

Kirstin O'Brien

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Academic Positions

CHAIR

Theatre and Dance Department

Keene, New Hampshire

Fall 2021-Present

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Keene State College

Keene, New Hampshire

Fall 2015-Present

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

Virginia Commonwealth University

Richmond, Virginia

Fall 2014-Spring 2015

Education

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

M.F.A. in Theatre Performance Pedagogy (May 2015)

Thesis: *One Script, Two Perspectives: Generation Me and the Staging of Really Really*

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

B.A. in Musical Theatre (May 2007)

Research and Teaching Interests

Musical Theatre

Gender and Sexuality in Theatre

Theatre for Social Change

Theatre/Musical Theatre History

Selected Recent Courses Taught (Keene State College)

Theatre and Dance Department:

- TAD 105 Foundations
- TAD 140 Voice and Movement
- TAD 231 Theatre History and Literature I
- TAD 232 Theatre History and Literature II
- TAD 350 Intermediate Acting
- TAD 398 Performance Process
- TAD 399 Musical Theatre Workshop
- TAD 490 Special Topics: Audition Technique
- TAD 492 Capstone
- TAD 498 Independent Study

Integrative Studies Program:

- IATAD 102 Acting: Identity and the Creative Process
- IITAD 399 Experimental: Gender and Sexuality in Theatre
- IITAD 399 Experimental: Psychology of a Character

Selected Courses Taught (Virginia Commonwealth University)

Theatre Department:

- Intro to Acting I & II
- Acting I & II (Teaching Assistant)
- Third Year Acting Studio (Teaching Assistant)
- Musical Theatre History (Co-Creator and Co-Lecturer)
- Senior Showcase (Teaching Assistant)
- Advanced Stage Voice & Speech for the Actor (Teaching Assistant)
- Introduction to Drama

Communications Department:

- Effective Speech

Directing/Vocal Coaching/Choreography

Director, *Urinetown*

Main Stage, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, November 2021

Director, *The Last Five Years*

Main Stage, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, April 2021

Director, *A Year with Frog and Toad*

Wright Theatre, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, March 2020

Director, *Stop Kiss*

Wright Theatre, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, November 2018

Director, *Proof*

One Light Theatre Company, Tilton, NH, July 2018

Director, *Cabaret*

One Light Theatre Company, Tilton, NH, August 2018

Director, *Spring Awakening*

One Light Theatre Company, Tilton, NH, January 2018

Director, *Company*

Main Stage, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, November 2017

Director, *The 39 Steps*

One Light Theatre Company, Tilton, NH, July 2017

Vocal Coach, *An Evening of Dance*

Main Stage, Redfern Arts Center, Spring 2017

Director, *A...My Name is Alice*

Wright Theatre, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, October 2016

Director, *Little Women: The Musical*

Main Stage, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, November 2015

Vocal Coach, *An Evening of Dance*

Main Stage, Redfern Arts Center, Keene State College, April 2016

Director, *Really Really*

Shafer Laboratory Theatre, Graduate Thesis Project, Virginia Commonwealth University,
February 2015

Director, *Candide (Abridged)*

Music Department, Virginia Commonwealth University, December 2014

Vocal Coach, *Man of La Mancha*

Main Stage, Virginia Commonwealth University, November 2014

Assistant Director (Directed by Barry Bell), *Macbeth*

Main Stage, Virginia Commonwealth University, September 2014

Assistant Director (Directed by Michael Baron), *Les Miserables*

Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma, Civic Center, June 2014

Assistant Director (Directed by Matthew Gardiner), *Xanadu*

Signature Theater (Arlington, VA), May 2012

Choreographer, LaChiusa's *The Wild Party*

Theater II, James Madison University, November 2006

Director, *And the World Goes 'Round*

Theater II, James Madison University, April 2006

Director/Choreographer, Adventure Theatre MTC Summer Day Camp Final Showcase

Adventure Theatre Musical Theatre Center (Rockville, MD), Summers 1999-2004, 2011

Institutional Activities

KEENE STATE COLLEGE

Theatre and Dance Department:

- Teach performance and lecture-based courses
- Direct one annually for Main Stage season
- Vocal coach for Main Stage season (if needed)

- Develop new courses: Audition Technique, Musical Theatre Workshop; Gender and Sexuality in Theatre, Psychology of a Character
- Develop new curriculum: Musical Theatre Specialization (currently still in preparation process); Serve as Faculty mentor at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
- Serve as Faculty representative at Admissions Open Houses
- Recruitment for Theatre and Dance Department
- Head of Social media for Theatre and Dance department
- Coach (acting) nominees for Irene Ryan Scholarship and Richard Maltby, Jr. competition
- Organize workshops for outside professionals to come and teach our students
- Writer of TAD Self Study 2020

Campus Wide:

- Chair of Academic Standards Committee on the Senate (Fall 2019-Spring 2021)
- Faculty At-Large Member of the College Senate, Academic Standards Committee (Fall 2018-present)
- Serve on NECHE Self Study 2020 Committee Standard Five: Students (Fall 2018)
- Serve as a Proposal Reader for the Center for Creative Inquiry (Fall 2017-Present)
- Serve on the Redfern Arts Center Advisory board (Fall 2019-Spring 2020)
- Serve as Faculty mentor to The Group Theatre (Fall 2016-Present)

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Theatre Department:

- Teach acting course for First-Year Theatre majors
- Created special topics course: Musical Theatre History
- Director MFA Thesis project
- Assistant Director of *Macbeth* (Main Stage season for Theatre department)
- Musical Theatre vocal coach to students (private studio)

Other Professional Activities and Service

ADJUDICATOR

New Hampshire Educational Theatre Guild, State Festival
(Spring 2019)

Adjudicated for the New Hampshire State High School Theatre Festival. Saw various productions and gave immediate feedback as well as more detailed conversations in director forums.

WORKSHOP PRESENTER

"Audition Technique"

Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) Region 1
(Spring 2019)

Led an audition technique workshop for college students attending the festival. We discussed how to read an audition breakdown, how to walk into the room, what to prepare and held mock auditions for feedback.

AUDITION TECHNIQUE SEMINAR

One Light Theatre Company
(Spring 2018)

Led an audition technique workshop for pre-college students. They prepared a monologue and two songs for my feedback in material as well as their overall audition presentation (specifically for college auditions).

KEENE STATE COLLEGE WORKSHOP PRESENTER

New England Theatre Festival, College Workshops
Gilford, NH
(April 2018)

WORKSHOP COORDINATOR

"If I Can Make It There, I'll Make It Anywhere", Jake Odmark, Keene State College
(Spring 2018)

Jake Odmark, Broadway actor in *Kinky Boots* and the upcoming *Pretty Woman*, led a mock audition workshop for students to perform monologues and songs for his feedback. Afterwards, there was a question and answer session for any student to ask about the theatre business.

SYMPOSIUM SPEAKER

"Let's Misbehave" with Cole Porter
The Winnepesaukee Playhouse
(Summer 2017)

Before their production of *High Society*, composed by Cole Porter, I presented a symposium surrounding the life and career of Porter and his influence on American Musical Theatre.

FESTIVAL WORKSHOP COORDINATOR

Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) Region 1

(2016-2017)

Coordinate various theater/musical theater workshops taught by professionals for students to attend during the weeklong festival

ADJUDICATOR

Incoming First Year Auditions

Virginia Commonwealth University (Theatre) & James Madison University (Musical Theatre),
2014-2015

ADJUDICATOR

Second Year Performance Assessments

Virginia Commonwealth University
Fall 2014

Second Year students are required to perform an assessment (monologue or scene), after which the performance faculty makes the decision whether the student will continue on a B.A. or B.F.A. track.

GUEST LECTURER

Musical Theatre Performances Laboratory

James Madison University
Spring 2014

Coached students on musical theater performance working with acting intention and vocal technique/quality.

GUEST LECTURER

Musical Theatre Audition Technique

James Madison University
Spring 2014

Students performed their audition cuts for the upcoming SETC (Southeastern Theatre Conference) and I discussed audition etiquette for conference auditions, acting intentions, vocal technique/quality as well as what to bring headshot/resume wise and wear for their singing versus dance audition.

SEMINAR, ACTING COACH

Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) & Virginia Theatre Auditions (VTA) Audition Preparation

Virginia Commonwealth University

September 2014

SEMINAR, MUSICAL THEATRE COACH

Virginia Theatre Conference, Musical Theatre College Audition Technique/Process

Shenandoah University

January 2014

Performance Resume

Production	Role	Theatre	Director	Date
<i>Signature Theatre 25th Anniversary Concert</i>	Ensemble	Signature Theatre	Eric Schaeffer & Matthew Gardiner	October 2014
<i>Seussical the Musical</i>	Mayzie La Bird	Imagination Stage	Janet Stanford	December 2012
<i>SPIN (Workshop)</i>	Ensemble	Signature Theatre	Eric Schaeffer	September 2012
<i>Hairspray</i>	Brenda/Tracy u/s	Signature Theatre	Eric Schaeffer	December 2011
<i>The Hollow</i>	Xandra u/s	Signature Theatre	Matthew Gardiner	August 2011
<i>The Boy Detective Fails</i>	Penny u/s	Signature Theatre	Joe Calarco	August 2011
<i>A Year with Frog and Toad</i>	Bird Girl/Ensemble	Adventure Theatre	Michael Baron	April 2011
<i>Sunset Boulevard</i>	Ensemble/Betty u/s	Signature Theatre	Eric Schaeffer	December 2010
<i>Sweeney Todd</i>	Swing (Performed)	Signature Theatre	Eric Schaeffer	February 2010
<i>Camelot</i>	Lady in Waiting	The Olney Theatre	Stephen Nachamie	December 2009
<i>Damn Yankees</i>	Lola	Toby's Dinner Theatre	Larry Munsey	July 2009

<i>The Music Man</i>	Teen Ensemble	Washington Savoyards	Michael Baron	March 2009
<i>Spot's Birthday Party</i>	Steve the Monkey	Adventure Theatre	Joe Banno	September 2008
<i>Jerry Springer: The Opera</i>	Ensemble/Baby Jane u/s	Studio Theatre	Keith Alan Baker	July 2008
<i>Thoroughly Modern Millie</i>	Millie Dillmount	Stage Door Theatre	Dan Kelley	February 2008
<i>Singing in the Rain</i>	Dora Bailey	Mac-Haydn Theatre	John Saunders	August 2007
<i>White Christmas</i>	Ensemble/Betty u/s	Mac-Haydn Theatre	Doug Hodge	July 2007
<i>The Pajama Game</i>	Babe	Mac-Haydn Theatre	Joey Patton	June 2007
<i>Oklahoma!</i>	Ensemble/Ado Annie u/s	Mac-Haydn Theatre	Rusty Curico	June 2007
<i>Children of Eden</i>	Storyteller	Flat Rock Playhouse	Paige Posey	July 2005
<i>The Last Five Years</i>	Cathy	JMU Theatre II	Student Directed	March 2005
<i>Stop Kiss</i>	Callie	JMU Theatre II	Student Directed	September 2004

Specialized Training

ESTILL VOICE TRAINING, (Course Level I & II)

Kim Steinhauer

CHOREOGRAPHY/MOVEMENT/DIRECTING

David S. Leong, Patti D'Beck, Aaron Anderson, Wesley Broulik

MUSICAL THEATRE JAZZ/TAP

Karma Camp, Diane Hamilton, Helen Hayes, Suzanne Miller-Corso

THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Michael Bobbitt (Adventure Theatre Musical Theater Center-Rockville, MD)

Janet Stanford (Imagination Stage-Bethesda, MD)

Professional Memberships

Actor's Equity Association (AEA)

Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)

Awards/Nominations

Virginia Commonwealth University Graduate Teaching Assistantship
Fall 2014

Helen Hayes Award, Outstanding Ensemble, Hairspray
2012

Helen Hayes Award Nomination, Supporting Actress, A Year with Frog and Toad
2012

Helen Hayes Award Nomination, Outstanding Ensemble, A Year with Frog and Toad
2012

Helen Hayes Award Nomination, Outstanding Ensemble, Jerry Springer the Opera
2009

Outstanding Achievement in Musical Theater, James Madison University
2007