

*Institutional Effectiveness Report
Academic Year 2010-2011
Department of Fine Arts: Theatre*

*D. Keith Best
Professor of Theatre*

*Lawrence Anderson
Chair, Department of Fine Arts*

Spring 2011

Mission and Goals

Department of Fine Arts

The Department of Fine Arts offers major programs in art education, theatre arts, and visual arts. Minors are offered music, theatre arts, visual arts, and art history. Collaterals are offered in music, theatre arts, and visual arts. Introductory courses in art and theatre are offered for nonmajors. All Francis Marion University students may pursue the introductory course in music or the applied lessons in piano and voice.

Students majoring in art education, theatre arts, and visual arts combine general education courses with lecture courses in art education, art or theatre history, and upper-level courses emphasizing studio/performance. Theatre arts majors may specialize in performance areas or design and technical production areas. Visual arts majors may specialize in ceramics, graphic design, painting, or photography. These major programs serve as ends in themselves as well as preparation for graduate study, related careers, and the teaching of art.

University Theatre (a co-curricular activity of the theatre arts program)

To produce wide and varied selections of challenging dramatic literature that is educationally beneficial to both student participants and observers.

Core Goal Statements

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of theatre concepts, theories, organization and production process.
2. Students will expand communication skills, collaborative problem-solving, and modes of self expression through the production process.
3. Students will demonstrate skills, knowledge and vocabulary usage to form aesthetic judgments of/within the production process.
4. Theatre arts majors will acquire an understanding of the relevance, implications and consequences of theatre to its social, cultural and historical context.
5. The theatre arts program will develop theatre arts students and provide faculty who exhibit a professional disposition in theatre art analysis, production process and practices.
6. Students, especially those bound for graduate or professional school, will acquire and demonstrate sufficient skills and knowledge in advanced areas of study to qualify for admission into such programs.
7. Theatre arts students and faculty will collaboratively serve the community and region by producing plays open to the general public.

8. Theatre arts faculty will stay up to date on the latest issues and trends in the discipline, and contribute to the total body of knowledge through applied research and presentation of theatrical stage plays.

Assessment Activities

1. Locally developed exit exam.

Two theatre students graduated in the past academic year. Neither of them took the final exit exam.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mean Core</u>	<u>Mean Specialty</u>
2011	N/A	N/A
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.

It should be noted that the exit exam was redone for the 2008-2009 year by the current faculty. As a result, 2009 and 2010 may show inconsistent figures as the student may not have taken the course with the instructor who created the exit exam questions for that course. Also, we have had three different instructors in the Costume Crafts course, so testing in that area is difficult.

2. Exit interviews.

None of the graduating theatre students have taken part in an exit interview as of this report.

3. Portfolio reviews.

The graduating seniors were not design students.

4. Juried acting performances.

This theatre arts assessment process was not applicable this academic year. The next assessment in this area is scheduled for April 2012.

5. Juried direction of one-act plays.

Two external adjudicators, both of who have terminal degrees and more than 20 years experience directing and teaching, were brought in and adjudicated the student directed one acts in the following areas

Stage Pictures	Understanding the Script
Movement and Blocking	Use of Space
Choice of Script	Working with Actors

Each area was ranked on a scale from 1 – 7 with 1 being considered the lower scoring, etc.

In total scoring, the average for the class in each area was as follows:

Stage Pictures – 77%	Understanding the Script – 68%
Movement – 73%	Use of Space – 68%
Choice of Script – 61%	Working with Actors – 75%

The response to the four students was a numeric response on a scale of 1-7 with 7 being the best score. Each student could have attained a maximum of 84 points. The four students scored as follows:

76 (90%)
73 (87%)
66 (79%)
58 (69%)

Consistently through the past 5 adjudications, the adjudicators have marked “choice of script” and “understanding of the script” as the lowest scoring area. The department is addressing these issues by a renumbering of the Script Analysis course so that theatre students will hopefully take the course earlier in their college careers. Class projects are being designed to address other issues in the “stage pictures” and “movement/blocking” areas.

6. External examiners (NAST).

In April 1997 Francis Marion University and the theatre arts program received full institutional accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). As required by NAST, to maintain full university accreditation, the theatre arts program engaged in "self-study" renewal procedures culminating with an on-site visitation by at two person team during the period of October 10-12, 2004. The results were tabulated and analyzed.

7. Annual faculty reports.

The theatre arts faculty completed and submitted annual reports to the chair on or before March 30, 2011. Each faculty member completed a written assessment of activities and participated in an oral discussion thereof during the period of April 16-May 15, 2011.

One theatre faculty member was re-elected to serve as Chair of the Faculty for 2011-2012. Another was elected to serve as Secretary.

One theatre faculty member currently serves as a past President of the Southeastern Theatre Conference. Another faculty member chairs a committee for that organization and all faculty members attended the annual conference.

One theatre faculty member was elected to serve as Treasurer for the South Carolina Theatre Association.

Three faculty members received QEP funds to take students to conferences, arts festivals, and New York to experience Broadway.

A review of the theatre arts annual faculty reports indicates that all four (100%) meet or exceed all benchmarks as prescribed. A review of these reports shows that, via teaching, scholarship/creative activity and service, the theatre arts faculty is maintaining a professional disposition and overall professional atmosphere that is beneficial to student learning, the production process and the University as a whole (benchmark 100%).

Beyond that, the theatre arts faculty is highly involved in discipline related activities locally, statewide and regionally. Activities include but are not limited to: the South Carolina Theatre Association; the Southeastern Theatre Conference; serving on various boards, workshop presentations, delivering papers, committee service as well as serving as guest artists; professional acting or design; and consulting on various projects.

Finally, all five theatre arts faculty members serve the university or this degree program through service on university or departmental committees or administrative assignments.

8. Archival records - audience attendance records.

The University Theatre completed a three show mainstage season in April 2010. Audience attendance records were tabulated and analyzed.

A review of the attendance records for the three University Theatre productions (2009-2010) indicates that play 1 (*Buried Child*) played to approximately 745 attendees out of a possible 1065, or 70 % capacity for run of show. Play 2 (*Eleemosynary*) played to approximately 635 attendees out of a possible 1065, or 60 % capacity for run of show. Play 3 (*Greater Tuna*) played to approximately 861 attendees out of a possible 1065, or 81 % capacity for run of show. Hence, the University Theatre productions this

season played, on average, to 73% capacity. Evaluation of these statistics indicates a slight decrease from last season and slightly lower than our benchmark (75%).

<u>Season</u>	<u>Show #1</u>	<u>Show #2</u>	<u>Show #3</u>	<u>Season Avg.</u>
2010-2011	66%	65%	***	65.5%
2009-2010	70%	60%	81%	73.2%
**2008-2009	90%		70%	80.0%
**2007-2008	*100+ %		72 %	86.0 %
2006-2007	88 %	58 %	74 %	73.3 %
2005-2006	*100+ %	*100+ %	47 %	84.3 %
†2004-2005	72 %	47 %	58 %	59.0 %
2003-2004	46 %	‡84 %	38 %	55.5 %
2002-2003	58 %	39 %	34 %	43.0 %
2001-2002	59 %	43 %	●35 %	45.6 %
2000-2001	◎68 %	35 %	°37 %	46.8 %

* In addition to the sold-out performances, one night of dress rehearsal was open to students.

** Reduced number of performances (3 to 2).

***The third show was two one-acts for children that was also part of our Arts International Festival. Festival seating was used and no tickets were required.

†Reduced number of performances (4 to 3).

‡Reduced seating capacity (from normal 355 down to 335).

●Increase number of performances (4 to 5) substituting 2 Art's Alive! matinee performances for Saturday evening's performance.

◎Reduced seating capacity for "thrust" production.

°Increased number of performances (4 to 7), including Saturday morning "children only" matinee.

The benchmark for this area of assessment is a season average of 75% capacity.

Additionally, all five (100%) of the theatre arts faculty were involved in at least one production as a producer, director, designer, actor or dramaturge.

A closer examination of audience demographics indicates:

	FMU Students	Adults/ Community	Faculty/ Staff	Cast
Show #1	79%	3%	7%	11%
Show #2	87%	4%	3%	6%
Show #3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Season Total	83%	3.5%	5%	8.5%

Analysis of these statistics indicates that the majority of the University Theatre's audience is from the FMU student body (our primary target audience). Additional study of these statistics shows a very limited attendance by the surrounding and academic communities (a growing concern).

9 Year Attendance Totals:

Season	Total Attendees
2010-2011	****2100
2009-2010	2339
2008-2009	***1690
2007-2008	**1835+
2006-2007	2280
2005-2006	*2630+
2004-2005	1877
2003-2004	2317
2002-2003	1858

****One of three productions was well attended, but had no official house counts. 2100 is an estimate.

***Only two productions occurred in this year. This figure is approximate as exact numbers were not available at the time this report was written.

** Only two productions occurred in this year (rather than three) and one night of dress rehearsal was open to students

* In addition to scheduled performances, four nights of dress rehearsals were open to students.

9. Annual alumni survey.

The Francis Marion University office of alumni affairs has, to date, received no surveys related to theatre arts. Beyond that, the theatre arts locally developed survey is currently being redesigned so that it might be offered in an online format. Some anecdotal evidence is available from the large number of alumni who stay in touch with current faculty.

10. General Education survey.

This year, the theatre program used a survey in its Theatre Appreciation courses in an attempt to accumulate data for General Education assessment. This year was the second time the survey was given, and only one class completed the survey. The questionnaire that was used follows.

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS SHEET.
PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING BY CIRCLING THE BEST ANSWER.

1. What grade do you expect in this course?
A B+ B C+ C D+ D F I have no idea.
2. I am _____ to see a theatre production on campus as a result of taking this course.
A. more likely B. neither more or less likely C. less likely
3. I feel I understand the theatrical process _____ I did before taking this course.
A. much better than B. about the same as C. much less than
4. I feel it will be _____ to enjoy the experience of watching a play now that I've taken this course.
A. easier B. more difficult C. no easier or more difficult
5. I feel I have a(n) _____ understanding of the theatrical process as a result of this course.
A. above average B. basic C. less than basic
6. I feel I am _____ of reading a play for its production possibilities as a result of this course.
A. more capable B. just as capable as before this course C. less capable
7. I am _____ to pay to see a theatre production off campus as a result of taking this course.
A. more likely B. neither more nor less likely C. less likely
8. How many productions had you seen prior to taking this course?
A. 0 B. 1-3 C. 4-10 D. More than 10
9. How many productions did you see during this semester?
A. 0 B. 1 C. 2 D. 3 or more
10. Did you participate in plays before this course?
A. No. Never. C. Yes. A few times.
B. Yes. Once. D. Yes. A lot.
11. Now that you've taken the course, how likely are you to participate in a play if the chance arises?
A. Very likely. C. Not very likely.

B. Maybe.	D. Definitely not.
12. How difficult was this course in comparison to your other general education courses?	
A. more difficult	C. less difficult
B. about the same	

The above survey was given to 25 students in Spring 2011. This was one section (under one instructor) of about ten sections taught during the academic year. The results are included below.

1. What grade do you expect in this course?
A (4%) B+ (12%) B (12%) C+ (20%) C (24%) D+ (8%)
D (8%) 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 (28%) B. neither more or less likely (60%) C. less likely (12%)
3. I feel I understand the theatrical process _____ I did before taking this course.
A. much better than (48%) B. about the same as (48%) C. much less than (4%)
4. I feel it will be _____ to enjoy the experience of watching a play now that I've taken this course.
A. easier (72%) B. more difficult (0%) C. neither easier nor more difficult (28%)
5. I feel I have a(n) _____ understanding of the theatrical process as a result of this course.
A. above average (20%) B. basic (72%) C. less than basic (8%)
6. I feel I am _____ of reading a play for its production possibilities as a result of this course.
A. more capable (48%) B. just as capable as before this course (40%)
C. less capable (12%)
7. I am _____ to pay to see a theatre production off campus as a result of taking this course.
A. more likely (32%) B. neither more nor less likely (40%) C. less likely (24%)
8. How many productions had you seen prior to taking this course?
A. 0 (16%) B. 1-3 (32%) C. 4-10 (44%) D. More than 10 (8%)
9. How many productions did you see during this semester?
A. 0 (4%) B. 1 (0%) C. 2 (56%) D. 3 or more (40%)
10. Did you participate in plays before this course?
A. No. Never. (48%) C. Yes. A few times. (32%)
B. Yes. Once. (16%) D. Yes. A lot. (4%)

11. Now that you've taken the course, how likely are you to participate in a play if the chance arises?

A. Very likely. (8%)

C. Not very likely. (24%)

B. Maybe. (52%)

D. Definitely not. (16%)

12. How difficult was this course in comparison to your other general education courses?

A. more difficult (60%)

C. less difficult (8%)

B. about the same (32%)

Given this was only the third time to include an evaluation instrument like the one above, we have no benchmarks in place. We will revisit this information in the next year, possibly revise the form, and establish some benchmarks.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

Issues of Concern	Actions Taken
<p style="text-align: center;">2006-2011</p> <p>The policy and cycle of awarding scholarships. (A concern expressed by NAST [National Association of Schools of Theatre] during 2006 visit.)</p>	<p>This year faculty did visit high school events in an attempt to use scholarship money more effectively as a recruitment tool. The primary difficulty seems to be in the disappearance of theatre programs from secondary programs in the region. The faculty is working with admissions to determine more aggressive recruiting efforts that target interested students.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2006-2011</p> <p>The over-use of the HFAC Theatre and the "lack of additional instructional space". (A concern expressed by NAST [National Association of Schools of Theatre] during 2006 visit.)</p>	<p>The new Performing Arts Center has opened and has some additional space for Music Technology courses. However, space is still limited for theatre instruction. We will be performing one show in the new Center, but the Fine Arts Center is the primary rehearsal space for that show.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2006-2011</p> <p>Lack of publicity</p>	<p>Continual efforts are being made to improve publicity via local media and the University's Community Relations Office. In the past year, though, publicity has improved dramatically in local newspapers. The plan this year was to create a brochure to be used for a departmental mailing. A small brochure was created but severe cuts in state funds reduced the amount of money that was available for publicity items.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2006-2011</p> <p>Alumni Data</p>	<p>Theatre arts faculty will continue to revise and further develop the current theatre arts alumni survey to more accurately gather needed information that will facilitate strengthening of the program and assisting current students upon graduation. We hope to place the survey online in the next academic year so that alumni visiting our website will have easier access to the survey.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2007-ongoing</p> <p>Recruitment and Scholarships</p>	<p>Our incoming theatre majors is the largest incoming group we've experienced in several years. We hope to continue putting forth effort into the recruitment areas so that we see our numbers continue to grow. Theatre faculty are currently in discussion about fundraising for theatre scholarships.</p> <p>Obviously, these issues will be ongoing.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2006-2008</p> <p>Lack of real world experience</p>	<p>Thanks to financial incentive from the department and a QEP grant, the faculty was able to take students to the Southeastern Theatre Conference in 2009 and March 2010. The response</p>

	<p>from students was extremely positive and an increased understanding of the professional world was apparent. The plan is to continue to offer incentives to students so that they begin to experience and understand the professional world as early as possible in their education.</p>
<p>2005-2011 Need for improvement in movement skills among actors.</p>	<p>Faculty continue to address these problems in all performance classes.</p>