

Departmental Assessment Meeting: Report THEATRE ARTS AND DANCE DEPARTMENT
Please fill out this report based on your department's conversation and return via e-mail to Megan Leonard or Sasha Pfau by March 31, 2017.

Summary of past decisions

Please summarize up to three departmental changes made since the last HLC visit (08-09) the impetus for those changes and any changes to information gathering about student development.

- Senior Written and Oral Manifesto.

Assigned Faculty and Staff work with each student on an individual basis while creating the written portion. Mentoring happens through a series meetings for discussion on ideas, goals, and revising the document. All students orally present their manifesto to the faculty and to an invited student audience. One faculty member mentors each student on condensing the full length written manifesto into a five minute oral presentation. The impetus for this change came about due to the recognition of students needing a more specific understanding on the challenge of self-expression, ownership of ideas and reflecting on one's meaning of theatre and writing process.

- The Contemporary American Theatre Project

Play selection for this production is now scaled down tremendously. Instead of having students read and submit plays for production, Faculty suggest three plays that are able to be produced, cast and develop artistically in all areas of production for the Senior Seminar. This has allowed department faculty and staff to better mentor students on the production process, create a positive collaborative community for students, and ultimately serve our audiences with engaging productions. Seminar students begin meeting once a week with the Seminar Convener in the fall semester once a week.

- Dance Production

Student choreographers now implement an artistic statement as a tool for discernment and this has allowed a deeper aesthetic connection for students when writing choreography proposals and developing movement vocabulary. Student costume and lighting designers now use a specific collaborative process with faculty/staff and student choreographers allowing for more time to mentor students in the creative process. Department resources needed to be used in a more collaborative and effective way due to the production schedule and develop students into stronger, positive collaborators and leaders.

- Gathering Student Development Information

While mentoring students in writing manifestos and preparing for the oral presentation, much information is gathered through discussion on an individual basis with faculty. Faculty then share information gathered about each student. Further faculty discussion transpires to ensure that this process continues to benefit all goals of the manifesto.

Student assessment meetings continue to be held with rising juniors and seniors at the end of the spring semester. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss and reflect upon student progress in

the department, personal goals in course and production work, graduation requirements, productions off campus, internships and overall student well-being.

Each course syllabus includes department and Odyssey goals when pertaining to the course. Assessment in all courses continues to happen through the following: projects, demonstrations, presentations (all in design or performance), exams (written and movement), raw and creative research for papers and production work, student reflection, peer and professor response.

Looking forward

Please summarize your department's focus for student development and your evaluation methods.

- Focus for Student Development

The department will continue to analyze the methods/actions described above and move forward with any new aspects in any course or production developmental and/or creative process.

Student involvement for Majors and Non-Majors is a key area of focus for student development. Students who thoroughly develop and progress from the experiences offered by the current Theatre Arts and Dance curriculum are involved, prepared, collaborate effectively, and are a part of the overall community of the department. Students must understand the in depth preparation needed for course work and then how this work transfers over to and supports all rehearsals and performances through the engaged experiences and knowledge gained in class; understanding this work is a layering of step by steps in all areas.

- Evaluation Methods

The department will focus on developing Catalog language regarding the expectations of Majors and Minors in Theatre Arts and Dance. Models and language from other liberal arts institutions will be researched. Season selection will work on a transparent timeline in which student need and artistic development is considered and highly valued while taking under heavy consideration of exactly what constitutes a Main Stage Show given current facilities and resources. Specific departments will be informed when a production's concepts/themes are relatable and teachable for course work in hopes of becoming components in syllabi. Department web site and Facebook pages will continue to be up dated with all imperative information in a more deliberate manner. We acknowledge that we need to promote and share information about our season with our audiences.

The current Theatre Arts and Dance Student Handbook will be updated with language developed for the Catalog along with a list of *expected* duties within the department. A given outline will suggest how any student can easily achieve any of these expectations by planning ahead in personal, academic, sports and campus community scheduling.

Theatre Arts and Dance Department's chapter of Alpha Psi Omega is becoming active for students who are Majors or Non-Majors. Students must apply for membership and be initiated. Initiations happen after students have accrued a certain number of points through the society's point system which requires specific involvement in department projects, productions and courses.

Department discussion focused on the contents above to promote open dialogue among faculty, staff and students while bringing a clear focus on the commitment needed from students and the campus community. We wish to emphasize that theatre and dance are about collaboration, which is the most important skill our students learn from us.

Achieving departmental goals for students

Please explain how your departmental curriculum achieves your student learning goals, being sure to include the Capstone. Feel free to attach a curricular map or other supporting documents. Summarize the ways your department provides guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

- Theatre Arts and Dance curriculum is structured in a way that each course offering achieves department learning goals and builds student achievement. Specific goals may be emphasized more than others in courses and production work but all are implemented in various pedagogical methods including the Capstone which brings all learning goals to a climax in student cognizance and demonstration. A copy of the student letter received by seniors at the end of their junior year is included.
- Students are guided in course work to research effectively through historical, social and cultural analysis of various forms of literature (plays, articles, texts), visual resources (live performance, videos, photos, visual art) and mediums (paints, woods, metals, fabrics). All research assignments specify questions to be answered, problems to be solved or creative techniques to be mastered. Critical thinking and analysis processes support the creative process. Student dramaturgs for productions are guided by faculty, staff, director and designers to research genre, period, language, music, historical influences, locations, movement, costume/scenic design and anything the production needs to be produced by the demands of the script. Student choreographers research movement styles, social and cultural influences on content and technique, music, literature, visual art, film, and live performances. All performance and design work depend heavily upon research using the various resources mentioned above.
- Assessment of research lies within written papers of various topics, short answer and essay questions on exams, presentations in production designs, scenic and costumes and make-up designs, script analysis, movement vocabulary (content, form, technique, projection), performances in acting/voice and dance both in the classroom and stage production.

Your department's role in achieving the college's shared goals for students

Please explain how your departmental learning goals contribute to the Vision for Student Learning

Theatre Arts and Dance learning goals support the Vision for Student Learning in all areas through all courses, productions and ensemble work in the curriculum because of the diversity, inclusion, and engaged experiences students are offered. Working side by side with faculty committed to ongoing artistic development, students engage in coursework aimed at developing the skills and knowledge to keep theatre and dance as sustainable and ever-evolving mediums. We celebrate performance as an enduring means of embodied inquiry into the human condition. Goals are included.