

THEATRE, BFA: PERFORMANCE

In the Theatre BFA Performance degree, students will choose a track: Acting or Musical Theatre.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Theatre provides intensive specialized coursework for students seeking professional training in one of two separate tracks:

- Performance
 - The **Performance** BFA has two 130-credit tracks in either Acting or Musical Theatre.
- Production
 - The **Production** BFA is a singular 120-credit track embracing all the areas of production including design, costume, prop, scenery, lighting, sound, and stage management.

The BFA focuses on uncovering the potential of the individual student in the development of personal performance and/or production practices. The BFA curriculum supports student exploration of theatrical processes including new works as well as the established canon of dramatic literature. The program approaches the work in fresh and innovative ways, giving students a wide range of tools to speak to the contemporary moment both as actors on stage and as artists in production studios, rehearsal halls, and backstage.

The specialized tracks in the BFA build on the objectives of the department's core curriculum to nurture within each student a deepened, strengthened, and developing professional level of competency. Each track of specialization follows an integrated curriculum based on an intensive, specialized array of courses. These focused arcs of training endow students with a sense of their own identity as artists. Students must continue to show artistic growth and progress and meet academic grade requirements (see Requirements tab) to continue in the program. Admission to each BFA track is selective and progress reviews are conducted each semester allowing for direct feedback to the student and a chance to explore changing interests or career paths.

- **BFA Acting:** The program builds on the objectives of the department's core curriculum to develop within the student a deepened, strengthened, and professional level of competency in acting and a sense of identity as a performing artist. It prepares students for advanced graduate study in performance or entry into the profession of theatre practice. To help students develop as complete artists, our program emphasizes an understanding of essential acting theories, principles of voice production, flexible speech techniques, physical communication, physical structures of character, principles of Dramatic Action and Storytelling, and personal artistic practice. Research specific to an actor's work, objective and subjective/affective, is demonstrated as a core principle to artistic development. Students are guided through the process of self critique to gain the ability to prescribe solutions and/or new directions for artistic development, and gain an understanding of professional modes of behavior, preparation, and competency
- **BFA Musical Theatre:** Combining three major performing disciplines, Music, Dance, and Theatre, this program trains students to succeed as versatile performing artists. Our students annually perform in carefully chosen musical productions essential to pre-professional training, and hone a range of practical and creative skills consistent with their professional and personal goals. Students will be trained

thoroughly in the performance skills necessary to compete in the professional world of musical theatre. Included in this track are a solid developmental and pedagogical foundation in music (voice, theory and musicianship, piano, large and small music ensembles), dance (history of the musical theatre art form, ballet, tap, jazz, and theatre dance), and theatre (acting, play analysis, and theatre production).

- **BFA Production:** Our multi-faceted Theatre Production program trains students to be competitive in a variety of fields, including technical production, stage management and design, costume production, and more. Offering professional training experiences as early as Freshman year, our students go on to work in a variety of related industry careers. The Production BFA utilizes the foundation of theatre to explore the uniquely collaborative artistic and artisanal processes that create and support compelling storytelling in live performance. The program allows for specialization in the areas of costumes, lighting, properties, scenery, sound/video and stage management but is flexible enough for cross disciplinary studies tailored to the student's specific interests.

Requirements

Laptop Requirement

Preparing for a future defined by digital technology is an important step in developing artists. Our digitally integrated curriculum helps you achieve a professional level with leading art-related software and practices.

Laptop ownership is strongly recommended for *all* undergraduates. However, it's required for the programs below. For more information please visit the Peck School of the Arts admission page (<https://uwm.edu/arts/apply/>).

- Art & Design (BA and BFA Programs)
- Dance (BA and BFA Programs)
- Film, Video, Animation & New Genres (BA and BFA Programs)
- Music (Composition & Technology Program)
- Theatre (BFA Production and BA Theatre Education Programs)

University Core

Code	Title	Credits
General Education Requirements ¹		
<i>Competencies ¹</i>		
Oral and Written Communication – Part A and Part B ^{2,3}		
Quantitative Literacy (QL) – Part A and Part B ^{2,3}		
Foreign Language ^{2,3}		
<i>Distribution Requirements ¹</i>		
Humanities 6		
Natural Sciences (Must include one lab) 6		
Social Sciences 6		
Cultural Diversity ²		
Electives		
University Credits (outside of PSOA) 12		
Credits in Peck School of the Arts ⁴ 9		
Total Credits 39		

¹ Learn more about the General Education Requirements (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/archive/2024-2025/policies/undergraduate-policies/#bachelorsdegreegeneraleducation>).

² Credits may be utilized in conjunction with General Education Social Sciences, Humanities, or Arts credits. See advisor for guidance.

³ Theatre students must complete the General Education Requirements (GER) in Oral and Written Communication competency (OWC), Quantitative Literacy competency (QL), and Foreign Language proficiency prior to enrolling in 310-level or above theatre courses.

⁴ 9 credits are required in 3 of the 4 other departments in PSOA, outside of the student's discipline: Art and Design, Dance, Music, Theatre, or Film, Video, Animation, and New Genres.

The minimum number of credits required to complete the Bachelor of Fine Arts in the Performance Acting track is 126 credits while Performance Musical Theatre track is 130 credits. Students who need background preparation courses in math, English, foreign language, and chemistry may need additional credits.

Acting Track

Theatre Department Core

Code	Title	Credits
THEATRE 110	Fundamentals of the Actor's Process	3
THEATRE 213	Play Analysis	3
THEATRE 214	Stagecraft (with lab)	4
THEATRE 225	Costume Construction (with lab)	2
THEATRE 275	Performing Arts Management	3
THEATRE 230	Acting 2: Text and Performance	3
THEATRE 236	Theatre Production and Design	3
THEATRE 305	The Theatrical Experience:	3
THEATRE 322	The Theatre: Modern and Contemporary Period	3
THEATRE 321	The Theatre: Beginnings Through Realism	3
Total Credits		30

Acting Track Requirements and Electives

Code	Title	Credits
<i>Required</i>		
THEATRE 330	Acting Topics: (Topic: Acting for the Camera)	3
THEATRE 430	Stage Voice and Speech 1	3
THEATRE 431	Stage Voice and Speech 2	3
THEATRE 440	Physical Performance 1	3
THEATRE 441	Physical Performance 2	3
THEATRE 463	Master Class in Professional Theatre Study	3
THEATRE 470	Acting Technique 3	3
THEATRE 471	Acting Technique 4	3
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance: (2-3 cr as assigned; repeatable)	6
THEATRE 530	Stage Voice and Speech 3	3
THEATRE 531	Stage Voice and Speech 4	3
THEATRE 540	Physical Performance 3	3
THEATRE 541	Physical Performance 4	3
THEATRE 570	Acting 5	3
THEATRE 571	Acting 6 (Capstone)	3

Theatre Performance Electives

Select electives with your advisor	9
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Total Credits	57
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Musical Theatre Track

Theatre Department Core

Code	Title	Credits
THEATRE 110	Fundamentals of the Actor's Process	3
THEATRE 213	Play Analysis	3
THEATRE 214	Stagecraft (with lab)	4
THEATRE 225	Costume Construction (with lab)	2
THEATRE 230	Acting 2: Text and Performance	3
THEATRE 236	Theatre Production and Design	3
THEATRE 275	Performing Arts Management	3
THEATRE 305	The Theatrical Experience:	3
THEATRE 322	The Theatre: Modern and Contemporary Period	3

Select one of the following:	3
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THEATRE 321	The Theatre: Beginnings Through Realism	3
THEATRE 324	Theatre in the Americas: Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Theatre	3

Total Credits	30
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Musical Theatre Track Requirements and Electives

Code	Title	Credits
<i>Required</i> ¹		
<i>Theatre</i>		
THEATRE 408	Acting in Musical Theatre	3
THEATRE 431	Stage Voice and Speech 2	3
THEATRE 470	Acting Technique 3	3
THEATRE 471	Acting Technique 4	3
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance: (Select 6 credits [Variable credit as assigned/ cast])	6

<i>Music</i>		
MUSIC 101	Fundamentals of Music ¹	1
MUSIC 123	Aural Theory I	1
MUSIC 142	Class Voice for Musical Theater Level I	2
MUSIC 143	Class Voice for Music Theatre Level II	2
Select 1 Voice Ensemble for 1 semester		
MUSPERF 1	Fundamentals of Piano:	1
or MUSPERF 101	Lessons in Piano	
MUSPERF 111	Lessons in Voice (complete 2 semesters of 1 credit)	2
MUSPERF 412	Voice Lessons for Musical Theatre (complete 4 semesters of 2 credits)	8

<i>Dance</i>		
DANCE 111	Ballet I	2
DANCE 112	Contemporary Dance Practice: Ballet Tradition II	2
DANCE 117	Tap I	2
DANCE 122	African Dance & Diaspora Technique I	3

DANCE 251	Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis ¹	
DANCE 327	Dance for the Musical Theatre I	2
DANCE 427	Dance for the Musical Theatre II	2
Choose 2 of the following not previously taken:		4
DANCE 113	Modern Dance Technique I	
DANCE 114	Contemporary Dance Practice: Modern Tradition II	
DANCE 115	Jazz Dance I	
DANCE 116	Jazz Dance II	
DANCE 211	Contemporary Dance Practice: Ballet Tradition III	
Choose 1 of the following:		2
DANCE 103	Introduction to Yoga	
DANCE 321	Alexander Technique for the Performer	
DANCE 323	Body Conditioning: Pilates Method	
DANCE 624	Feldenkrais for Performers	
Choose 1 of the following:		1
DANCE 490	Repertoire and Ensemble (repeatable)	
DANCE 491	Repertory/Student Choreographer	
Electives		
Select electives in music, theatre, or dance as discussed with advisor		6
Total Credits		61

¹ Credits from MUSIC 101 and DANCE 251 fulfill 6 credits of PSOA requirements in the University Core.

Acting: Example of Required Courses in 4-Year Plan

Year 1		Credits
Fall		
University Core: General Education Requirements		6
THEATRE 110	Fundamentals of the Actor's Process	3
THEATRE 225	Costume Construction	2
THEATRE 305	The Theatrical Experience:	3
Credits		14
Spring		
University Core: General Education Requirements		6
THEATRE 214	Stagecraft	4
THEATRE 230	Acting 2: Text and Performance	3
THEATRE 236	Theatre Production and Design	3
Credits		16
Year 2		
Fall		
THEATRE 213	Play Analysis	3
THEATRE 430	Stage Voice and Speech 1	3
THEATRE 440	Physical Performance 1	3
THEATRE 470	Acting Technique 3	3
University Core: General Education Requirements		3
Credits		15
Spring		
THEATRE 275	Performing Arts Management	3
THEATRE 431	Stage Voice and Speech 2	3
THEATRE 441	Physical Performance 2	3
THEATRE 471	Acting Technique 4	3
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance:	2

University Core: General Education Requirements		Credits
		3
Year 3		17
Fall		
THEATRE 321	The Theatre: Beginnings Through Realism	3
THEATRE 530	Stage Voice and Speech 3	3
THEATRE 540	Physical Performance 3	3
THEATRE 570	Acting 5	3
University Core: Required Elective		3
Credits		15
Spring		
THEATRE 322	The Theatre: Modern and Contemporary Period	3
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance:	2
THEATRE 531	Stage Voice and Speech 4	3
THEATRE 541	Physical Performance 4	3
THEATRE 571	Acting 6	3
University Core: Required Electives		3
Credits		17
Year 4		
Fall		
THEATRE 330	Acting Topics: (Topic: Acting for the Camera)	3
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance:	2
University Core: Required Elective		3
PSOA Core: Required Elective		6
Theatre Electives: Degree Electives		3
Credits		17
Spring		
University Core: Required Elective		3
PSOA Core: Required Elective		3
THEATRE 463	Master Class in Professional Theatre Study	3
Theatre Electives: Degree Electives		6
Credits		15
Total Credits		126

Musical Theatre: Example of Required Courses in 4-Year Plan

Year 1		Credits
Fall		
DANCE 111	Ballet I	2
MUSPERF 1 or MUSPERF 101	Fundamentals of Piano: or Lessons in Piano	1
MUSIC 142	Class Voice for Musical Theater Level I	2
MUSIC XXX	Choral Ensemble	1
THEATRE 110	Fundamentals of the Actor's Process	3
THEATRE 214	Stagecraft	4
THEATRE 305	The Theatrical Experience:	3
Credits		16
Spring		
DANCE 112	Contemporary Dance Practice: Ballet Tradition II	2
MUSIC 143	Class Voice for Music Theatre Level II	2
MUSIC 101	Fundamentals of Music	3
THEATRE 230	Acting 2: Text and Performance	3
University Core: General University Requirement		6
Credits		16
Year 2		
Fall		
DANCE 122	African Dance & Diaspora Technique I	3
MUSPERF 111	Lessons in Voice	1
MUSIC 123	Aural Theory I	1
THEATRE 213	Play Analysis	3

THEATRE 225	Costume Construction	2
THEATRE 236	Theatre Production and Design	3
University Core: General University Requirement		3
Credits		16

Spring

Choose 1 not previously taken:		2
DANCE 113	Modern Dance Technique I	
DANCE 115	Jazz Dance I	
DANCE 211	Contemporary Dance Practice: Ballet Tradition III	
MUSPERF 111	Lessons in Voice	1
THEATRE 275	Performing Arts Management	3
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance:	2
University Core: General University Requirement		3
Elective: (Outside of PSOA)		6
Credits		17

Year 3**Fall**

DANCE 117	Tap I	2
Choose 1 not previously taken:		2
DANCE 113	Modern Dance Technique I	
DANCE 114	Contemporary Dance Practice: Modern Tradition II	
DANCE 115	Jazz Dance I	
DANCE 116	Jazz Dance II	
DANCE 211	Contemporary Dance Practice: Ballet Tradition III	
MUSPERF 412	Voice Lessons for Musical Theatre	2
THEATRE 470	Acting Technique 3	3
Elective: (Dance, Music, or Theatre)		2
PSOA Elective: (Art or Film)		3
University Core: General University Requirement		3
Credits		17

Spring

Choose 1 of the following:		2
DANCE 103	Introduction to Yoga	
DANCE 321	Alexander Technique for the Performer	
DANCE 323	Body Conditioning: Pilates Method	
DANCE 624	Feldenkrais for Performers	
MUSPERF 412	Voice Lessons for Musical Theatre	2
THEATRE 431	Stage Voice and Speech 2	3
THEATRE 471	Acting Technique 4	3
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance:	2
Elective: (Outside of PSOA)		3
Elective: (Dance, Music, or Theatre)		2
Credits		17

Year 4**Fall**

DANCE 251	Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis	3
DANCE 327	Dance for the Musical Theatre I	2
THEATRE 408	Acting in Musical Theatre	3
MUSPERF 412	Voice Lessons for Musical Theatre	2
THEATRE 475	Rehearsal and Performance:	2
THEATRE 322	The Theatre: Modern and Contemporary Period	3
Elective: (Outside of PSOA)		3
Credits		18

Spring

DANCE 427	Dance for the Musical Theatre II	2
MUSPERF 412	Voice Lessons for Musical Theatre	2
DANCE 490 or DANCE 491	Repertoire and Ensemble or Repertory/Student Choreographer	1
Elective: (Dance, Music, or Theatre)		2
Choose 1 of the following		3
THEATRE 321	The Theatre: Beginnings Through Realism	

THEATRE 324	Theatre in the Americas: Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Theatre	
University Core: General University Requirement		3
Credits		13
Total Credits		130

Advance to Major/Retention

To be accepted and continue in good standing within any Theatre degree program, students must meet or exceed all general university requirements, have and maintain a 2.5 GPA overall (with the exception of Theatre Education majors). BA degree majors must also maintain a 2.75 GPA within the major. Theatre Education majors must maintain a 3.0 in the major. All BFA degree majors must maintain a 3.0 in the major. Additionally, all Theatre majors in all programs must pass all Theatre Core courses with a C grade or better. Students will be put on probation inside the major, and may be denied continuation in their program, if they receive a D grade or lower in any Theatre Core courses, which are:

Code	Title	Credits
THEATRE 110	Fundamentals of the Actor's Process	3
THEATRE 204	Theatre and Social Change	3
THEATRE 213	Play Analysis	3
THEATRE 214	Stagecraft	4
THEATRE 225	Costume Construction	2
THEATRE 230	Acting 2: Text and Performance	3
THEATRE 236	Theatre Production and Design	3
THEATRE 260	Storytelling:	3
THEATRE 275	Performing Arts Management	3
THEATRE 305	The Theatrical Experience:	3
THEATRE 321	The Theatre: Beginnings Through Realism	3
THEATRE 322	The Theatre: Modern and Contemporary Period	3

As per Wisconsin State statutes, all Theatre Education students must also pass the Praxis II Theatre Content test, or a portfolio equivalent as determined by the program, before being allowed to engage in their student teaching fieldwork.

Continuation

Students who are in danger of being dropped from the program, or put on probation, will receive a written warning. Any Theatre student who is dropped or suspended from his/her program (due to failing/low grades and/or academic misconduct) has the right to an appeal. Any student wishing to appeal must inform the Chair and his/her Area Head of their interest and in writing. Students must then meet with the Chair and the Area Head to discuss their appeal. The appeal may then be forwarded to the Theatre Department Appeals Committee and the Theatre Department Chair. Appeals committee findings will be given to the student in writing and in a timely manner.

Application Process

The Theatre BFA is in compliance with all general requirements for undergraduate degrees including the general education, continuation, and laptop program requirements. Admission to each BFA track is based on an audition (Acting, Musical Theatre) or interview (Production). Prospective students are encouraged to pre-audition or pre-apply to the Theatre BFA programs during their senior year of high school.

Accepted students will gain full admission to their BFA Program on successful completion of their GER core competency requirements. For more information on the application process and to apply online go to: uwm.edu/arts/theatre/ (<http://uwm.edu/arts/theatre/>)

Application to the BFA is encouraged following successful completion of the first-year (Freshman) Theatre Core sequence (see suggested schedule on Plan of Study tab).

BFA program applicants must submit the following:

1. A separate application form; New (<http://uwm.edu/arts/apply/>)
2. A statement of purpose;
3. A current resume;
4. Copies of high school or appropriate college transcripts (for transfer students). [Unofficial copies are acceptable for departmental purposes.];
5. Two confidential letters of recommendation, preferably from instructors familiar with the student's artistic and/or academic abilities. Letters should be submitted in signed and sealed envelopes or sent electronically directly from the recommender and will remain confidential and the property of UWM; and
6. Acting and Musical Theatre candidates should submit a headshot or other suitable photo.

Freshman and transfer applicants must additionally complete the UWM admission process, be accepted into the university, and send separate copies of transcripts and letters of recommendations directly to the department.

All materials may be submitted to the department electronically.

Following review of applications, all candidates will be contacted for interviews or, for Acting and Musical Theatre candidates, participate in an entrance audition. In the Production interview, candidates will have an opportunity to present representative samples of their work/experience in theatre or related skill areas and to chat with the faculty about their goals. The interview allows time to talk about the Production curriculum and to explore the specific interests of the candidate. Based on this interview, faculty can craft and advise an individualized and challenging arc of training from the many production classes in scenery, lights, sound, props, costumes, and stage management, as well as opening the entire PSOA class offerings to explore the connections between theatre and all the arts.

Acceptance into the BFA in Musical Theatre requires a successful audition and application packet prior to beginning in the theatre major, either as an incoming freshman or transfer student. Acceptance into the BFA in Acting requires a successful audition and application that may be made either prior to entering the major as an incoming freshman or transfer student or at the completion of the first year (freshman) Theatre Core sequence.

Additional Musical Theatre Entrance Requirements

Some required courses of the Musical Theatre Track have placement-level testing. As part of the Musical Theatre entrance audition, students take Piano and Theory Placement Exams to determine in which level of piano and music theory to enroll.

- **Piano:** Depending on audition results, a student may be required to enroll in MUSPERF 1 for two semesters. Proficiency for these courses requires a passing grade of B or better. If piano proficiency can be demonstrated

through the Piano Placement Exam, one semester of piano lessons at the MUSPERF 101 level is required.

- **Theory:** Depending on exam results, a student may be required to enroll in MUSIC 101, or test into MUSIC 123 with 3 additional credits available toward electives. Proficiency for these courses requires a passing grade of C or better.

End-of-Semester Review Process

BFA Theatre faculty will assess students' academic and artistic growth through individual conferences at the end of each semester.

Student Evaluation

All BFA Theatre majors who do not demonstrate a consistent level of artistic and academic improvement, have and maintain a 2.5 GPA overall, and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in their program may not advance, may be placed on probation, and/or dropped from the program.

Appeal Process

Any BFA Theatre major who is dropped from the program has the right to appeal. The appeals committee will consist of two full-time, tenured or tenure track faculty, or teaching academic staff, from the Peck School of the Arts, a faculty member of the student's own choosing, and the faculty member who oversees the specific degree track. In addition, a Peck School of the Arts Student Services advisor will be present as a non-voting member. Outcome(s) of the appeal will be given to the student in writing and in a timely manner.

Theatre BFA: Performance Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from the Theatre Performance BFA program will be able to:

- Practice the essential theories of acting and expression including a deepened and clarified ability to communicate story, truthfully play character action, and work confidently and creatively in a variety of contemporary physical approaches to generating theatrical performance.*
- Practice essential theories in acting, singing and dance including a deepened and clarified ability to communicate story, truthfully play character action and work confidently and creatively in a variety of contemporary physical approaches to generating musical theatre performance.**
- Utilize critical analysis in the generation of character aesthetic through applied problem solving and the communication processes common in theatre arts.
- Function effectively, collaboratively, and productively as a member of a performance ensemble.
- Utilize basic familiarity and fluency in the artform to inform their own acting practice through the experiencing of, participating in, and writing of theatre.
- Engage empathetically by exploring their own and others worldview to create respectful, ethical, and accessible environments to create diverse works of theatre.
- Engage fundamental techniques as a performer of a diverse group of dance forms including ballet, jazz and tap.**
- Utilize basic familiarity and fluency in the artform and the history of American Musical Theatre to inform their own performance and preparatory practices.**

- Practice and encourage empathy through civic engagement.*
- Present themselves confidently for professional employment in a variety of audition formats.

* Acting track only

** Musical Theatre track only

Advising

Location: Theatre 120

Hours: M–Th 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. | Fri. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (*closed on university holidays*)

Contact: 414-229-4763 | Contact Form (<https://uwm.edu/arts/contact/>)

Academic advising is an important aspect of long-term academic success. At the Peck School of the Arts, we offer professional advising in the undergraduate disciplines of art, dance, film, music and theatre.

Our advisors provide students with individualized appointments to assist them in areas such as: degree requirements, major options, course selection, campus resources, college success strategies, graduation assessment, academic policies and procedures, and more.

For more information please visit the Peck School of the Arts advising and student services page (<https://uwm.edu/arts/students/advising/>).

Honors in the Major

Honors in the Major is granted to students who have earned a GPA of 3.500 or greater in the major and the academic department's recommendation.

High Honors in the Major is granted to students who have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.500 or greater and the academic department's recommendation.

Departmental Honors are granted to students recommended by their academic department for Honors excellence in performance not reflected in the GPA.

Dean's Honors are granted to students with major achievements in one or more of the arts.

College of the Arts and Architecture Dean's Honor List

GPA of 3.750 or above, earned on a full-time student's GPA on 12 or more graded credits in a given semester.

Honors College Degree and Honors College Degree with Distinction

Granted to graduating seniors who complete Honors College requirements, as listed in the Honors College (<https://catalog.uwm.edu/honors-college/>) section of this site.

Commencement Honors

Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.500 or above, based on a minimum of 40 graded UWM credits earned prior to the final semester, will receive all-university commencement honors and be awarded the traditional gold cord at the December or May Honors Convocation. Please note that for

honors calculation, the GPA is **not** rounded and is truncated at the third decimal (e.g., 3.499).

Final Honors

Earned on a minimum of 60 graded UWM credits: Cum Laude - 3.500 or above; Magna Cum Laude - 3.650 or above; Summa Cum Laude - 3.800 or above.