

## Program Assessment – Theatre

### 1. Strengths

- Student-faculty interaction: Students seem to get a lot of coaching and mentoring as they develop performances together. Reorganization of lab and practicum has led to greater instructional opportunities in smaller lab experiences. This has led to high quality of productions. It also leads to workload concerns discussed below.
- Quality of teaching is strong
- Recognition at national level of many student productions.
- Continuing involvement/collaboration with music faculty, the ability to offer strong musical theatre opportunities (e.g. Cabaret)
- Alumni and exit interviews seem positive
- Faculty report positive morale due to becoming a budgetary unit in 2012 and the hiring of a technical director in 2009 to relieve faculty workload. This had been a concern in the 2006 program that has been positively addressed. More efficiency of unit.

### 2. Concerns

- Declining number of majors: from n=72 in 2009 to n=52 in 2013, and low number of graduating students (2013: 4). The unit reports that it had grown too fast in the prior 10 years outstripping its ability to keep up with the number of students. Now the numbers have declined – perhaps to more manageable numbers? But the workload issues continue.
- Concerns expressed in the 2006 self-study have continued surrounding periodicity of classes. Recent exit interviews with students also confirm this periodicity problem. Some students are taking the required core classes in their last year, and they should take them earlier in the major.
- The program reports that staffing is the biggest challenge, also a major concern in 2006. Cast Practicum, a 1 credit course, requires a very high time commitment relative to the 1 credit earned. Each production that is developed is new, requiring significant development time. Faculty stress is taking a toll.
- The Theatre program is providing a great deal of general ed instruction, with 2/3 of students in lower level courses and 54% of upper level courses populated with general education students. Check this upper level- question
- Theatre majors graduated with average of 136 credits in 2013, well over the 120 credits needed to graduate from UW-Green Bay. UW-Green Bay Theater major requires 54 credits or more. A quick check of the UW-Oshkosh requirement found a 36 credit Theater major. UW-Green Bay

has four areas of emphasis in the Theater major, while Oshkosh only has three emphases. This is the competition.

- Program does not offer playwriting, which has been an expressed need at the student exit interviews and is offered at UW-Oshkosh. Could this be jointly offered with English
- Reduced casting opportunities for students due to the barriers to offering more productions, such as faculty workload, increased costs, and aging facilities. Two smaller performances a year – fewer casting opportunities for students. No performance requirement in theatre major.
- Assessment methods concerns: history and literature outcome is assessed by students simply passing the class (with a D). This class is not offered frequently. Other outcomes seem to be assessed through the faculty mentoring relationship. Students' acting abilities and working knowledge of techniques are validated when the productions win external awards. Is there an assessment rubric or documentation of this quality? External peer review is great, but faculty need to assess students. Need a schedule of assessment?

### 3. Questions and Recommendations

- Specifically how has the transition to the new budgetary unit benefited the program? What changes have been enabled or undertaken after this change (2012)? This is repeated as having been an improvement, but what specific improvements have resulted? Are there specific outcomes they can provide?
- Could the curriculum be streamlined and reduced, perhaps eliminating an emphasis? A much tighter pathway seems needed, with strong periodicity. Is it possible to become more focused on certain elements? This seems like one possible way to reduce the burden on students and faculty. Especially in light of reduced numbers of students. Reality practicality. More efficiency.
- Unlikely to have additional faculty support or load credits from other units, how will they streamline. Keeping curriculum more aligned with the faculty that they have. Workload balance. Don't over-reach in order to grow or offer the requirements.
- The unit is carrying a very heavy Gen Ed student load, is this necessary? Check the 52% for upper level from earlier
- It is puzzling that the University and its students have not been able to benefit from the presence of the Weidner Center. As the Theatre Hall facilities decline, isn't there some way to enable the University to use this community jewel? The community is likely to attend performances in greater numbers and support this goal through donations. Benefits from interaction with the artists. Set designconcern
- Concern about the declining numbers of majors, fewer graduates, and declining casting opportunities for students due to workload issues. With

the high cost of college, requiring this many credits (54) in the major may be prohibitive for students. The economy may also be a factor in the declining numbers of theater majors, as students worry about employment to a greater extent.

- Current path seems threatened to become unsustainable. The quality of performances seems clear, but the department is not able to develop as many performances due to current limitations. The workload issues are highly concerning. Can a significant redesign of the major be accomplished to make the best use of current faculty and also offer a more manageable credit requirement for students? This is coming from one who does not have first-hand knowledge of what my colleagues are going through and the dynamics involved, however, it seems that innovation is called for. Insert numbers.
- Is there opportunity for screen acting? Strong emphasis on stage performance. Could this be explored? Online video production.
- Modernize.