



Theatre | 2015-2016 Assessment Report

1. Please give a brief overview of the assessment data you collected this year.

Learning Objective #2: Theatre Majors will have a strong background in the fundamental skills of acting, stagecraft, costume, design and direction.

Learning Objective #2 relates directly to the core curriculum of the Theatre Program and introductory courses that are required of every Theatre Major and Theatre Minor*. The five distinctly different areas related to theatrical study and production. To that end each one of these required courses in the curriculum are all offered at least one time per academic year.

The required study across all areas of theatre has clearly nurtured a respect for the collaborative nature of theatre and the skills required in the specific theatrical disciplines. A high value is placed on the ability of students to reach beyond a single defined area of interest or specialization. A named scholarship is also devoted to specifically recognizing a student's ability to achieve excellence in 2 or more separate areas of specialization.

Additionally, we offer a minimum of four High Impact Learning Experiences for students in the theatre Program by producing four Mainstage (Faculty or Guest Artist Directed) Productions every year. In addition, there are opportunities each year for Student Directed Studio Productions (Three such opportunities will be offered in 2016/2017) where students assume all production positions and Faculty members serve as Mentors through the production process. These High Impact Experiences for our students are typically the most valued experiences that students have in a Theatre Program. Even those students who have not been as heavily involved in production as others have found these experiences to be their own personal highlights in their own learning experiences. Professional Practice is central to our Production Program in Theatre and Dance and therefore most students are exposed to an average of 16 professional theatre opportunities as an aspect of their Theatre Education/Training at UW-Green Bay.

After the completion of every Mainstage and Studio Production we conduct Talk Back Discussions with Cast/Crew/Student audience members to discuss the process and evaluate what worked well or where there may have been production related issues to manage or respond to.

Additionally, we also conduct exit interviews with all Graduating Seniors from the program to gain their individual perspectives of their time in the program. We also conduct year-end meetings with individual students to determine their past experiences and their future interests in the program.

NOTE: * Theatre minors in the area of Dance do not have this same breadth of requirement due to the high number of credits related to specific dance related skill development. For this reason, the Dance minor remains a disciplinary area of study within the interdisciplinary unit.

2. How will you use what you've learned from the data that was collected?

Course content is regularly updated to assure that methods and skills introduced are in line with current professional practice. The particular courses related to this Learning Outcome are Acting I, Stagecraft, Costume Technology, Directing I, All Production Practicum Courses. Over the years we have made slight changes in the various Major emphases. As I review the details of Learning Outcome #2 and those changes I notice there is one area that is not covered as specifically in the curriculum and that is the area of Design. Many adjustments had been made to create a better blend of emphasis related study; however, we were always limited due to the high number of credits required for a Disciplinary Major. There are no longer any Design course requirements in either the Performance or the Musical Theatre Performance major emphases (our two most populated majors). We have now been serving as an interdisciplinary program for four years and the pressure on the number of credits is quite different for Theatre Students. In fact, those who have chosen to "advise themselves" instead of setting up regular advising appointments have not been paying attention to their 120 credit totals and they have found themselves short of that graduation credit requirement after completing all major and General Education Requirements.

One way to insure that course curriculum specifically covers the area of Design would be to add the Introduction to Theatre Arts class as a requirement for all majors as all design areas are included in the curriculum for this class and there are papers requiring evaluation and commentary in the design area as well as a major final project that includes theatrical design details. This 3-credit addition to the major will not have the kind of credit impact it would have had in the past. It will also insure all incoming students (regardless of Registration circumstances) will have at least one Theatre class they can enroll in even when other required classes are closed. Currently more than half our students take this class but they have done so as either a General Education class before declaring a major or they may take it as an elective for another program Major or Minor such as Arts Management. There are other Design course Options but in fact those would either be focused in one specific area of design or it would involve offering multiple sections of an existing course with no faculty member available to offer the requirement.

Class sizes for all the required core classes are monitored and evaluated to assure appropriate teacher/student ratios are achieved and safety standards are met. We monitor the student records to assure we are offering sufficient sections of these courses to make sure all students have access to them annually. That review has prompted us to offer additional sections of both Acting I and Costume Technology class on a fairly regular basis. Both of these classes are limited due to the size of the related teaching/learning spaces and/or the amount of individual student work within each course.

Each year during exit interviews it is common to learn that students are interested in the addition of other aspects of a Theatre Curriculum. Two of the most common additions students request are Playwriting and Stage Combat. Another frequent comment relates to increased opportunities for High Impact experiences. In some ways our students in Theatre & Dance are spoiled in that they have more such experiences than many if not most of the programs across campus. Given the advent of Required Capstone Experiences our students may well begin to realize the significance of so many of their production related High Impact experiences in the program that many think of as ordinary.

Typically before the beginning of each academic year the Faculty gather for an informal retreat of sorts to discuss curricular issues as we head into the new academic year. These are things in fact that as a Theatre cohort we discuss throughout every year as so much relates to our Theatre Production program. This coming year the Dean has asked us to consider a proposal we have discussed in the past related to the development of a BFA program in Design/Technology. We have never moved forward with that proposal as we can offer the BFA in that area with current staffing but we cannot offer a balanced BFA in the Performance areas unless we have an additional faculty position in that area.