

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE
ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
September 19, 2006

1. **Program Goals**

- A. Programmatic: The Department of Theatre will: 1) educate and train those seeking professions in the theatre; 2) provide a balanced academic curriculum consistent with theatre training programs; 3) support the University's general academic curricula by providing courses which stimulate understanding and response to theatre; 4) present regular, varied programs in theatre for the enrichment of the students and the community; 5) provide leadership in the theatre, promoting it through service and programs; and 6) provide development opportunities to all faculty members for the professional growth and enrichment of the program and individuals.

Learning Outcomes/Data Collection:

1. Students acquire basic skills in performance and theatre production.

- Student Course Evaluations are collected and reviewed by the Chair for all Department courses. The Department keeps copies of course evaluations. Chair and individual faculty review student comments.
- Sophomore Review is a non-credit, gateway course and a requirement for graduation. Students must successfully complete Sophomore Review before enrolling in advanced performance and production courses. Sophomore Review consists of a comprehensive exam (described below), and audition/portfolio review, and an interview with the faculty. Beginning in 2004, the Department implemented its evaluation scoring for student performance (audition or portfolio review and presentation) in Sophomore Review. This scoring is consistent with the scoring method already applied to Senior Project. These scores will be kept on file along with any faculty comments and reviewed every two years by the chair and faculty.
- Comprehensive Exam: On the first day of class, students in the Introduction to Theatre class (all new freshman) take a comprehensive exam comprised of questions similar to those students will find on the Sophomore Review comprehensive exam. (Students must achieve a 75 score on the exam to pass this portion of Sophomore Review) The exam results are placed on file. When the students have completed the Sophomore Review comprehensive exam, the results of both exams are compared. The results of both exams are compared (annually) by the faculty to determine the effectiveness of the overall academic program

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- Comprehensive Exam (continued):
through the sophomore year. This past year the faculty reviewed the scores for all the exams from 2004.

2. Students acquire basic skills in play analysis and knowledge of theatre history, styles, and genre.

- Student Course Evaluations are collected and reviewed by the Chair for all Department courses. The Department keeps copies of course evaluations. Chair and individual faculty review student comments.
- Senior Project:

3. Students acquire advanced skills in performance or in production

Successful completion of Theatre 295, Sophomore Review, is the gateway course for all advanced (400 level) performance and production courses.

- Student Course Evaluations are collected and reviewed by the Chair for all Department courses. The Department keeps copies of course evaluations. Chair and individual faculty review student comments.
- Senior Capstone: Students are required to make formal presentation of their Capstone Senior Projects and defend their proposals based on their qualifications and experiences gained as a student in this program. Students continue follow a single format for the thesis materials and the students provide a copy of the thesis which is kept on file in the department.
- External Evaluation: If our students are to compete on at a national level, they must begin in their freshman year, and their evaluators must include external individuals from the profession.

1. Internship: Beginning Fall of 2003 with the new Internship requirement, all students are expected to obtain a professional position (paid or unpaid) in an arts-related setting thru a demonstration of their skills (audition or portfolio review) learned in this program. The students are expected to have acquired a broad range of skills in a variety of areas that will enhance their opportunities and success in many professional settings. Employers' comments on the student's performance are solicited by the student and the faculty member responsible for the internship course and placed on file with the Department. In the summer 2004 the Department began collecting evaluations from the student's summer employers as well as their journals. This information is kept on file and will be evaluated annually by the chair and faculty.

2. Professional Associations: KCACTF / WVTC / SETC

- The Department participates fully in the Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival Irene Ryan Competitions. External evaluators (responders selected by the organization) respond to the quality of the performance for each of the Department's main stage productions with emphasis on our student performances. (The responder and the department each nominate one student to participate in Irene Ryan Acting Competition or in a design review process. Of the students (approximately 300 out of 3,000) nominated to attend the regional competition only forty will be selected to participate in the final level of the competition where two will be selected go on to the Kennedy Center finals.) The responder's written evaluation and the regional responders (when possible) are collected and kept on file. These responses are reviewed along with Sophomore Review, Senior Project, and Theatre 490 evaluations. Due to past staffing issues, storage of data collected for these programs has been sporadic. However, by assigning faculty specific tasks, this issue has been eliminated.
- The Department participates in the West Virginia Theatre Conference and Southeast Theatre Conference. The Southeast Theatre Conference accepts only 40% of the students auditioning at WVTC for participation in the SETC auditions. Over 100 employers, professional summer theatre companies, theme parks, and employers seeking full time employees, audition about 3500 students who have earned the opportunity to audition. Students may still participate in Actor/Tech Walk Thru. Data, comments from the evaluators, and numbers of students obtaining employment at SETC, when available, are kept on file by the department. The majority of our students will obtain their required internship opportunity at this event.

Results:

Where national benchmark tests are unavailable, the Department relies on external evaluations of our productions and our students as a Benchmark substitute. In addition, we have systematized our evaluation of Sophomore Review and Senior Project. Based on the information gathered from Sophomore Review, Senior Project, and information gathered from ACTF and other organizations, several changes including a significant curriculum overhaul, were implemented in 2003. While there is still insufficient data to evaluate the curricular changes long term, data collected so far suggests that student interest in professional conferences, the numbers and success of students participating in

Results Continued:

auditions and interviews, and the number of students accepted in MFA graduate programs has risen. Comments from employers, the continued interest in our main stage season by season patrons and single ticket sales all suggest that the program is continuing to provide excellent training to our serious students.

The following assessment data collection began in the fall semester of 2004 and continues:

- Comprehensive Exam:
 1. Students (26) taking the exam in 2005 initially earned an average of 43% on the exam. On retaking the exam after three semesters in the program their average was 86%. Overtime this data should be very useful in evaluating the early experiences of students in the theatre program.
- Student Course Evaluations:
 1. The Chair continues to collect and evaluate student course evaluations and make appropriate comments to faculty as necessary. Faculty are generally receiving mean scores for all questions equal to or above the College average.
- Sophomore Review:
 1. In 2005 thirteen students participated in Sophomore Review. nine students passed, two student will re-apply fall 06., one left the program.
 2. The evaluation system based on a 100-point scale for Sophomore Review is consistent with the Senior Project scale.
- Internship:
 1. Five students participated in the Internship class this past summer. We received excellent comments from supervisors. Several other students worked in the profession, but either had not passed Sophomore Review or had already earned their Internship credits. This summer we instituted a grant to assist those individuals enrolled in the Internship class.
- Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival:
 1. Twelve students (seven nominees and their partners) participated in the Irene Ryan Competition. One went on to the third round (one of 16 out of 3,000).

2. All productions were responded to by outside evaluators. Evaluations are on file and have been publicly shared with students, faculty, and staff. Faculty discusses these Responses informally with the students and with each other.
- Professional Associations: / WVTC / SETC
 1. Eleven out of 22 students were nominated by audition at WVTC). 50 % of our students were included in the 43% of all auditionees allowed by SETC. All students received excellent feedback from the three adjudicators. The feedback over time will be a helpful assessment tool.
 2. A major increase from 20(03) to 35(04) 26 (05) students participated at SETC. The drop in numbers for this year reflects the cost of the Orlando area. as well as others participated in the professional auditions, 80% of students who interviewed or auditioned received offers of employment. (Not all students accepted the positions)

Senior Capstone:

1. In 2005 five students who passed their Capstone Senior Project and graduated. One is working at Arkansas Repertory Theatre, two are graduate students in the MFA programs at the University of Mississippi and the University of Houston Texas, and one is working at the Georgia Shakespeare Festival and one is with the Carnival cruise lines as a technician. Several others are still students and one remains temporarily in the area for personal reasons.
1. Senior Interviews
 1. As a result of discussions last spring, the senior interviews may become part of the senior project with standard questions for all students to answer.
 2. Theatre Appreciation Course Assessment was revised by the Dean's Office this year and those results will be reviewed by the Chair annually and shared with the faculty teaching that sections of that course.
 1. The fall and spring 2005 results from the external evaluators suggest that instructors in Theatre Appreciation continue to focusing more on critical thinking and on identifying genres, but overall improvement continues and the assignments evaluated are more appropriate to the overall goals of the course. Student evaluations continue to be positive for all sections.

III. Board of Trustees Initiative 3 Compliance

No statewide or national testing has been identified to serve as a benchmark in assessing the knowledge and skills of departmental graduates. However, the Department is using external evaluators to look at its on-campus productions as well as the results of WVTC and ACTF (including any written evaluations available) as a method of determining and assessing students knowledge and skill relative to national standards. Data on ACTF evaluations is currently stored in the Department, regularly reviewed by the Chair, and is available to all faculty and students.

IV. Plans for the Current Year

- This year the all collected materials from the previous four years will be evaluated by the entire faculty at one or more meetings expressly called for this purpose. An evaluation report of the curriculum including our assessment tools will be developed as a result of those meetings. The report will be included in next year's Assessment Report.
- Continue to work on systematizing the collection of assessment data and regularizing its review by the faculty.
- Develop appropriate paperwork for Exit Interview to file with other review documents that may occur as part of the Senior Project.
- Continue to develop procedures for an annual Departmental review process.
- Continue seeking suitable additional national benchmarks
- Explore methods that the Department might employ to track its graduates through the early stages of their careers perhaps thru the web site and thru a Department List serve.
- The Department will continue to maintain it relationship with the American College Theatre festival, but will focus resources on the The Southeastern Theatre Conference and the University and Regional Theatre Association with respect to using these organizations as professional development for students and faculty and for student assessment with regard auditions and portfolio review for professional positions and graduate school acceptance. Students will be participating in these events since the Internship requirement is now part of the new curriculum.

IV. Assistance Needed

How do we develop a benchmark when none exists in the discipline?

1. The Department continues to utilize the South East Theatre Conference, the American College Theatre Festival, the Irene Ryan Competition, and the West Virginia Theatre conference auditions and portfolio presentations as a benchmarks for student progress, and the success of our students in acceptance to graduate school or employment in arts related fields to evaluate our overall curriculum. The Department will look for additional benchmarks provided by professional organizations such as the United States Institute for Theatre Technology and the University and Regional Theatre Association. In addition, the Department will consider looking to the National Association of Schools of Theatre for benchmarks in the academic area. ACTF, USITT, and SETC will be funded using Theatre's Hinchman Foundation account.
2. Outside responders assigned by the ACTF Regional Office travel to campus to view each of our season productions. These adjudicators provide written Documentation with reference to the skill of our students and faculty. Copies of these adjudications are kept on file in the department and shared with students and faculty. We may want to consider sending these evaluations to the Dean's Office as well.

V. What has the Department Learned from this Process?

The new theatre curriculum has been in place for the past three years. Over that time our students have developed more maturity and sophistication regarding their profession and their skill development. Present data suggests that our new curriculum is appropriate for our student constituency, the present and near future employment environment, and the theatre curriculum's effectiveness in preparing students for a variety of professional opportunities continue to focus on professional development and audition/portfolio practices and skills necessary for West Virginia students to compete on a national level.

From the data collected so far, the theatre program appears to be meeting, at least for the more directed students, it educational goals. However, as more data is collected and the faculty has an opportunity to study the data collected over several years, the department will identify areas that need to be strengthened.

Student Outcome	Person/Office Responsible	Assessment Tool/Approach	Standards/Benchmark	Results/Analysis	Action Taken
Students acquire	faculty	Grades/production	No national standard	Our students	Marginal

basic performance skills and basic skills in design/technology		evaluations*/Sophomore Review/regional auditions/portfolio review/auditions for Dept. productions	Benchmarks available ACTF and SETC auditions/portfolio review success may be used as a measure	generally do well in these areas. Sophomore Review has proved useful in determining skill level	students have been required to retake the exam or re-audition.
Students acquire basic knowledge of theatre history and play analysis and an overview of contemporary practices	Faculty	Grades/production evaluations where appropriate/ /Senior Project where appropriate	No national standard Benchmarks available	Students are acquiring knowledge in these areas, but improvement is needed in analysis	Play analysis is a component for Theatre 101 Several special topics courses (THE 480) are centered around specific productions
Students gain advanced skills in either performance or design/technology	Faculty	Grades/production evaluations/Senior Project/External evaluators/regional auditions/portfolio review auditions for Dept. productions	No national standard Benchmarks available ACTF and SETC auditions/portfolio review success may be used as a measure	Increasingly students are better prepared on a regional level and are more successful in acquiring internships and positions in gradate schools.	Developed department internship requirement
* Productions are evaluated by nationally or regionally recognized external reviewers as part of the Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival Irene Ryan Competition, Students are evaluated externally through professional internships in their area of interest.					

Results of Faculty Assessment meetings:

- Faculty had a very positive response to the Assessment Rodeo. The rodeo indicated that 90% of students acquired the skills in the acting and production areas, but that Dance and vocal work in the area of singing needs considerable work. The department needs to pay closer attention to the evaluation system and make it consistent throughout the event. It was extremely helpful to have highly qualified guest for the performance area events.
- The department needs to pay more attention to play analysis and the reading of plays. The department will change the approach to the Introduction to Theatre course for the fall 2006 semester to focus specifically on this area.
- In order to bring the classroom and laboratory experiences closer together, in fall 2006 each faculty member involved with THE 270 or 370 will require a short paper that answers a question that is relevant to the student's experience.
- The faculty generally feel that our curriculum is working and that the students are becoming better trained and more experienced as evidenced from their successes at SETC, in their Internship course and upon graduation. For the last three years, a very high percentage of our students, about 75% either go on to a specific position or graduate school in theatre. At least 10% of the others are seeking a position in the performing arts area. There has been some discussion to focus more of our resources on students going to SETC and to maintain the adjudicators for our productions, but to be more selective when students wish to attend Irene Ryan and design competitions at ACTF.

College of Fine Arts

Student Satisfaction Survey of Facilities and Equipment

DEPARTMENT _____ THEATRE _____

ACADEMIC STANDING

FRESHMAN 5
 SOPHOMORE 2
 JUNIOR 1
 SENIOR _____
 GRADUATE _____

My Level of Satisfaction

- 1 – Not Satisfied at all
- 2 – Somewhat Dissatisfied
- 3 - Somewhat Satisfied
- 4 – Very Satisfied
- 5 – Not applicable

Please check appropriate box

	FR	SO	JR	SR	GR
1. The spaces (facilities) allotted to teaching (lecturing) in my major	3	2	1		
2. The areas allotted to studio work/ performance in my major	3.8	3.5	2		
3. The areas allotted to departmental storage in my major area	2.6	3.5	3		
4. The storage areas for a student’s personal equipment and supplies	2.2	3	2		
5. The environmental conditions in my major department’s facilities	3	1.5	2		
6. The safety and security issues in my major department	3	3	2		
7. The computer equipment for work in my major was adequate	1.6	1	1		
8. The other equipment available for work in my major	2.2	3	1		
9. The repair/ upkeep of equipment in my major area	3	2	2		
10. The availability of expendable supplies necessary for work in my major area	1.8	2.5	1		

You are invited to make comments about any of the areas indicated in the questions above
