Department: Theatre and Dance: BA in Theatre
Assessment Coordinator: Deb Currier

Departmental Mission: The faculty and staff of the Theatre and Dance Department are committed to a liberal arts approach to performing arts education while maintaining a balance of both academic and practical approaches to the arts of theatre and dance. We believe strongly in the value of academic rigor, which in turn supports and maintains productions and projects of the highest standards. We promote a global, diverse and collaborative view of performing arts education, and strive to train artistic leaders in their chosen disciplines who will further contribute to the craft.

Department Student Learning Outcomes:

Theatre Learning Outcomes: The following outcomes are central to the undergraduate degree in theatre arts:

1. Knowledge of major works of dramatic literature representative of diverse cultures
2. Knowledge of the history of theatrical production – its styles, conventions and social context – from the ancients to the present day
3. Knowledge and application of the means by which theatrical production is realized
4. Knowledge of the role of theatre in shaping our past, present and future

Theatre Program Objectives: In addition to the goals of the content knowledge areas, students completing the degree in theatre arts should be able to:

5. Analyze and interpret dramatic literature and performance from the standpoint of designer, performer, director, playwright or critic
6. Use the tools and technology basic to theatrical production safely and efficiently
7. Function effectively as a member of a collaborative team in the preparation and realization of a public performance

GUR Student Learning Outcomes - HUM GURs offered by Theatre:

THTR 101, THTR 201, THTR 202, THR 380, 382, 383:
Competency 1: Analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral, written, and visual forms – all THTR GUR courses engage this competency and range from capstone 4: “exceeds standard” to milestone 2
Competency #2: Analyze and interpret information from varied sources, including print and visual media- all THTR GUR courses engage this competency and are at Capstone 4: exceeds standard
Competency #4: Identify and Analyze Complex Problems – Student group film projects in 201; Student group Asian theatre and “Isms” projects in 380 and 382; milestone 3: meets standard
Competency #5: Apply tools of technology, with an understanding of their uses and limitations – Student group film projects in 201; group project multi-media presentations in 380 and 383; milestone 3: meets standard
Competency #6: Explore, imagine, and create –this is what we do in every class taught, not just GURs; Capstone 4: exceeds standard
Competency #8: Understand and evaluate assumptions, values, and beliefs in context of diverse local, national and global communities – THTR 380, 381 and 383 Theatre and Culture series- global, intercultural approach; milestone 2
Competency #9: Work collaboratively and manage projects to effective completion – 201, 380, 382 all group projects address this; Exceeds capstone (4)
Competency #10: Reflect on one’s own work and on the ethical dimensions of academic pursuits – T 380, 381 and 383 reflection assignments meet the milestone standard (3)
Competency #11: Understand and assess the impacts of interactions among the individual, society, and the environment – 202, 380, 381, 382 meet milestone (2)

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed This Year

SLO 1: Knowledge of major works of dramatic literature representative of diverse cultures
SLO 2: Knowledge of the history of theatrical production – its styles, conventions and social context – from the ancients to the present day
PO 5: Analyze and interpret dramatic literature and performance from the standpoint of designer, performer, director, playwright or critic
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>SLO/POs Assessed</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabi, course lectures, exams, student projects and research papers from core theatre major courses</td>
<td>SLO 1</td>
<td>Faculty syllabi are annually submitted for review. SLOs and POs addressed in each individual course are required to be listed in each course syllabus. Individual faculty then report out regarding meeting or not meeting those outcomes and objectives.</td>
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<td>Western Theatre Ambassadors Tour (AKA “Brit Tour”); elective Multicultural Outreach Tour (THTR 353, 354)</td>
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<td>Summaries of student course performance, relative to SLOs 1 and 2, were reported by faculty teaching core major courses as well as elective courses in the major.</td>
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<td>Original Production of “Corktown,” with guest playwright in residence (winter/spring 2014)</td>
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<td>Generally, individual courses are meeting these learning objectives to varying degrees.</td>
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<td>Syllabi, course lectures, exams, student projects and research papers from THTR 353, 354, 380, 381, 382,383, 420, 428 Departmental main season productions (actualized): THTR 256, 356, 255, 355, 455; electives Western Theatre Ambassadors Tour (AKA “Brit Tour”); elective Multicultural Outreach Tour (THTR 353, 354); elective</td>
<td>SLOs 1, 2 PO 5</td>
<td>The production of “Corktown” was a commissioned work to give students the opportunity to work with a professional playwright on an original work dealing with the gentrification of Detroit and the racial issues that still confront the Detroit community. The play was specifically commissioned for this year to address SLO 1.</td>
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<td>THTR 380, 381, 382, 360, 361, 460, 461; Capstone Senior Projects: THTR 496</td>
<td>PO 5</td>
<td>Faculty syllabi are annually submitted for review. SLOs and POs addressed in each individual course are required to be listed in each course syllabus. Individual faculty then report out regarding meeting or not meeting those outcomes and objectives.</td>
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<td>Summaries of student course performance, relative to POs 1 and 2 were reported by faculty teaching upper-division, core major courses (some of which are also GURs). Generally, individual courses are meeting these program outcomes to varying degrees. Core curriculum is dedicated to these outcomes.</td>
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<td>Departmental productions were assessed by faculty designers and directors in relation to SLO 5 and are meeting those program objectives quite effectively.</td>
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<td>Touring projects were focused on in specific and unique relation to SLO 5 and are meeting the program objective quite effectively.</td>
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<td>Group projects embedded in courses used for assessment measures demonstrate the highest level of skills acquisition in relation to analyzing and interpreting dramatic literature and performance from the standpoint of designer, performer, director, playwright or critic. Senior projects were examined overall for demonstrating departmental SLOs and POs</td>
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**Changes/Kudos to us based on assessment findings:**

Overall: The individual courses which make up the core curriculum as a whole address SLOs 1 and 2 and PO 5 fairly thoroughly. However, the Senior Project capstone/senior exit survey still needs to be revisited. The Senior Exit Survey did not even happen this last year, to my knowledge. We have a brand new chair and I do not think she felt it was effective (?). The senior project class (THTR 496) is a huge problem but without faculty support (meaning, no support for looking at it because it will be work), the course review and overhaul simply will not happen. This finding has been in every assessment document since 2008, but without senior faculty support/agreement/collaboration, I cannot move that mountain.
Findings in relation to SLO 1: The department has taken the diversity issues very seriously this year, and made a commitment in the spring of 2013 that every performing season (5 shows) will have at least one production (20% of the season) written by a playwright representative of a non-white, non-Eurocentric culture and examining issues relating to that culture. This year the goal was accomplished with the production of “Corktown.”

The department also offered three different dramatic literature courses focused on cultures other than white, Eurocentric, hetero-normative cultures: African American Playwrights, Asian American Playwrights and Gay and Lesbian Playwrights. There has been concerted effort both within the coursework as well as in productions (which are publicly viewed) to enhance SLO 1.

Recommendations:
- Continue to ensure that at least 1 out of our 5 season productions is dedicated to a play representative of diversity issues.
- Continue to offer at least 1 dramatic literature class focusing on non-Western playwrights
- Continue to support the annual Multicultural Outreach Tour as a CFPA outreach program which focuses on children’s literature from diverse cultures.

Findings in relation to SLO 2: The three-quarter Theatre History series remain a cornerstone of the student learning objectives and program goals. It is a comprehensive series that covers the development of theatre from the ancients to present day, with a focus on the cultural aspects of each time period which shaped the theatrical practices of each era. The individual course size, however, has become cumbersome and highly ineffectual, as each level of the series (THTR 380, 381 and 382) is only offered once per year and now averages 60 students per section. This has severely hampered the course design and delivery, as it is meant to be an upper-division course integrating experiential projects, discussion and peer review. The course sizes as they are now do not facilitate that.

The Costume history course, THTR 383, is a very effective elective which gives an historical overview of theatrical practice as it relates specifically to the cultures of the eras and the resulting clothing styles.

Recommendations:
- Create a second section of the theatre history series, reducing each section to a manageable size.
- Redesign the courses to implement more technology and course management systems (theatre history professor attended Course redesign workshop June 2014).

Findings in relation to PO 5: Every aspect of the department is geared toward PO 5, from coursework to group projects to productions. The faculty and staff of the department demonstrate a high level of investment in the students’ abilities to “analyze and interpret dramatic literature and performance from the standpoint of designer, performer, director, playwright or critic.” The individual coursework within the concentrations for the BA in theatre are designed to highlight one or more of the standpoints listed, and the core curriculum keep this program outcome as its compass in curriculum development.

In regards to a culminating demonstration of the acquisition of these skills mentioned in PO 5, the department is struggling with facilitating the non-core coursework related capstone projects. Students are seeking more and more opportunities to generate their own work demonstrating skills acquisition in their concentration (ie: designer, playwright, performer, dramaturg/critic) by doing a production-based senior project. This has become an untenable situation in that there is simply not enough resource as far as space and time to allow for the senior project capstone (THTR 496) to continue to be administered in a non-uniform way by individual professors. A THTR 496 project can range from a 3-page summary of a single performance in a show to a full-scale musical production, depending on the student proposal and the expectations of their project advisor. This situation makes it almost impossible to assess PO 5, as the productions vary wildly in quality, skill-level and student involvement.

Recommendation:
- Dedicate faculty time and focus to redesigning the THTR 496 capstone project with a unified vision and goals for all students.
- Repeat recommendation from 2013 assessment: enact a new system of approving student use of space for non-class projects (this will in turn have an effect on the number of them each quarter).
- Repeat recommendation from 2013 assessment: Students who are participating in/enrolled in a mains season, faculty-directed show will need departmental permission to participate in any student production projects running concurrently with the main season production.