In their final year, Theatre Arts majors become a theatre company that will write, direct, design, act, and produce a repertoire of plays to be presented in the fourth quarter of the school year. Within that larger company endeavor, each senior defines a project that serves both as a logical culmination of her/his undergraduate program and as a sensible step toward the career (s)he envisions.

Calendar: During their junior year and the first few weeks of their senior fall, students are encouraged to explore possible projects and collaborations with classmates. Based on these conversations, each Theatre Arts senior submits on the third Wednesday of the fall semester a preliminary thesis proposal for review by and discussion with faculty. Proposals are weighed in terms of their feasibility within the School’s resources and the proposing student’s demonstrated preparedness (via prior SOT course and/or production work) to undertake such a project. These preliminary proposals include:
1) Name and contact information (phone, email)
2) A description of the proposed project
3) A statement of why the student is drawn to this particular project
4) An assessment of how the project will function as a culmination of the student’s training and propel the student toward his career goals.

In addition, writers and devisers must include:
5) The genesis and development of the show so far
6) A one-page summary of its story, giving as much detail as you can in that space
7) A list of Theatre Arts seniors who have agreed to work with you on this project and their contributions.

Please submit proposals to Michael Kaye by 9/23/09.
Late submissions will be considered only as resources allow.

Building on continuing feedback and discussion of preliminary proposals, students submit on the sixth Wednesday of the fall semester final proposals, not from each individual this time but from each project group. All Theatre Arts seniors in a group are to concur in and sign their group’s proposal. These final proposals include:
1) The project’s working title
2) Name, production role, and contact information of all who have agreed to participate
3) A scenario
4) A brief description of each character and an indication of possible doubling
5) Space and equipment needs you anticipate
6) Any preference(s) for a faculty advisor

Please submit proposals to Michael Kaye by 10/14/09.

Once their proposal has been accepted by the faculty, each group should complete and file a Thesis Approval form with all the appropriate signatures. For examples: if the project is student-written, Lydia Diamond must approve it; if it is student-directed, Sidney Friedman must approve; if it is a devised piece, Elaine Vaan Hogue must approve; if it has a student dramaturg, Ilana...
Brownstein must approve; if it has a student choreographer, Judith Chaffee must approve; and so forth. This step ordinarily occurs in early November but must be accomplished by the end of the fall semester for a thesis project to go forward.

Further, each group producing a new script should arrange and publicize a reading of the current draft in November or December in order to solicit responses that might fuel re-writing. Re-written drafts will be read in the Thesis class early in the second semester.

Casting, additional script development, and directing preparation occupy the third quarter while production meetings, rehearsals and performances comprise the fourth.

**Resources:** While there are no restrictions based on the content, methods, or format of senior theses, the School of Theatre may impose restrictions based on its resources of time, space, personnel, budget and equipment. Example #1: For 2009-2010, we are asking each group to restrain its running time to a maximum of 90 minutes. Doing so allows sufficient rehearsal and performance time. Example #2: The School has budgeted $50 for each project, primarily to help with printing costs; students will raise funds for further expenses. Example #3: Each group will have a primary advisor rather than separate advisors for each participant. (Project leaders are encouraged to discuss their plans with faculty they would like to enlist/suggest, but selection of advisors will remain a faculty decision.) Example #4: In 2007-2008 the casting requirements of Theatre Arts thesis projects exceeded the number of actors available from the casting pool, resulting in the casting of some actors in two shows and a consequent reduction of each show’s rehearsal time with each shared actor.

Because our Theatre Arts major fosters collaboration and the creation of new works for the theatre, priority in the allocation of resources will tend to go to those groups producing new plays that involve several Theatre Arts seniors.

**Registrations:** Seniors should consult with relevant faculty concerning appropriate course registration in support of their proposed thesis. Examples: students planning a playwriting project must register for Advanced Playwriting with Lydia Diamond in the fall to get mentoring in the evolution of their scripts; students directing a thesis project must register for Directing II with Sidney Friedman in the spring semester for supervision and coordination of their shows.

**Summary timeline:**
- **Sept 2** Classes begin. First meeting of senior Theatre Arts thesis prep class. All Theatre Arts seniors are expected to participate.
- **Sept 23** Preliminary (individual) proposals are due.
- **Oct 14** Final (group) proposals are due.
- **Nov** Groups meet with faculty; completion of Thesis Approval forms
- **Nov- Dec** Readings of thesis drafts
- **Jan- Feb** Casting, readings, re-writes, director preparation, assembling production teams
- **Feb- March** The week preceding and the week of Spring Break are devoted to preparing/presenting Showcase.
- **Late March- Early May** Production, rehearsals, performances of thesis repertoire