**5-Year Learning Outcomes Assessment report  
June 30, 2021**

**Program Name: Department of Theatre**

**List program’s learning outcomes**

**All majors share these two outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the central elements of theatrical process and production. (General)
2. Analyze, contextualize, and communicate ideas about dramatic texts or performances from a broad range of traditions and periods, including our own. (General)

**Each emphasis or major has an additional 3-4 unique outcomes, as follows:**

**BFA in Theatre: Actor Training Emphasis**

1. Develop physical, vocal and textual responsiveness and flexibility with the aim of embodying characters in relation to larger stories; making and revising committed, interactive choices; engaging in constructive critique; and performing in public. (Acting)
2. Apply current best practices and industry standards for the pursuit of employment opportunities. (Acting)
3. Demonstrate professionalism by being responsible, punctual, prepared, ethical, collaborative, and engaged. (Acting)

**BFA in Theatre: Musical Theatre Emphasis**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of applied acting, voice, and dance techniques and historical styles required for musical theatre performance and the maintenance of a healthy instrument. (Musical Theatre)
2. Embody a character through acting, song, and dance to tell a story. (Musical Theatre)
3. Demonstrate professionalism by being responsible, punctual, prepared, ethical, collaborative, and engaged. (Musical Theatre)

**BFA in Theatre: Performing Arts Design Emphasis**

1. Communicate design ideas and realities both orally and visually, through competent sketching, rendering, drafting, model-building, and/or digital media. (Design)
2. Demonstrate understanding of the total design process, including the progression of raw materials through multiple design "shops" and the roles that various craftspeople play in the creation of a finished product. (Design)
3. Conceptualize and execute designs that are consistent with the overall artistic concepts of department productions in one area of emphasis (e.g., set, costume, sound, light). (Design)
4. Demonstrate professionalism by being responsible, punctual, prepared, ethical, collaborative, and engaged. (Design)

**BFA in Theatre: Stage Management Emphasis**

1. Demonstrate professionalism by being responsible, punctual, prepared, ethical, and engaged. (Stage Management)
2. Demonstrate discipline-specific knowledge, e.g. theatrical terminology, modern technology, and the job responsibilities of a stage manager in various genres and professional levels within the business. (Stage Management)
3. Communicate with production and non-production-oriented departments through effective leadership, collaboration, conflict navigation, and team management in both day-to-day and emergency situations. (Stage Management)
4. Apply self-awareness techniques through personal goal setting, self-reflection, boundary creation, self-care, and empathetic interpersonal connections to create healthy group and team dynamics amongst colleagues with commitment, vulnerability, and grace. (Stage Management)

**BFA in Theatre Teaching**

1. Direct and create expressive performances with various types of groups and in general classroom situations, and integrate dramatic skills into a variety of educational, community, and artistic contexts. (Teaching)
2. Model professionalism in K-12 public school systems (student teaching/practicums), theatre organizations, and community spaces. (Teaching)
3. Develop and implement comprehensive, standard-based K-12 theatre education programs and curricula that are inclusive. (Teaching)
4. Exhibit a commitment to adapting, modeling, and implementing multiple learning methods (including technology) in the theatre space, and to integrating dramatic skills into a variety of educational, community, and artistic contexts. (Teaching)

**BA in Theatre Studies**

1. Apply a variety of scholarly and creative methodologies in the domains of theatre scholarship, playwriting, performance, and production. (Theatre Studies)
2. Combine creative or scholarly research methodologies to demonstrate advanced understanding of theatre history, dramatic literature, performance writing, directing, or dramaturgy. (Theatre Studies)
3. Connect theatre-based knowledge and skills with other fields and methods of inquiry. (Theatre Studies)

**List learning outcomes assessed for this report**

Outcome #1: Demonstrate basic knowledge of the central elements of theatrical process and production.

Because we were still finalizing outcomes in December 2020, we were only able to conduct an assessment of one outcome common to all areas in spring 2021. The course we will use to assess outcome #2 is delivered during the fall semester each year, so we will collect data to assess that outcome during fall of 2021.

To assess outcome #1 we examined the curriculum to determine which course(s) address it and collected artifacts that would help us to understand whether we were meeting the intended outcome.

**Describe assessment results**

Most importantly, we discovered that we no longer offer a single course required of all students in the department that meets learning outcome #1. We offer a variety of courses that address some elements of outcome #1 in each major, but there is not currently a unified approach to ensuring all students are getting a basic knowledge of the central elements of theatrical process and production from start to finish. This would include acquisition of specialized theatre vocabulary and familiarity with various types of theatrical spaces, different professional roles in theatre (who does what), the steps involved in putting on a show, and how material for a show is generated. This is a significant gap in the curriculum; anecdotal reports by faculty indicate that this gap negatively impacts outcomes.

While we do not have a single class that fully addresses this outcome at this time, all Theatre students are required to enroll for credit to work on a production crew (THEA 1160 and THEA 1170), which is the closest approximation of a single class that could result in the ability to demonstrate basic knowledge of theatrical process and production right now and across all major areas of study.

Therefore, as an interim assessment measure, we examined course materials for students enrolled in our crew classes during the 2020-2021 academic year. Materials included a quiz on safety, self-evaluations completed by each student, and peer evaluations conducted by stage management students. The sample size was not as large as it would have been in a normal academic year due to the pandemic’s impact on performance: we usually produce six shows per year, while this year we produced three. In addition, each show was quite a bit smaller, thus requiring fewer crew members.

In addition to realizing that our curriculum currently has a significant gap, analysis of the materials suggests that upon completion of this course, students do:

* Demonstrate an understanding of safety in the theatre space;
* demonstrate a basic understanding of the technical rehearsal process;
* demonstrate an understanding of the importance of teamwork in theatre;
* demonstrate an understanding of the impact their attitude and work ethic have on other team members; and
* appreciate working with others backstage to bring a live (or recorded) performance to an audience.

Thus, they appear to acquire some specialized vocabulary, demonstrate knowledge of certain aspects of the production and performance process (e.g., necessity of teamwork, how a technical rehearsal works, importance of attitude) as well as an understanding of the various roles involved in theatrical production (e.g., stage manager, light board operator). However, the measures currently in place are not entirely adequate to assess outcome #1. In addition, direct instruction on this key outcome is not consistently provided to all students in the department.

**Describe changes that have been implemented or planned as a result of your interpretation of the assessment results**

We have determined that the department must develop a new introductory course that will introduce all Theatre majors to the specialized vocabulary, roles or positions in a theatre company, different types of theatrical spaces, production processes, how content for a production might be generated.

It may be that we could create an asynchronous learning module for all incoming students, along with an exam or some other assessment tool that will allow us to determine whether the outcome has been met.

We may also be able to find a way to develop an introductory course for all majors that includes not only this, but also addresses a number of important contemporary issues in theatre and the performing arts more generally, such as casting, self-advocacy, and establishing theatrical processes that are anti-racist, equitable and inclusive.

This is a matter that will take some time to sort out in a way that serves the needs of the students and helps them achieve the learning outcomes faculty believe are essential for undergraduate theatre majors. However, given the urgency of the need, particularly as it relates to student understanding of important contemporary issues in theatre practice, we are prioritizing the development of this course and expect to be able to offer it no later than the fall of 2023.