

Theatre & Dance Area Assessment Plan

I. Goals

Mission. The Theatre & Dance Area of the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts exists to offer undergraduate students the educational experiences and environments that promote the complete development of each artist/scholar. We value theatre as a rich, exciting and demanding collaborative art, seeking to achieve artistic excellence in studio and production work. We pursue these goals in a liberal arts setting and prepare students for a lifetime of continuous learning, which may include further specialization at the graduate level, application in other disciplines or entry into the professional world.

Our Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) degree programs are a unique program of specialized study within a liberal arts context. The curriculum provides a greater depth of training in the more specialized areas of acting or design. Our Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree programs are a comprehensive theatrical degree designed to incorporate specific disciplines in a broader educational context.

At the completion of the major program:

1. Students will be able to comprehend and articulate in both oral and written forms the history, theories, and factual information concerning their area of concentration. They should be well-informed and have a global view of their field while analyzing, comparing, and contrasting the similarities of many cultures and historical periods.
2. Students will be able to comprehend and practice the learned knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their areas of concentration.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate through some form of performance or presentation that they have mastered the learned skills.
4. Students will emerge as curious, objective, critical thinkers with the necessary skills to succeed in an audition and/or professional interview situation.

II. Methodology for Measuring the Attainment of Educational Goals

A. Direct Measures

1. Entry-level assessment; pre-requisites and advising

All freshman declaring a major in theatre are advised at threshold. We adhere to pre-requisites for our courses to ensure that students have the skills necessary to succeed in introductory and upper-level courses.

2. Audition/Portfolio review; throughout student matriculation

At threshold, some students are prepared to present an audition or portfolio. At the conclusion of the freshman year all students are prepared to present an audition or portfolio. Audition and portfolio presentation are required for all students for each of the reviews conducted.

3. Advising

Advising. All majors are advised every semester before registration to ensure that a faculty member regularly assesses the progress of each student. When students are advised, when they evaluate their courses and instructors, when they participate in area co-curricular production activities, when their work is reviewed prior to the area's selection of its annual award for excellence, and scholarships-- each of these occasions provides information that the area uses to assess its program.

4. Course assessment tools

a. Co-curricular Production Season.

The processes of preparation, execution, and performance of plays in our co-curricular production seasons is the strongest measure of student progress in relation to the program goals. As students progress through the course of study and gain experience in co-curricular activities, more is expected from their contributions in co-curricular production activities and responsibilities increase.

Objectives assessed: All program goals.

b. Freshman Core.

The area strictly adheres to the use of a Freshman Core of theatre courses; THTR-T120 Acting I; T150 Play Structure and Analysis, T225 Stagecraft, T228 Design for the Theatre, and T230 Stage Costuming. These courses are completed in the first year of study prior to formal acceptance into the program of study.

Objectives assessed: The courses provide the student a foundation of experience related to all of the program goals; some experience studying, discussing, and practice with all major aspects of theatre.

c. Mid-course Core.

Enrollment focus in major courses related to their concentration.

Objectives assessed: These courses provide feedback on student development related to program goals 2 and 3.

d. Advanced Core.

In the junior or senior year all majors must take THTR-T470 AND T471 History of the Theatre 1 and 2, T483 Topics in Theatre and Drama.

Objectives assessed: These courses provide feedback on student progress related to program goals 1 and 4.

5. Annual Reviews for all majors: Audition presentation and interviews for students with a performance concentration; Portfolio presentation and interviews for students with a design/technology concentration.

Audition. At the conclusion of the freshman year all students with a concentration in performance are required to prepare and present a prepared audition for casting consideration in the co-curricular production season. All students applying for scholarship consideration must present a prepared audition and participate in an interview. BFA students must prepare and present an audition at the conclusion of each semester of their matriculation in that degree program. The objective of the preparation and presentation of two contrasting monologues in all of these contexts is the accumulation of a range of material and the experiences presenting the material for future activities related to theatre.

Portfolio. At the conclusion of the freshman year all students with a concentration in design/technology must present evidence of projects undertaken over the course of the year in course-work and in co-curricular production activities. These materials form the foundation of the portfolio for subsequent reviews. The objective of the portfolio is to provide the student with the awareness that they must collect and maintain a record of their activities through the program. The materials of the portfolio are aimed at helping the student achieve a useful perspective on their work and to provide insights to the processes they have utilized to achieve various course and co-curricular products. The portfolio is the basis for a thorough review of the student's work and achievements during his or her undergraduate career. The portfolio is reviewed at each review event. All students applying for scholarship consideration must present a portfolio and participate in an interview.

Objectives assessed: Taken together, these reviews assess all of the program objectives, and identify aspects of the program that are currently in need of attention by the faculty.

6. End of Freshman Year; interviews

All freshman are reviewed at the conclusion of their first complete year of study. These reviews consist of interviews between the student and the Theatre and Dance faculty to discuss academic and production progress. Review is made of overall academic performance, performance in theatre classrooms and studios, and in co-curricular production activities.

Objectives assessed: Student progress related to all program objectives and appreciation of the processes of the theatre.

7. Mid-Course; Audition/Portfolio, interviews

At Mid-course, as appropriate to the concentration, each student must present an audition or a portfolio including a resume. The portfolio or audition presentation is followed by an interview/discussion of the students academic and co-curricular production activities. This review is where a students concentration within the major is formally deemed appropriate. While discussion relative to student concentrations may, and often does, occur at previous levels of review, at Mid-Course, in response to student academic progress, co-curricular production contributions, and the audition/portfolio presentation the faculty of the area and the Dean of the School of the Arts formally designate the student continuation in the concentration as unacceptable, acceptable with provisions, acceptable, or the student will be re-heard.

Objectives assessed: Student progress related to all program objectives at the mid-point of their matriculation in the program.

8. Capstone Project

In the senior year all majors prepare and present a Capstone Project. For performance concentration students the project can take one of two forms: 1) Preparation and presentation of a Senior Recital; five (5) monologues and scenes; or, 2) Preparation and presentation of a significant role in a co-curricular production. For design/technology majors the project is comprised of a significant project for a co-curricular production.

Objectives assessed: Program goals 2 and 3.

9. Exit; interviews

All students are interviewed at exit. The interview includes discussion of their accomplishments through the program of study, observations of, and suggestions about the program, and a discussion of future plans.

Objectives assessed: All program goals; emphasis on goal 4.

10. BFA Reviews, Audition/Portfolio presentation, each semester

All Bachelor of Fine Arts candidates are reviewed at the conclusion of each semester. For performers the review includes the presentation of a prepared audition. For design/technical candidates the review includes the presentation of a portfolio, appropriate to the concentration. Additionally, all B.F.A. candidates present resumes and are interviewed by the faculty.

Objectives assessed: All program goals; emphasis on goals 2 and 3.

11. Scholarship Auditions; progress assessment, each semester; Audition/Portfolio presentation, annually

All Theatre and Dance Area scholarships are talent-based. Scholarships are available to all students as awarded by the faculty of Theatre and Dance. Scholarship consideration requires audition or portfolio presentation and interview. A minimum cumulative 2.0 grade point average is required. Participation in the co-curricular production program is required. Scholarship recipients are reviewed at the conclusion of each semester to ensure fulfillment of scholarship requirements. Scholarship applicants must submit a Scholarship application. Beyond the basic information required the applicants are asked to provide a narrative describing their merit in relation to the scholarship.

Objectives assessed: All program goals; emphasis on goals 2 and 3.

12. Assessment by Students

In all courses, comments from students during the course and in course evaluations are used to modify the structure and substance of course offerings.

B. Indirect Measures

1. Senior Survey

The Area is creating a survey for students graduating in 2005-2006.

2. Alumni Survey

The Area plans to create a survey for alumni to solicit longer-term reflections on their experience at Indiana University South Bend. Initially the survey will be sent to all alumni; every three years thereafter.

C. External Measures of Student Success

1. Theatre Employment during Matriculation

Records are kept of student success in gaining employment opportunities in profession theatre during their matriculation at Indiana University South Bend.

2. Acceptance to post-graduate programs

Records are kept of acceptance to graduate schools and other post-graduate training.

3. Careers of alumni

To the extent possible, we track student employment in theatre and in theatre related fields.

III. Process for using assessment information to improve program.

The Area meets annually to discuss assessment information. Each full-time faculty member submits an assessment of their courses and co-curricular activities in January. Changes in curriculum and scheduling of classes are made in response to the discussion of assessment activities by action of the faculty. Suggestions from students about how the curriculum or assessment process might be improved are noted and action, if appropriate, is taken. The assessment plan is revised in response to changing needs.

IV. Participation of all constituencies.

All full-time members of the Area faculty participate in all levels of review. Findings and action are by consensus of the committee. Students are actively involved in the process, through their presentations and in the interviews.

V. Record keeping.

The Area Coordinator of Theatre & Dance serves as liaison to the Assessment Committee. Electronic files are kept on the Theatre & Dance Shared drive. Hard copies and video recordings are kept in the office of the Area Coordinator.