

Institutional Effectiveness Report Template

Name of Program/Department:	Theatre Arts/Department of Fine Arts
Year:	2016-2017
Name of Preparer:	D. Keith Best

Program Mission Statement

The Mission of the Theatre Program is:

The Department of Fine Arts offers a major in theatre arts with specialties in performance (acting and directing) or design/technology (scenery, lighting, costuming, and stagecraft). The department seeks to prepare students for graduate studies in the major, for entering professional training programs, or for entering professions that require creative thinking and artistic expression. Students may also earn either a minor or a collateral in theatre. The education students participate in leads to the development of life skills of self-discipline, personal responsibility, and organization; and the ability to communicate effectively and work cooperatively is fostered in the program. The program educates the student body at large and serves the community through quality performances that exhibit student and faculty artistic work and function as a laboratory for applying skills learned in the classroom and studio.

The Mission of the University Theatre (a co-curricular activity of the Theatre Arts Program) is "to produce wide and varied selections of challenging dramatic literature that is educationally beneficial to both student participants and observers."

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

1. Students will expand communication skills, collaborative problem-solving, and modes of self-expression through the production process.
2. Theatre arts majors will acquire an understanding of the relevance, implications and consequences of theatre to its social, cultural and historical context.
3. The theatre arts program will develop theatre arts students who exhibit a professional disposition in theatre art analysis, production process and practices.
4. Theatre arts students will collaboratively serve the community and region by producing plays open to the general public.

Executive Summary of Report

The 2016-2017 year was an adjustment as the theatre program is attempting to incorporate more direct assessment into the report and less indirect assessment. The faculty are also attempting to fine tune and update student learning outcomes to reflect the knowledge, skills, and experience required of the theatre arts today. The result is that we are still in a state of transition as far as how we assess our SLOs.

Our primary assessment tool is the Exit Exam. Graduating students this year did have higher scores than those in the previous year, but the scores were still below targets. Faculty continue to address those areas in which students need further instruction or additional training by updating course content and assignments.

The theatre practicum course is the primary assessment for production knowledge and skills. We are currently evaluating the structure of the Theatre Practicum as a course and how the students are assessed in that course. However, a new design faculty is joining the theatre program, and we have postponed any major changes until he arrives and can be a part of this restructuring dialogue. A theatre handbook is currently being created for the 2017-2018 academic year and will include more specific information about the practicum course assignments for students.

Another assessment tool is outside adjudication. Outside adjudicators were used for final projects in Directing II and Costume Design. Outside adjudicators in both courses gave solid ratings to every student, though areas in need of improvement were mentioned and will be addressed by faculty in those courses. In addition, an adjudicator provided feedback on *Blue Bird*, our February production. In general, feedback was very positive for the students of the program involved in this play.

We are gradually improving the assessment tools that we have been using though we will need to continue to revise these tools as well as revisit and set new targets.

Note that this report does not address the general education goals, though we are working on assessment tools to help evaluate those courses and assess those students as well. The general education program is evaluated separately.

The theatre program will continue reviewing and updating the PLOs and the SLOs as seen in this report. This revision will obviously affect the types of assessment methods that are used.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of theatre concepts, theories, organization, and production process.
2. Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to successfully participate in a theatrical production under the direction and supervision of an experienced production team.
3. Students will demonstrate skills, knowledge and vocabulary usage to form aesthetic judgments of/within the production process.
4. Students will acquire and demonstrate sufficient skills and knowledge in advanced areas of study in their specialty.

Assessment Methods

1. *Students will demonstrate an understanding of theatre concepts, theories, organization, and production process at the level of 80% or above as measured by a departmental Exit Exam.*

The primary assessment tool for this SLO is the Exit Exam given to graduating seniors. The exit exam includes questions from each theatre course that the student completed at FMU. These questions target specifics from the courses that would be representative of the knowledge in this SLO. The graded exams will be reviewed by theatre faculty to determine areas in which students seem to have difficulty retaining important information. Adjustments in curriculum can be made as needed.

2. *Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to successfully participate in a theatrical production under the direction and supervision of an experienced production team at the overall level of 80% or above in THEA 210.*

The primary assessment tool for this SLO is the use of the course Theatre Practicum (THEA 210) in which students receive a grade for specific roles (both onstage and backstage) under the direction of theatre faculty. The theatre faculty assigns practicum grades at the end of the semester based on an evaluation of the student's performance in a specific assignment (lighting, acting, stage management, etc.). Items considered include (but are not limited to) attitude, professional manner, timeliness, discipline, commitment, quality of work, etc.

3. *Students will demonstrate skills, knowledge and vocabulary usage to form aesthetic judgments of/within the production process. No target has been set for the selected exit exam questions at this time.*

Many parts of the Exit Exam are specific to the production process including areas of aesthetic judgment. These parts are assessed independently of the entire exam.

4. *Students will acquire and demonstrate sufficient skills and knowledge in advanced areas of study in their specialty.*

In addition to being graded in the course, final projects in upper level courses like Costume Design, Directing II, and Acting IV receive outside adjudication. In addition, an outside adjudicator is often called upon to provide more general feedback to at least one of the productions each year.

Assessment Results

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of theatre concepts, theories, organization, and production process.

- Senior Exit Exam

Two graduating students took the Exit Exam this year. The target for the core average was 80%. The target for the specialty area (performance/design) was 90%. The average core grade for this year was 68%. The average specialty grade for this year was 85%. These scores were a considerable improvement from the previous year. **However, no single student achieved the target grade in any area.** A copy of this year's results can be found in the Appendix. Given that the target has not been met since an Exit Exam was incorporated, the Exit Exam and the benchmarks should be revisited. Results are shared with theatre faculty who are

2. Students will demonstrate the skills necessary to successfully participate in a theatrical production under the direction and supervision of an experienced production team.

- Practicum Experience

Both of the graduates had completed four or more practicums in theatre production. All of the performance majors had at least one practicum in the area of performance. Theatre faculty felt that all students had been proven to be successful in this regard. There was no target stated in this area; however, the theatre faculty decided to revisit the way in which the practicum course is structured and how students are evaluated. **All students taking the Practicum course in the 2016-2017 year were judged to have successfully completed the requirements of the course by a faculty panel. The lowest grade given was a B.**

3. Students will demonstrate skills, knowledge and vocabulary usage to form aesthetic judgments of/within the production process.

Of the two students taking the exit exam, the overall average was 85.6% on those questions specific to this SLO. **This is the first year that we separated out these questions for a separate score, so no target was set. 85% would be the suggested target at this point.**

4. Students will acquire and demonstrate sufficient skills and knowledge in advanced areas of study in their specialty area.

- External Adjudication

An external adjudication for Directing II was conducted at the conclusion of the course as described. One external adjudicator and one internal adjudicator were used. The adjudication was primarily one of open conversation and general feedback. Both adjudicators were generally positive and felt that all of the directors presented work of an acceptable level for upper level theatre majors. No target has been set in this regard.

An external adjudication also occurred in Costume Design. The results are in the appendix. This is the first year those results have been tabulated. Scores were high (average was over 90%) so more data will be accumulated before a target is set.

- Senior Exit Interviews and Follow-ups

Of the nine students graduating, only three had specific plans regarding further education or professional work. One has been accepted and is currently attending graduate school. Another has accepted an internship at a professional theatre in Greenville, SC. The third moved to Los Angeles and has been employed in the costume shop of a major film company. The target is for 100% of our graduates who pursue further education or professional employment in theatre to be successful. The three graduates who planned to do so have been successful in that regard.

Action Items

Changes Made Since May 2016

Anticipated Actions Based on This Report

1. Theatre faculty met and reviewed the Exit Exam and the current benchmarks. The Exit Exam will be rewritten to reflect current courses and content--including input from a new design faculty member. The benchmarks will be re-evaluated to reflect more realistic target scores after the new exam is implemented. (SLO 1, 3)
2. The Exit Interview will be revisited in the next academic year. The current document has not been updated for several years. (SLO 1-4)
3. The theatre faculty still needs to revisit the goals (PLO and SLO) of the program. The initial "core goal" statements, which were separated into Program and Student Learning Outcomes, have been updated but need further revision. However, the faculty decided to wait until the new designer was in place before making substantial changes. A short-range and long-range plan should be discussed in the next year. (SLO 1-4)
6. A survey tool should be developed which is distributed to theatre majors at our annual majors meeting held in early fall. This survey should give us data about student employment, progress, and other information about what types of learning are occurring outside of the classroom. (SLO 1-4)
7. The theatre faculty have decided to use a common text for the Intro to Theatre courses. The faculty will spend the next year reviewing texts and will choose one by the end of Spring 2018. The intent is to add an exit exam for students in Theatre 101 (Intro to Theatre) which can be used to more accurately assess General Education goals. (SLO 1-3).

Additional Assessment Data

- Senior Exit Interviews

Some students expressed frustration with the Exit Exam as it does not take into consideration the amount of time that had passed (in one case, eight years) since they had taken some of the courses. They did express that they felt they received a lot of practical knowledge from most courses even if they had difficulty recalling some of the detailed information.

Appendix

1. Exit Exam Results

RESULTS FOR EXIT EXAMS FOR THEATRE MAJORS GRADUATING IN THE 2016-2017 ACADEMIC YEAR

Theatre Course	<u>201</u>	<u>202</u>	<u>203</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>291</u>	<u>301</u>	302	303	309	<u>320</u>	<u>321</u>	402	Avg. (Total)	Avg. (Core)	Avg. (Spec)
Student #1	70%	80%	80%	100%	38%	80%	80%	70%	100%	50%	30%	90%	72%	66%	90%
Student #2	70%	50%	70%	90%	63%	90%			90%	58%	60%		71%	69%	80%
Average	70%	65%	85%	95%	51%	85%	80%	70%	95%	54%	45%	90%	72%	68%	85%

*designates transfer student.

Underlined course numbers represent CORE courses (which all theatre students take).

Emboldened course numbers represent SPECIALTY courses in the PERFORMANCE area.

Italicized course numbers represent SPECIALTY courses in the DESIGN area.

Two students graduated in the last academic year. Both students took the exit exam.

Year	Mean Core	Mean Specialty
2017	68.0%	85%
2016	61.0%	59.0%
2015	72.5%	72.5%
2014	61.3%	63.3%
2013	64.7%	50.6%
* 2012	00.0 %	00.0 %
* 2011	00.0 %	00.0 %
2010	80.1%	81.3%
2009	84.0 %	53.3 %
2008	76.0 %	76.3 %
2007	80.5 %	81.0 %
2006	56.0 %	85.0 %
* 2005	00.0 %	00.0 %
2004	78.4 %	77.9 %
2003	55.9 %	66.6 %
* 2002	00.0 %	00.0 %
2001	64.7 %	70.9 %
2000	67.6 %	79.4 %

- indicates no graduates tested.

2015-2016 should have been the first year that all graduates will have had the same instructors for all theatre courses. However, two returning students had a few courses under previous instructors.

2. Exit interviews. (*1, 3, 4)

Two students graduated with a theatre major in 2016-2017. Both students held exit interviews.

Points of interest from the interviews.

- Students again noted a lack of modern technology and a need for training with more modern technology.
- Neither student was planning on graduate studies in the near future.
- One student expressed a desire for more electives in the program that would allow for more creative experience outside of the major.

Exit Interview Survey (*All open-ended questions*)

- I. Employment – Graduate Study
 - A. What is your current status as to employment and/or graduate study?
 - B. How useful has your major been to prepare you for employment and/or graduate study?
 - C. What is the relation of your major to your career plans?
 - D. How do you view the adequacy of career guidance by the faculty?
- II. Self-perceptions
 - A. How do you feel the University's programs have enhanced personal development, intelligence, and social awareness?
 - B. How have the University's programs enhanced your writing ability?
 - C. How have the University's programs enhanced your speaking ability?
 - D. How have the University's programs enhanced your math skills?
- III. Courses
 - A. How was the quality of your courses and/or instruction?
 - B. Was the variety of courses sufficient?
 - C. Which courses contributed most vs. least to your satisfaction?
 - D. Which courses contributed most vs. least to your career preparation?
 - E. How was the quality of your Theatre Arts courses vs. non-major courses?
 - F. What was the quality of advisement?
 - G. What courses (areas of study) were omitted that should be added?
 - H. Were the prerequisites appropriate for the courses?
- IV. Faculty
 - A. Was the faculty accessible for advice, etc.?
 - B. What is the quality of the faculty (preparation, interest, effectiveness)?
- V. Facilities
 - A. Are the theatre and its support areas adequate?
 - B. Is the library adequate?
- VI. Overall Assessment
 - A. What are your suggestions for improvement (specific problems)?
 - B. What is your perceived purpose of the Theatre Arts program?
 - C. What are the weaknesses (liked least) of the Theatre Arts program?
 - D. What are the strengths (liked most) of the Theatre Arts program?
 - E. What is your overall satisfaction with the major?
- VII. Miscellaneous
 - A. When did you decide to become a Theatre Arts major?
 - B. Were the departmental extra-curricular activities of value? Which and why?
- VIII. Other Comments:

3. Portfolio reviews. (*1, 2, 3, 4, 6)

No portfolio reviews were held in 2016-2017.

4. Juried acting performances. (*1, 2, 3, 6)

This theatre arts assessment process was not applicable this academic year. The next assessment in this area is scheduled for Spring 2018.

5. Juried direction of one-act plays. (*1, 2, 3, 6)

An adjudication for final projects in Directing II was conducted at the conclusion of the course. One external adjudicator and one internal adjudicator were used. The adjudication was primarily one of open conversation and general feedback. Both adjudicators were generally positive and felt that all of the directors presented work of an acceptable level for upper level theatre majors. No benchmark has been set in this regard.

6. External examiners. (*1, 2, 3, 6, 8)

An external adjudicator for the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival attended the presentation of *Blue Bird* in February 2016. Their written report is included at the end of the appendix.

7. General Education Survey Results

Seventeen Theatre 101 (Intro to Theatre) students were randomly sampled with the below survey.

1. What grade do you expect in this course?

A (44%)	B+ (0%)	B (19%)	C+ (6%)	C (19%)
D+ (0%)	D (0%)	F (0%)	"I have no idea." (12%)	

2. I am _____ to see a theatre production on campus as a result of taking this course.

A. more likely (80%) B. neither more or less likely (20%) C. less likely (0%)

3. I feel I understand the theatrical process _____ I did before taking this course.

A. much better than (88%) B. about the same as (12%) C. much less than (0%)

4. I feel it will be _____ to enjoy the experience of watching a play now that I've taken this course.

A. easier (69%) B. more difficult (0%) C. neither easier nor more difficult (31%)

5. I feel I have a(n) _____ understanding of the theatrical process as a result of this course.

A. above average (69%) B. basic (31%) C. less than basic (0%)

6. I feel I am _____ of reading a play for its production possibilities as a result of this course.

A. more capable (53%) B. just as capable as before this course (47%)
C. less capable (0%)

7. I am _____ to pay to see a theatre production off campus as a result of taking this course.

- A. more likely (41%) B. neither more nor less likely (53%) C. less likely (6%)
8. How many productions had you seen prior to taking this course?
 A. 0 (18%) B. 1-3 (53%) C. 4-10 (11%) D. More than 10 (18%)
9. How many productions did you see during this semester?
 A. 0 (0%) B. 1 (18%) C. 2 (59%) D. 3 or more (23%)
10. Did you participate in plays before this course?
 A. No. Never. (41%) C. Yes. A few times. (41%)
 B. Yes. Once. (6%) D. Yes. A lot. (12%)
11. Now that you've taken the course, how likely are you to participate in a play if the chance arises?
 A. Very likely. (0%) C. Not very likely. (31%)
 B. Maybe. (56%) D. Definitely not. (13%)
12. How difficult was this course in comparison to your other general education courses?
 A. more difficult (35%) C. less difficult (24%)
 B. about the same (41%)

8. Results from Costume Design Course Adjudication

Adjudication Results for Costume Design (Theatre 309) in Spring 2017																								
	#1		#2		#3		#4		#5		#6		#7		#8									
Strength of Concept	4.50	5.00	4.75	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	4.75	3.50	5.00	4.25	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.50	5.00	4.75		
Execution of Concept	4.50	5.00	4.75	4.50	5.00	4.75	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.50	4.00	3.75	4.50	5.00	4.75		
Quality of Design	4.00	5.00	4.50	3.50	5.00	4.25	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	4.50	4.00	4.25		
Support Materials	4.50	5.00	4.75	4.50	5.00	4.75	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.50	5.00	4.25	5.00	5.00	3.50	5.00	4.25	4.50	5.00	4.75		
Display	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	4.75	5.00	4.00	4.50	4.50	5.00	4.75	2.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.50
Communication of Ideas	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.50	5.00	4.75	5.00	4.00	4.50	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.00	4.25	
Completion of Work	3.50	5.00	4.25	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.50	4.00	4.25	
Preparedness	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	4.50	4.00	4.25	
Total			36.00			37.00			39.00			38.50			36.00			39.75			29.50		34.75	
Overall Average			36.31																					

Students were given scores in eight areas--one score from the instructor and one score from an outside adjudicator. Each area had a possible five (5) points for a possible total of forty (40) points. The two scores were averaged together and then those averages were totaled for each student.