

Assessment of Majors/General Education Competency Template for 2005

Program/Department: Theater/Visual and Performing Arts

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Key Learning Outcomes: What should students be able to do AFTER completing this program? State learning outcomes simply and in measurable terms. Please limit the number of outcomes to five or fewer.

If your department reports on General Education competency areas (writing, foreign language, quantitative reasoning, scientific reasoning), please use this form to report on those areas in a separately generated document.

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of theater to history, culture and society.
2. Demonstrate literacy of theatrical language, history, aesthetic value and practice.
3. Develop a sophisticated understanding of the production process and demonstrate that understanding by assuming a position of responsibility within it.

Please link learning outcomes to the College's Desired Accomplishments/Goals.

1. *Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of theater to history, culture and society.*

- 1.1. Students gain the skills necessary to continue to educate themselves.
- 1.2. Students are prepared to assume responsibility of citizenship.
- 1.3. Students learn to appreciate and respect diverse cultures.
- 1.4. Students discover the importance of being involved in the community.
- 1.5. Students understand the value of education.
- 1.6. Students acquire an international perspective.
- 3.1. The College is the cultural center for the region.

2. *Demonstrate literacy of theatrical language, history, aesthetic value and practice.*

- 1.1. Students gain the skills necessary to continue to educate themselves.
- 1.3. Students learn to appreciate and respect diverse cultures.
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3. *Develop a sophisticated understanding of the production process and demonstrate that understanding by assuming a position of responsibility within it.*

- 1.1. Students gain the skills necessary to continue to educate themselves.
- 1.2. Students are prepared to assume responsibility of citizenship.

- 1.4. Students discover the importance of being involved in the community.
- 1.5. Students understand the value of education.
- 1.7. Students value honor and integrity.
- 1.8. Students develop leadership skills.
- 3.1. The College is the cultural center for the region.

Through what courses/assignments will you ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn this? List key courses, capstones, internships, experiences, etc.

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of theater to history, culture and society.
 - a. Introduction to Theater Course (THTR 101)
 - b. Theater History I (THTR 376)
 - c. Theater History II (THTR 377)
 - d. Participation in co-curricular theatrical productions
2. Demonstrate literacy of theatrical language, history, aesthetic value and practice.
 - a. Introduction to Theater Course (THTR 101)
 - b. Theater History I (THTR 376)
 - c. Theater History II (THTR 377)
 - d. Introduction to Theatrical Design (THTR 115)
 - e. Participation in co-curricular theatrical productions
 - f. Obviously, all courses within the theater curriculum will serve to develop some extent of theater literacy, relative to their content.
3. Develop a sophisticated understanding of the production process and demonstrate that understanding by assuming a position of responsibility within it.
 - a. Stagecraft (THTR 165)
 - b. All Production Practica (THTR 112, 186, 286, 287, 288, 289, 387, 388, 389)
 - c. Rehearsal, Ensemble, and Performance (THTR 226, 236, 326, 336)
 - d. Theater Seminars I-IV (THTR 385, 386, 485, 486)
 - e. Participation in co-curricular theatrical productions
 - f. Internships

Please list all tools used for assessing student achievement (CRTs, MFTs, capstones, exit interviews, external reviews, etc.). Choose a minimum of three tools.

- History, literature, Aesthetics and Stagecraft courses utilize:

1. Tests/Examinations
 2. Papers
 3. Oral Presentations
 4. Applied Projects
- Practica, while graded, currently use no formal tool for assessment.
 - Rehearsal, Ensemble and Performance courses utilize a rubric constructed with the students as a part of the course and applied in evaluation of student work in rehearsals and performance.
 - Theater seminars and internships for credit require the student to submit a course outline with goals, plans and assessment criteria as well as final report which applies that assessment criteria in an evaluation of the project, position, or internship.
 - Voluntary, not-for-credit participation in co-curricular theatrical productions currently do not involve any formal documentation of assessment.
 - With such a small faculty and such a large work-load between the curricular and co-curricular parts of the program there are substantial opportunities for observing students' performance and progress.

How will you assess how well your students are learning? List standards/performance indicators, etc., taking care to provide quantifiable means (for example, all students should earn a minimum 50% on exit exam; 65 % should earn a minimum 70%; with a rubric, indicate the scale used, the levels of competence, what is identified as "competent," and what constitutes competence for each outcome measure, what percentage of students you would expect to see at each level, etc.). Be sure to spell out criteria.

- Presently there are no forms of assessment used to measure student learning outside of the assessments used in individual courses. Competency then is only implicitly defined as a passing grade- 60%- within the various course work.
- There are also currently no attempts to track any of the separate assessments embedded within individual courses for the purpose of broader program-wide assessments.

How often, when, and under what circumstances will you gather the relevant data?

- Currently "Relevant Data" collected through course content will be collected within the regular structure of the course of study as described by the particular course syllabus/ae.
- Exit interviews will be conducted with willing students

Summarize what has been learned about how well students are achieving desired outcomes.

Across all three of the learning outcomes, significant improvement has been evidenced this year. Course and production based discussions have revealed a significant increase in the ‘theatrical literacy’ of students with respect to theatrical language (in technical theater particularly), history, and aesthetics. This clear growth can be attributed to several factors. Foremost of these, however, was the addition of a third faculty member to the theater division to develop and implement the historical and cultural elements of the program curriculum.

There is also clear increase in the understanding by the students of the relationship of theater to culture and society. This is most clearly evidenced by the development of an Aesthetics class which has added needed context to the rest of the theater curriculum and well as the co-curricular production program. There is clear evidence of the contributions this course has made to student thinking and learning in their discussions and reporting. Hopefully the course will also prove over time to contribute to students’ practice of theater.

Finally, students have made substantial advances in their assumption of production responsibilities and their understanding of the production process. This is demonstrated quite tangibly in the production work itself, in their discussions about the work, and in their reporting on it. Much of this advance may be attributed to a significant decrease in student attrition. Recent attempts at recruiting from within and outside the campus may have contributed to this development. The retention of students within the program has helped to foster a stronger sense of community and purpose. This sense of community is evidenced by an increased ownership of the responsibilities implicit in the co-curricular production work and a subscription to the sort of aesthetic standards which give value to that work. It is clear that this is the primary area which the theater division must continue to develop and foster in order to achieve any sustained growth in the program. In order for students to develop a sophisticated understanding of the production process and accept the responsibilities of its larger communal effort, there must be a group of individuals, beyond faculty, modeling the ability and value of that undertaking.

Action Plan: What plans have you for the future based on the data gathered that will aim to improve student learning/achievement? Should students perform at less than the standard expected, what steps will the department take to improve their learning/performance? What steps does the department anticipate to improve the program otherwise?

- ❑ The theater division is in the final stages of a complete revision of the theater curriculum. This revision will substantially increase the curricular applications of the learning outcomes the division has defined as its programmatic goals.
- ❑ It is clear from the questions posed by this assessment template that the theater program lacks any *formal* means by which to assess the growth and development of its students over the course of their entire tenure within the program. Given the current work-loads of the faculty, this would be a difficult deficit in the program to overcome in a substantial way that would pay more than lip service to the effort and

purpose. It does, however, seem to have value implications for program development. To that end, the faculty will consider the feasibility of developing and implementing a system for formally assessing the progress and development of student majors over the course of their tenure in the program. This may take the form of collecting a portfolio of “Relevant Data” from separate courses, practica, and internships for all majors to be reviewed by the theater faculty each year. To that end, administrative support in the form of a staff assistant would be invaluable by assisting in the documentation and collection process for each student as well as by alleviating some of the burdensome administrative tasks that consume a great deal of the current faculty’s time- budgeting, accounting, purchasing, recruiting records, scheduling, etc.

- ❑ Job descriptions and performance rubrics will be developed for production positions that students may assume for practica or seminars to more clearly communicate expectations and standards within various positions of production responsibility.
- ❑ The program will seek to improve student participation in exit interviews and develop a student survey to accompany the exit interview.
- ❑ Program faculty will attempt to develop a system for more thorough evaluation of production assignments/responsibilities (Practica, Rehearsal, Ensemble & Performance, Seminars) with a performance rubric and a plan for its implementation. An example may be a student evaluated based on the rubric twice during the preparation period and once based upon the completion of the production assignment in the actual performance.
- ❑ The program MUST endeavor to recruit students with more drive and discipline dedicated to theatrical pursuits. Such students exponentially advance the program through their aspirations and their interactions with less driven and disciplined students. The faculty shall continue to pursue all possible avenues available to them for such recruitment. Ultimately, however, this endeavor will require administrative support in the form of scholarship programs to achieve any level of student engagement near the level of those theater programs against which we compete for students.
- ❑ Attempt to secure administrative support in the form of a staff position to alleviate the extraordinary burden imposed upon the current faculty for record keeping, procurement, scheduling, and various other administrative tasks.

Comments

Please return this document by April 1, 2006