



Theatre | 2016-2017 Assessment Report

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

Learning Outcome #3: Theatre Majors will have a working knowledge of techniques associated with theatrical process and production and will be able to critically analyze theatrical productions.

Learning Outcome #3 relates directly to our students work on Theatre Production. There is no question that students in our program continue to get regular production related experience and exposure to the production process from an analytical process through course requirements, and in a hands-on fashion, though their production related work conducted largely through Production Practicum and through Advance Independent Study in production related positions.

During this past year, the development of the Theatre Capstone to meet the General Education Capstone requirement was a major area of focus. In fact, Theatre and Dance takes great pride in the fact that as the Capstone Experience requirement was being developed a few years ago, our unit was one of the programs that was used as an example of the ways our students already have regular High Impact Learning Experiences at the Junior and Senior levels that would meet the Capstone Experience Requirement through theatrical production work. Clearly not every students attains the absolute highest level of Theatrical achievement and yet every student achieves a level of leadership and advanced production work and in that spirit The Theatre and Dance Faculty identified 37 potential Advanced Production-related positions that would be worthy of Capstone Experience leadership and recognition.

We have also identified Advanced Research Presentations and Student Direction of Studio Productions and Advanced Portfolio Seminar Development as other Highly valued Capstone options for students. We would certainly recognize a Semester Abroad and yet it has been most common for Theatre Students that do take advantage of this opportunity to complete the experience much earlier in their studies and to this point, no study abroad has occurred in a Theatre and Dance students' senior year. I suspect this is predominantly due to the most sought after production experiences that can be achieved during a typical senior year for our students. We would still accept this if the Capstone timing worked out, however.

Additionally, given the continued proven track record of our students' experiences beyond the confines of our program we have identified several advanced experiences worthy of a Capstone Experience. Our students regularly receive highly sought after Internships with Professional Summer Theatres and Theatre related companies. We have had students accepted into professional Acting Training Programs and Make Up Schools for additional specialized training. Through our participation in the American College Theatre Festival, our students have regularly presented Stage Management Materials and Designs for both realized

and project developed design competitions at our regional Festival with National Evaluators responding to the student work/presentations.

One interesting dynamic and a slight program problem that only seems to happen with our most advanced students (Those students who enter as freshmen actively seeking opportunities in their primary areas of interest.) They will often put off that required credit of Shop practicum in the area outside of their interest area until the very end. So in their final semester or two when they should be doing their most advanced production work, they are frequently having to participate in the area outside of their expertise to meet program requirements.

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

We have discovered that our Production Practicum experiences for our students continue to perform in the way they were designed. Students gain a breadth of required production activity and still the ability to focus more intently in their individual advanced areas of production. We have been working to force more students to register for Cast Member practicum. However, we are not able to register for the students...so if they ignore the advice and urging of the faculty it is not possible to replace the cast member to someone who will register, that is simply not how casting works in any Theatre. They often focus so much on auditioning and getting the role and most students will without question complete the production work as a cast member whether they get credit or not. The only time we will not force a student to register for a one credit practicum class if they have already met their required practicum classes is if adding the credit will require them to exceed their credit limit and force them to pay higher tuition.

We have also increased the offering of the Costume Technology class to allow more students to get through that gateway class in a more timely-fashion allowing them to fulfill the Costume Shop Practicum course earlier in their studies. The only problem left to address is with those students that seem to purposely avoid as long as possible this secondary area of their required production work. This does not tend to be a problem for those advanced in the costume or make up area, as they must take some pre-requisites before getting into their areas of theatre production. It also seems this has come about more recently due to the trend toward specialization in lighting and sound in the entertainment industry. The only real option we have is to work on this through individual advising and not allowing students to avoid required areas of study that they do not naturally gravitate to. It is not such an overwhelming problem as it only a few select students approach their studies in this way if not checked. We need to maintain an area that will allow freshmen to begin working on production immediately with appropriate training so advising is the only genuine solution to this occasional problem.

Our continued participation in ACTF should continue to offer our students numerous opportunities to observe and participate directly in a professional analysis of production work they complete in the program. Even when we do not enter a particular production, we still maintain all in program postproduction talkbacks and production analysis experiences for students.