Department of Performing & Visual Arts Theatre Program Assessment Plan

Bachelor of Arts in Theatre

Mission Statement

The theatre program at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville is dedicated to the highest quality instruction in curricula emphasizing theatre history, literature, criticism, stagecraft, design, acting and directing. The Bachelor of Arts in Theatre curriculum is constructed to provide students with the necessary foundation and specialized knowledge and skills needed for the analysis, understanding and implementation of all aspects of theatrical production. The degree is designed to serve students pursuing a career in technical theatre or performance as well as those pursuing graduate level study in the field. Majors may also seek theatre certification through the Wisconsin Department of Education.

Goals for Program Graduates

1. Graduates will demonstrate a conceptual understanding of theatre history, theory and dramatic literature, as these areas of theatre study form the foundation for all areas of theatre production.
2. Graduates will demonstrate competence in at least one area of theatre production/performance—acting, directing, choreography or scenic, lighting, costume, sound design or stage management—culminating in a senior capstone project.
3. Graduates will demonstrate competence in critical and analytical thinking skills by effectively communicating their knowledge of theatre in numbers 1 and 2 above both verbally and in writing.
4. Graduates will demonstrate skills, knowledge and competencies needed for teaching theatre to public school students (for students seeking DPI certification).

Based upon the program’s overriding goals, there are four primary course components that make up the current theatre curriculum at UWP:

1. History/Lit/Crit (Theatre History I & II, Theatre Writing & Research, Play Analysis, Seminars on Minority Theatre and Theories of Acting & Directing) HLC
2. Performance based courses (Beginning Acting, Advanced Scene Study, Classical Acting, Directing, Voice & Speech, Dance) P
3. Technical Theatre (Stagecraft, Scenic Design, Lighting Design, Scene Painting, Drafting for the Theatre, Technical Direction) TT
4. Teaching Methods in Theatre TE
Assessment Tools

The following tools are used to assess achievement of Student Learning Outcomes: (see the appendix for individual course objectives and student learning outcomes)

A. Short Answer Exams (HLC): evaluate students’ fact-based knowledge, critical, analytical and conceptual understanding of the course material.

B. Take-home Essay Exams (HLC): evaluate the students’ ability to synthesize the conceptual and fact-based ideas presented in the course in writing.

C. 8-10 Page Essay (HLC): evaluates the students ability to critically analyze a specific topic in theatre in writing. Students are expected to be able to write a cogent, persuasive argument with a clear thesis statement, a body presenting at least three major points to the argument using specific, detailed examples, ending with a concise conclusion that summarizes the main thesis statement and poses questions for further study and consideration.

D. In-class Oral Presentation and/or Leading of Class Discussion (HLC): evaluates students’ ability to clearly convey and share detailed information about a specific aspect of theatre history, literature or criticism verbally, incorporating modern media technology such as PowerPoint presentations, video and internet resources.

E. Performance of Monologues, Scenes, Songs or Dance Routines (P): evaluates students’ ability to put their development of voice, movement, staging, picturization, and acting skills into practice using text or music. Performance work includes student post-performance self-evaluation and critique and discussion of peer work.

F. Concept, Character, Textual Analysis Work (P): evaluates students’ written ability to create a world for a play, or analyze and develop a specific character through dance, singing or textual scene and monologue work.

G. Response Papers (P): evaluate students’ ability to analyze and critique theatrical productions from a specific perspective in writing. Perspectives for response papers include concept/staging, acting, vocal production and dance/movement or choreography.

H. Final Performance Project (P): evaluates students’ ability to synthesize all material and skills developed in a particular class through an acting showcase, one-act play festival or final dance routines.

I. Written Exams (TT): evaluate students’ fact-based knowledge, critical, analytical and conceptual understanding of the course material.

J. Quizzes (TT): daily class evaluation of students’ fact-based and conceptual understanding of reading assignments or previous lecture material.
K. Individual or Group Projects (TT): evaluates students’ grasp of basic functions and aesthetics of design and development and application of their functional design and construction techniques.

L. Short Research Presentations (TT): evaluate students’ ability to research a specific topic of technical theatre in depth and to verbally convey/ teach the topic clearly to peers.

M. Production hours (TT): evaluate students’ grasp of technical theatre skills through practical application on theatre program productions.

N. Senior Capstone Project (P & TT): Program majors must complete a thesis project in an area of theatre performance or production.

O. On-Site Observations (TE): Faculty from the School of Education observes students seeking DPI certification during clinical experiences in School of Education courses.

P. Content Test (TE): Students seeking DPI certification must pass the Praxis II Content Test in Theatre.

Q. On-Site Observations (TE): Faculty from the Department of Performing and Visual Arts—Theatre, the School of Education and cooperating teachers observe assess and provide constructive criticism for students seeking DPI certification during the 18 week student teaching experience.
### Assessment Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theatre Program Goals</th>
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Appendix

Samples of Individual Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

Play Analysis  THEA 2130

Student Learning Outcomes: At the conclusion of the semester, you (the student) will be able to demonstrate:

1. Define and describe through discussion and in writing the kinds of theatrical clues available in a play script, demonstrating knowledge of the concepts of plot, character, dialogue, theme, music and spectacle.

2. Describe orally and/or in writing a minimum of five ways to look for theatrical clues in a play script, demonstrating recognition of clues and their application to theatrical performance/production.

3. Discuss and describe in writing a minimum of five ways in which theatrical clues are recorded, demonstrating familiarity with script-writing conventions.

4. Analyze orally and/or in writing the process through which theatrical clues are transformed into theatrical images, demonstrating knowledge of the director's and/or designers’ approaches.

5. Explain in writing the technical issues/problems encountered by various play script styles, demonstrating knowledge of script interpretation as related to the Formalist’s approach to a close reading of the text.

6. Write a standard MLA-style paper (six to ten pages), as part of a director’s promptbook or regiebuch, identifying at least twenty clues in a specific play script describing, as well as explaining, the effect of their presence, demonstrating familiarity with their impact on translating the received text into the performance text.

7. Explain in writing at least five ways in which printed dialogue and stage directions can be translated into action/behavior and stage pictures, demonstrating knowledge of actor and/or director interpretations of a specific play script.
THEA 4630  History of Theatre and Drama

Objectives:

In this course we will study the rise and development of the western theatre and drama from its origins in Egypt and Ancient Greece to the Early Modern period. The primary objective of the course is to investigate the historical development of theatre during these eras and to read and analyze a wide range of plays. In class we will discuss how western theater has changed and developed since its origins, ending our course with the closing of the theatres in England in 1642. All aspects of the evolving theatre will be considered including playwriting, directing, acting, costuming, make-up/masks, scenery, lighting, theatrical space, machinery, special effects, management, audiences, and criticism. The focus throughout will be on the theatre as a socio-cultural institution that has helped to not only reflect its own society, but also shape civilization.
Theatre History  THEA 4730

Student Learning Outcomes: At the conclusion of the semester, you (the student) will be able to:

1. Identify and list verbally or in writing TEN playwrights (covered within the time period for this course) and at least ONE PLAY from each playwright.

2. Identify and list verbally or in writing TEN theatre practitioners (actors, designers, directors, producers, theorists) covered within the time period for this course.

3. Discuss and define in small group presentations at least ONE of the theatrical "isms" (Romanticism, Melodrama, Naturalism, Realism, Dada/Surrealism, Expressionism, Absurdism, Modernism, and Post-Modernism) covered within the time period for this course.

4. Describe in class discussion and/or writing the contributions of historically significant theatre practitioners and playwrights on the Western world's cultural tradition.

5. Identify in class discussion and/or writing the structure, themes, and historical significance of FIVE plays covered within the time period for this course.

6. Trace in writing the development of ONE specific aspect of theatre from the 19th century to the Contemporary scenes (choosing from actors and the acting process, design, directing, theatre architecture); OR
   Through writing and/or visual sketches, translate a play into THREE different theatrical "isms" covered within the time period for this course.
THE 4830  

Theater Writing and Research

Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Express their thoughts in organized, developed, clear, and audience-based prose.
2. Sustain and support a controlling idea.
3. Recognize their own strengths and weaknesses as writers.
4. Understand the research process.
5. Learn to synthesize research into a well-organized argument.
6. Be able to understand writing contexts.
7. Be able to understand the role of clear, concise writing and thoughtful, in-depth research in the field of theater.
8. Learn to properly use MLA guidelines.
Student Learning Outcomes (At the completion of the course the student will be able to):

1. Demonstrate diaphragmatic breathing and breath control, with an emphasis on releasing tension and creating a state of vocal relaxation.
2. To develop a thorough and effective vocal warm-up which is specific to the individual actor's needs and which prepares him/her to use the voice with ease, confidence and clarity.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of nonverbal communication, successfully developing a stage presence.
4. To demonstrate the range and clarity of the vocal apparatus through an understanding of the intellectual and emotional power of the voice through text.
5. To demonstrate an increased flexibility and expressiveness of the vocal instrument through the memorization and performance of two selected literary passages and a dramatic monologue.
6. List and describe the vocal organs involved in the process of articulation.
7. List and describe the elements of vocal expression, including, rate, pitch, volume, stress and resonance. In addition, express both orally and in writing, how to control these elements.
8. Transcribe the sounds of American English in to IPA.
9. Produce a Standard American stage dialect, reducing regionalisms in speech.
10. Demonstrate an understanding of the voice and articulation process through self-critique.

Produce and describe one regional and one foreign dialect.
THEA 2730  Acting I

Objectives:

1. To enhance the beginning actor’s awareness of his/her imagination.
2. To introduce the beginning actor to the foundations of acting and character building.
3. To make clear the importance of the skills of observation, concentration and listening in the art of acting.
4. To aid the beginning actor in the discovery of the body and voice as acting tools.
5. To enhance the beginning actor’s appreciation of theatre as a collaborative art form.
6. To introduce the beginning actor to basic theatre/stage terminology.
7. To introduce the beginning actor to the principles of the Stanislavski Method.
8. To explore alternative acting methods and techniques.
Acting II  Theatre 2830

Student Learning Outcomes: At the conclusion of the semester, you (the student) will be able to demonstrate:

1. Record and describe in writing, as part of a comprehensive character analysis, a personal inventory of movement and vocal patterns of three different characters.
2. Memorize and perform at least three different characters from three different theatrical sources.
3. Analyze in writing, as part of a comprehensive character analysis, the physical approaches used in developing at least three characterizations.
4. Convey vocal and physical lives of three distinct characters as performed in realistic scenes and monologues.
5. Exhibit a minimum of at least five different aspects of professional behavior using agreed-upon criteria*
6. Ability to score a script, using agreed upon textual notation.
7. Critically analyze in both a written and oral format on-stage acting exhibited by actors in at least two University productions.
8. Memorize and perform with a partner in a scene that is at least five minutes in length.
9. Convey through performance and written analysis the back story and given circumstances—world of the play—of three distinct characters.
10. Exhibit the ability through performance to make strong specific choices, to follow through on clear objectives, and to effectively talk and listen (be in the moment).
THEA 3330  Play Direction

Objectives:

• To explore the role of the director as unifier in the theatrical process.
• To define the role of the director through an examination of its historical development.
• To introduce the beginning director to the tools and techniques of directing.
• To instruct the beginning director in the basics of play analysis.
• To give the beginning director the tools and strategies necessary to communicate with actors and other members of the theatrical production team.
• To develop the beginning director’s sense of vision.
• To give the beginning director the opportunities to put the theories and techniques into practice.
THEA 1230  Stagecraft

Class Objective: Technical Theatre 1 explores the larger world of theatrical stagecraft within the context of theatre productions at UW Platteville. The creative elements of making theatre will be analyzed and evaluated through readings, lectures, demonstrations and class discussions. The objective of this course is to help you develop a fuller appreciation of the art of live theatre and how we make it.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the semester, you (the student) will be able to:

- Identify and describe the various creative elements that go into putting a play on stage.
- Identify the various backstage jobs associated with theatrical production and outline the representative job responsibilities.
- Identify and describe the technical drawings and design materials used in scenery production.
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of proper safety procedures and equipment
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the tools and processes used in scenery construction
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the tools and processes used in basic scene painting
- Identify electrical theory and practice used in Theatre.
**THEA 3250  Scene Design**

**Class Objective:** The goal of this course is to introduce the student to the basic design processes related to scenery for the theatre, including a working knowledge of the elements and principles of visual design, and the presentation of design ideas and concepts, the course also aims to familiarize the student with dramatic literature by assigning plays written from a variety of periods and countries.

**THEA 3400  Drafting for the Theatre**

**Class Objectives:**

- Precise and complete drawings, produced in a timely manner
- Attractive, reproducible drawings
- Development of problem solving skills
- Development of graphic communication skills, i.e. drawings must be understood by others.
- Ability to work skillfully using pencil medium