

**UMBC Theatre Advising**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**NEW!**

Please submit an RT using our theatre-only system for all advising and scheduling needs.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS:**

**ADVISOR-RELATED QUESTIONS**

1. [Who is my advisor? How soon can I get advised?](#)
2. [I see two names on my profile.](#)
3. [Do THTR minors have to get advising from the Theatre Department?](#)
4. [Do I have to see two advisors if I am a double-major?](#)
5. [Can I change my advisor? Will my advisor ever change?](#)
6. [What if I don't know if I'm coming back this spring or have a financial hold? Should I still go through advising?](#)

**HOW-TO QUESTIONS**

1. [I need to change my major - how do I do this?](#)
2. [I need to change my schedule - how do I do this?](#)
3. [The system won't let me register for more than 19.5 credits!](#)
4. [What classes do I need to take for my degree?](#)
5. [How do I know what classes you're teaching next semester?](#)

**TRANSFER ISSUES**

1. [But I took this course already outside of UMBC!](#)
2. [I want to take a course at a Maryland community college instead of UMBC.](#)

**COURSE PERMISSIONS**

1. [I need course permissions.](#)
2. [Can I take BFA Acting classes when I'm not in the major?](#)

## I need course permissions.

Let's start easy!

If the course requires **instructor** consent: **email the course instructor directly**.

If the course is **Department Consent** or the seats are held in **Reserve**: [submit an RT](#).

**Always include your campus ID** when requesting anything to do with courses or advising.

Why? It's very hard to look things up in our system by name only and can yield inconsistent results. Your ID is your own and saves a lot of hassle.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## I need to change my major - how do I do this?

Changing your major is pretty simple. In nearly 99% of cases you **do not need an advisor's signature** as most degrees around UMBC are not restricted. However, the **BFA Acting requires a signature**. Usually, [Professor Eric](#) signs these for the Department. The registrar takes anywhere from 1-4 weeks to complete these, depending on the time of year. If it's been several weeks and nothing has been done, [put in an RT](#).

The most important time to make sure your majors and minors are correct in the system is when you apply to graduate. Best practice is to ensure that your [Degree Audit](#) is correct **one semester prior** to applying to graduate.

[Click on this link to access the change of major form](#). The instructions for how to process the request is located on the top of the form.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## I need to change my schedule - how do I do this?

**STOP** - why are you changing your schedule? There's no right or wrong answer, but before you go dropping classes, you should **first send an email to your advisor**. Let them know if this is an unplanned change of schedule. Why? I don't want you dropping courses that are required for our major and are only taught once a year. If you and your advisor already chatted about potential course swaps, then go right ahead, boss.

You can freely change your schedule during the first part of any term. [If you look at the Academic Calendar for any given semester](#), the dates for changes are posted. If you change your schedule during the adjustment period, then it's like it never happened: nothing will appear on your transcript. However, if you change your schedule after the adjustment period, you may end up with a "W" on your transcript. A "W" doesn't harm your GPA, but it does count as a course attempt. You can only attempt a course twice before you have to file a repeat petition. [You can learn more about withdrawals at this link](#).

Anyway, now that you're smarter about changing your schedule, you can learn more about the mechanical process [through some handy Wikis](#) or by watching some amazing videos via the [Office of Academic and Pre-Professional Advising](#).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## The system won't let me register for more than 19.5 credits!

Slow down there, overachiever! First, have you considered your workload? Outside commitments? Rehearsals? What's the hurry?

Actually it's not at all uncommon for this to happen. But a couple of caveats:

1. New students (freshman or transfer students) are ineligible for overload **in their first semester**. The answer is already "NO" so don't bother.
2. The decision is not the department's but goes through the Office of Academic and Pre-Professional Advising. They base their decision on advisor recommendation, past course history, and GPA.

[To petition for overload, follow this link to get access](#). You will login using your UMBC credentials. You do not need to send around a form on this one as it's all handled through the DocuSign System (makes it easy). **PLEASE NOTE: you need to list all of your courses in the prompt, not just the credits that will put you over the 19.5 threshold.**

**Your advisor needs to sign this form**. If you are unassigned an advisor or if this request is coming over summer or winter hiatus, please direct the form to [Professor Eric](#).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Who is my advisor? How soon can I be advised?

Depending on the time of year, that's a great question! **Advising assignments are made mid-fall or mid-spring semester**, usually around the time of registration for the upcoming semester. If you are new to UMBC, this means you are unassigned. Professor Eric will be happy to help you in any advising need you have until your advisor gets assigned. Generally all faculty are helpful with questions around advising and enrollment.

You WILL BE CONTACTED when it's time for advising to start - and no one gets advising prior to the [schedule being published](#).

Your advisor is the person **responsible for helping you navigate graduation** on your desired timeline. Did you read that correctly? It's **your** job. They are there to "look over your shoulder" and double-check your work. **You need to know what your requirements are**. An advisor can offer advice and help connect you to campus resources. However, this role is truly about

graduation and learning. Please keep your [campus resources in mind](#) if you are experiencing a crisis or need support beyond the scope of academics.

[The Department keeps a list of assignments in our Advising Folder hosted on Google Sheets.](#) If this didn't get updated or if you aren't on the list, [please submit an RT](#) and we will correct this oversight. It happens!

Theatre Minors are not assigned advisors, but are welcome to chat with Professor Eric about advising or course registration needs.

**Your advisor is not necessarily your mentor.** You might be a costume-interested student, but Professor McCully is your advisor. This is normal—why? Because your interests change, y'all and I don't keep track. You can and should contact anyone in your area of interest to discuss placement options or learning opportunities.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## What classes do I need to take for my degree?

We have many resources available to help you know this, [but by far the most important is the Degree Audit](#). Available to you via MyUMBC, your Degree Audit is the **only** document used to assess degree completion. As I regularly say, ***it doesn't count unless the Degree Audit shows it*** (please someone embroider this for me on a pillow).

I recommend you check your Degree Audit at least **four** times a year. **You should consult the Audit both before and after registration** for the fall and spring semesters, and more if you choose summer or winter classes. Why? Checking before helps you see any area that is currently satisfied. Checking after helps you see that the classes you chose actually fulfilled the requirements you thought they did.

Outside of the Degree Audit, [the Department publishes checklists for the degrees](#), inclusive of suggestions for course order and sequences. These are vitally important because these pathways are what I use to determine what classes are taught and when. If we all use these forms, then everyone is on the same page.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## When can I know the classes you're teaching next semester?

When it's ready! All kidding aside, it takes about two months to build a semester from beginning to end and this process is controlled by the University Registrar. All students can access schedules on the same date, [published in the Academic Calendar](#). For example, if you look at the Spring 2024 calendar link, you can see that the Schedule of Classes will be made available to you on October 23, 2023.

This is also a handy date to keep in mind, as that is when the Department of Theatre will commence advising. **We do not start advising students prior to the schedule publish**, because how would anyone know what courses are being offered and when?

However, you should [always consult our Academic Pathways](#) to know what we are teaching and when we suggest you take that course. [You can also see our teaching rotation schedule](#), **subject to change**, for an even clearer understanding of our rotations.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Can I take BFA Acting classes when I'm not in the major?

And the answer is...sometimes! Occasionally we will have extra seats in advanced BFA Acting courses that the faculty will open to non-majors. If you are someone who wants to take more Acting courses here-and-there, you need to plan to take THTR 220 Craft of Acting I, THTR 221 Craft of Acting II, and perhaps THTR 222 Vocal I. Why? These courses **are always available to non-Acting majors** and are the foundations of advanced work. If you have those foundational courses and want to take a specific upper-level elective, then [submit an RT](#) and your request will be directed to the BFA Faculty.. Each request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## But I took this course already outside of UMBC!

Yeah, it's possible! Although we have tried our best to ensure that all theatre classes from Maryland Community Colleges have been properly articulated, mistakes happen and new courses get created all of the time. You can check to see if your Maryland Community College course has been evaluated by [looking at the ArtSys Website](#). Outside of Maryland schools or four-year institution transfers [can check the TES site for any existing articulations](#).

It's possible that you're our first student to have courses reviewed when you come to us from out-of-state or from another four-year institution. If this is the case, you will need to [submit an RT](#) to have your courses reviewed. Reminder, I can only review **theatre** courses. In your ticket, please attach **proof of course content**, which could be:

- a. Course Syllabus (best)
- b. Course Catalog Description (good)
- c. Your statement of course content, objectives, activities, texts, etc. (OK, not ideal)

If the course you want evaluated is **outside of theatre**, then you need to complete a [Course Review through the University Registrar](#). This form is self-guided and will assist you in uploading the information required.

If we're talking AP or IB credits, make sure those qualifying scores get sent in. [There is a whole document outlining those articulations located here.](#)

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## I want to take a course at a Maryland community college instead of UMBC.

This is more common than you might think. A lot of students choose to take some General Education Program (GEP) courses locally over the summer rather than stay around Catonsville. For some, it's a more accessible cost rather than location, and for others it's about availability of certain courses. Whatever your reason, **you need prior approval from the University** to do this. [The form itself is pretty straightforward](#): you need to know exactly what course you're going to take and when. [Make sure you review all of the policies](#) around maximum transfer credits when making this decision. It's also never a terrible idea to chat with your advisor about what your need is.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Can I change my advisor? Will my advisor ever change?

In short, yes and yes!

Students may request a new advisor as needed. We don't assign advisors based on areas of interest, as those are ever-changing and varied. All faculty are qualified to advise any theatre student in any degree program.

Advising assignments also can shift unexpectedly due to any number of reasons, the most common reason being faculty sabbaticals, so don't be surprised if you have a new advisor suddenly one semester.

If you still would like to request a new advisor, just [submit an RT](#) (even if you're Eric's advisee and want someone else—it won't hurt his/my feelings he/I promises).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Do THTR minors have to get advising from the Theatre Department?

No—this is not required. Minors are more-than-welcome to chat with Eric, via email or in-person, to make plans and ask questions. You only need to go through advising with your major(s).

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Who is my advisor? I see two names on my profile.

[Go back to this question, first.](#) All majors' and minors' MyUMBC profiles list Professor Eric's name for administrative purposes. If you have another theatre faculty listed with Eric, THAT faculty is your advisor. While I try my best to maintain accuracy, it is likely that your MyUMBC profile is not always up to date because of how fast advisors change and the updating process is entirely manual.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Do I have to see two advisors if I am a double-major?

Yes!! It doesn't matter which one of us you see first, but you should 100% seek planning from **all** major degree programs.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

## What if I don't know if I'm coming back this spring or have a financial hold?

Get advising anyway, please! Then, when your plans are finalized or your financial situation is cleared, even in late January or August, you can just go ahead and register.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)