waiver to be applied. We are not able to refund an application fee once it has been paid. Students who receive fee waivers will be able to bypass the application payment screen.

2. Submit your prescreen materials to our Musical Theatre Department through [Acceptd](#) (Details below). **If you need a fee waiver to submit your materials, please send documentation to [support@getacceptd.com](mailto:support@getacceptd.com) to have your prescreen submission fee waived.**
3. If you are invited to audition for our program, schedule your audition through [Acceptd](#)
  - Notifications of prescreen decisions will be sent through Acceptd messaging
  - If you are not invited to audition for us, Penn State Undergraduate Admissions will contact you to see if you'd like to be considered for other possible majors at Penn State.

## PRESCREEN DEADLINES AND NOTIFICATION DATES:

SUBMIT BETWEEN AUG 1-SEPT 30 – **NOTIFIED OCTOBER 16, 2023**

SUBMIT BETWEEN OCT 1 – OCT 31 – **NOTIFIED NOVEMBER 13, 2023**

SUBMIT BETWEEN NOV 1 – DEC 31 – **NOTIFIED JANUARY 15, 2024**

**Step 1:** All students interested in auditioning for the Musical Theatre B.F.A. must submit the following via digital upload [via the GetAccepted website](#).

- Headshot/Photo
- Resume
- Video Prescreen (*Penn State Musical Theatre is a participant in the Musical Theatre Common PreScreen for the 2023-2024 cycle – **OPTION A***)
- [Helpful Hints for Filming Your Prescreen](#)

### **OVERALL**

Each piece should be filmed/uploaded as a separate piece of media. No continuous videos. Students are encouraged to use standard technology/recording devices that are available to them (i.e. smartphones, tablets, etc.).

### **INTRODUCTION (“SLATE”)**

There should not be a separate introduction or “slate” video. Instead, “slates” are to appear at the beginning of each piece and included as part of the time allotment. (Read through the resources page for examples of each of the three slates described below).

- The proper slate for a song is to share your name, the song title, and show in which it appears.
- The proper slate for a monologue is to share your name, the title of the play, and the playwright.
- The proper slate for a piece of dance is to share your name, the title of the song you are dancing to, and the name of the choreographer. If the piece is “self-choreographed” you should share your own name as choreographer.

### **SONGS**

Students should prepare two contrasting pieces. Each institution is responsible for indicating which options are accepted.

- **Style:** one song should be a ballad (where the piece has longer, sustained vocal lines) and one song should be an uptempo (where the vocal line moves at a conversational pace) so as to contrast style.
- **Length:** Each song file should be 60-90 seconds (This time limit includes the slate at the beginning of the piece and is strictly adhered to; please do not upload media files longer than 90 seconds).
- **Accompaniment:** Students must sing to musical accompaniment, which could include live or pre-recorded accompaniment. No “a cappella” singing (meaning singing without music).

### -OPTION A

- One song should be written before 1970. This song can be either the “uptempo” or the “ballad” (student’s choice).
- One song should be written after 1970 and contrast the style of the first.
- One of the two songs (student’s choice) should be filmed in a full frame shot to see your full range of expression, and the other one in a close-up shot (top of the head to the chest should be visible in the frame).

### **MONOLOGUES**

Students may be asked to prepare either one or two pieces. Each institution is responsible for indicating which options are accepted.

- Monologues must be from a published play.
- Monologues cannot be from musicals.
- Each monologue file should be 60-90 seconds (this time limit includes the slate at the beginning of the piece and is strictly adhered to; please do not upload media files longer than 90 seconds).

### -OPTION A

- 1 contemporary monologue (typically written after 1950), 60-90 seconds in length

The contemporary monologue should be filmed in a “close-up” shot which means the top of the head to the chest should be visible in the frame.

### **DANCE**

Students may be asked to execute one or both of the following options. Each institution is responsible for indicating which options are accepted.

- Framing: All dance media should be filmed in a “full frame” shot taking care to keep the student’s entire person in the frame at all times. (This time limit includes the slate at the beginning of the piece and is strictly adhered to; please do not upload media files longer than 60 seconds)
- Style: Regardless of which style of dance you execute, the choreography and the movement should be connected to the music where the applicant is dancing with a sense of purpose.
- All choreography must be performed to music; please no “a cappella” dance media.

**Universities may ask for a required Dance option. Universities may offer an optional Ballet submission:**

### DANCE OPTION

- 30-60 seconds of dance in whatever dance discipline you feel most confident. This may include, but is not limited to jazz, ballet, tap, modern, hip hop, lyrical, contemporary, or dance styles beyond American and Euro-western styles.
- Please do not submit “barre work”. Instead, check to see if the auditioning program offers the optional “Ballet Submission” which is listed below.
- Please use steps, movement, and physical vocabulary that you are familiar with and can execute well. To the best of your ability, move your body fully. Please include at least one turn, one jump and one kick (or other suitable rotation, elevation, and extension that works for your body).

Dance media can be “self-choreographed”, but must be a solo video of you. This can include a show, competition, or other performance so long as you are clearly featured on your own.

### **WILD CARD (OPTIONAL)**

Students may be asked to execute a “Wild Card” submission. Each institution is responsible for indicating whether the “Wild Card” is accepted.

- Submissions should be no more than 60 seconds.
  - Applicants do not need to slate in any wild card media.
  - This media can be ANYTHING you want - a special skill, an interesting story about yourself, a passion speech, an instrument you play, etc. “What do you want us to know about you?” and “What makes you unique?” (See the resources page for ideas on Wild Card submissions)
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### **Step 2: Audition**

Students who are invited to audition should be prepared for their audition date. Each audition will consist of:

- Dance audition
- Two vocal selections
- One monologue

## **2023-2024 PENN STATE MUSICAL THEATRE AUDITION DATES AND LOCATIONS**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023 – ON CAMPUS (UNIVERSITY PARK, PA)

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, JANUARY 27-28, 2024 – NEW YORK, NY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2024 – ON CAMPUS (UNIVERSITY PARK, PA)

MONDAY – THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5-8, 2024– CHICAGO, IL

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2023 – ON CAMPUS (UNIVERSITY PARK, PA)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2024 – ON CAMPUS (UNIVERSITY PARK, PA)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 20234– ON CAMPUS (UNIVERSITY PARK, PA)

## *Audition Tips and Advice*

Your first decision is whether you actually want to pursue a BFA degree. The BFA is meant for highly focused individuals who wish to train for the professional theatre. It is a highly competitive, challenging degree program meant for students with intense discipline, motivation, stamina, physical, mental, and emotional strength, and of course – talent. Admission is extremely competitive – and based on both academics and artistry. Artistically, you need to demonstrate professional potential at the audition. Academically, you need to be admissible to the Penn State University system.

### **Preparing During your High School Years**

Here are some suggestions on how you can best prepare for the rigors of a BFA Musical Theatre degree...

1. Focus extra time on lessons and classes – voice lessons, acting class, and dance class can only improve your readiness. Even if you have never had any classes in musical theatre, you would be surprised what even a few months will do for you.
2. Choir, piano, and music theory will all help you increase your musicality.
3. Be as healthy as possible. We do not believe that there is only one appropriate body-type for work in professional musical theatre. On the other hand, strength, stamina, health, and flexibility are all important attributes for musical theatre students. Cardiovascular work and strength building can be of value.
4. See as much musical theatre as possible. The more theatre you see, the better. In addition to musicals, seek out plays, dance, and opera.

### **The Audition Material**

Since admission is based on a successful audition, it makes sense to thoroughly prepare and present yourself as your best. The successful audition begins with careful, intelligent material selection. Here are several suggestions...

1. Pick material that is appropriate for you. Do not try to impress us with your worldliness or edgy selections. Pick songs and monologues that fit your age bracket and experience.
2. Pick material that you do well and that you are passionate about. This is very different than picking material based on a belted high note or series of skills you are looking to showcase. You'll notice that we don't publish a list of "do not sing" material – we are happy to hear anything you prepare. We do suggest that you try to avoid material that is either currently on Broadway or has been "stamped" very specifically by a well-known artist.
3. Think of the two songs and the monologue as an introduction to who you are as a young artist and person. Remember, we aren't looking for the perfect casting decision. We are looking for talented and curious artists – people with whom we will spend a great deal of time and effort over four years.
4. Pay careful attention to cutting and editing your selections. The audition songs don't need every repeat; the monologue should be 90 seconds at a maximum.

5. The up-tempo and ballad should contrast and demonstrate different aspects of your performance capabilities. One song needs to have been written before the 1970s.
6. Find a way to rehearse with someone who can play the music that you will provide our accompanist. Singing the first time with an accompanist at an audition can be difficult. Remember, the accompanist will play what you provide.

### **The Audition Day**

Here are several things you can do to help yourself on the day of your audition...

1. Give yourself the best chance for success. You are a busy person. You're probably juggling your Penn State audition with other auditions, school shows, lessons, a job, an attempt at a social life, and school work. **HOWEVER**, we can't over-emphasize the importance of the audition to your future. If at all possible, plan to arrive on campus the day before. That way you can familiarize yourself with the campus, take a tour, look for the audition location, etc. We invite you to observe classes and meet current majors. Above all else, arrive at the audition well rested and focused.
2. Understand the audition process. After a group physical warm-up, you will be taught a dance combination. You can expect elements of ballet, jazz, and other physical storytelling in the combination. In small groups (3 or 4), you will present this combination to members of the musical theatre faculty.
3. Manage your energy. Many people in our field think of auditions as difficult, frightening events and performances as exciting, fun events. We invite you to think about your audition as a great opportunity to share your work with us as it stands in your young life and career. A time to introduce yourself and your passions to a group of people who are on your side in that process. If you are able to do this, you may find that nervous excitement (a constructive energy) will replace nervous fear (a destructive energy). Also, keep in mind that you and the people sitting behind the table want the exact same thing - for you to do great and exciting work.
4. Be ready for the unexpected. We may stop you and work with you on a piece; we may cut you off and ask you to move to your next piece; we may vocalize you, or we may ask you to do something unplanned. Do not let these requests distract or upset you. We have a short time to get to know as much about you and your work as possible. If we've seen what we need to see, or feel that we need to see something different, our request will only help us assess you in the most complete and accurate way possible. This will be mutually beneficial.

Best of luck!