

*Institutional Effectiveness Report
Academic Year 2007-2008
Department of Fine Arts: Theatre*

*D. Keith Best
Professor of Theatre*

*Lawrence Anderson
Chair, Department of Fine Arts*

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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. The theatre arts exit exam was administered to one senior on April 29, 2008. This exam was completed, collected, results tabulated and analyzed. The other senior had transferred from another institution and was not given an exit exam.

The one students taking the exam fell short of the benchmarks set forth for both “core” and “specialty” knowledge. The mean "core" area score was 76.0%. The mean "specialty" score was 76.3%. The benchmark for "core" knowledge is set at 80% with "specialty" knowledge set at 90%. This indicates a considerable decrease in "core" and specialty knowledge relative to the last testing opportunity.

It should be noted that the one student being tested had taken courses with instructors other than those currently teaching some of the courses. As a result, the knowledge gained in several courses may be different and more difficult to test.

	<u>Year</u>	<u>Mean Core</u>	<u>Mean Specialty</u>
	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 also be noted that the exit exam was finally redone this year by the current faculty. As a result, the next two years will show inconsistent figures as the student may not have taken the course with the instructor who created the exit exam questions for that course.

2. Exit interviews.

The theatre arts faculty administered one senior exit interview on April 29, 2008. Each senior completed a written evaluation and participated in an oral discussion thereof. The results were tabulated and analyzed. The other graduating senior declined the interview.

A review of the theatre arts exit interview process indicates that the four participating seniors succeeded in attaining the goals and outcome indicators set forth.

The single respondent felt they had an adequate understanding of theatre concepts, theories, organization and process (benchmark 90%).

The single respondent felt they had an adequate understanding of the role of theatre in its historical, cultural and social context (benchmark 80%).

The single respondent were perceived as possessing a professional disposition by a majority of the program's faculty (benchmark 75%).

The respondent was not particularly detailed in their comments, but all comments were highly favorable.

3. Portfolio reviews.

One senior was scheduled for portfolio assessment, but declined the process due to a lack of preparation. The student expressed that she was not currently interested in design but rather technical elements.

4. Juried acting performances.

The theatre arts acting faculty administered juried acting performances to seven Theatre 405: Acting IV students on April 26, 2008. Two external adjudicators assessed the progress of these performance track theatre arts students. The results were tabulated and analyzed.

Seven students were externally adjudicated by two adjudicators. One adjudicator teaches theatre at Lexington H. S. and recently one Teacher of the Year for that district. The other is an administrator and instructor with the Governor's School of the Arts.

The students were evaluated in four areas on a scale of 1 – 7, Communication Skills, Movement, Stage Presence, and Acting Ability. The adjudicators were also to simply respond “yes or no” indicating if the student’s performance demonstrated sufficient skills for admission into a graduate or professional level program.

Each student was involved in 5 adjudicated performances: 2 classic (Dramatic and Comic), 2 modern (Dramatic and Comic), and a scene with a fellow classmate. Each performance was adjudicated in the areas mentioned in the above paragraph for a total of 70 scores (2 scores per the 35 individual performances).

40 of the 70 performances were above the 65 percentile (score of 19 or higher).

37 of the 70 performances were given a “yes” = 53%

The adjudicators felt movement was the area most needing attention.

Scoring breakdown

28	4
27	2
26	5
25	5
24	4
23	6
22	5
21	2
20	2
19	2
18	2
17	5
16	2
15	6
14	4
13	3
11	2
10	4
9	1

5. Juried direction of one-act plays.

This theatre arts assessment process was not applicable this academic year. The next assessment in this area is scheduled for April 2009.

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, 2008. Each faculty member completed a written assessment of activities and participated in an oral discussion thereof during the period of April 16-May 2, 2008.

One theatre faculty member was elected to serve as Chair of the Faculty for 2008-2009. Another was elected to serve as Secretary.

One theatre faculty member currently serves as President of the South Eastern Theatre Conference and planned a very successful 2008 convention—the largest theatre convention in the country. Another faculty member chairs a committee for that organization and all faculty members attended the annual conference.

Though not officially a University Theatre program event, the Department of Fine Arts co-sponsored a V-Day production of *The Vagina Monologues* that played to a sell-out crowd and raised over \$4000. The production was directed by a faculty member and other faculty members worked many hours to support the event.

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 two show mainstage season in April 2008. (The season for this academic year was reduced by one show so that we might host a high school theatre festival.) Audience attendance records were tabulated and analyzed.

A review of the attendance records for the two University Theatre productions (2007-2008) indicates that play 1 (*The Taming of the Shrew*) played to sold out houses as well as one preview night for High School students. Play 3 (*Dearly Beloved*) played to 770 attendees out of a possible 1055, or 72 % capacity for run of show. Hence, the University Theatre productions this season played, on average, to 85+% capacity. Evaluation of these statistics indicates a 13% increase from last season and 11% higher than our benchmark, but the University Theatre season included only two shows.

Season	Show #1	Show #2	Show #3	Season Avg.
**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).

† 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 either a producer, director, designer, actor or dramaturg.

Specific audience demographics are unavailable for the season, though demographics are available for our April show. For *Dearly Beloved*, the University Theatre's audience consisted of approximately 60% FMU students and faculty. The remaining were primarily adult community members and guests of the cast and crew.

7 Year Attendance Totals:

Season	Total Attendees
2007-2008	**1835+
2006-2007	2280

2005-2006	*2630+
2004-2005	1877
2003-2004	2317
2002-2003	1858
2001-2002	2068

** 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 initiated a survey into its Theatre Appreciation courses in an attempt to accumulate data for General Education assessment. The questionnaire that was used follows.

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

- What grade do you expect in this course?
A B+ B C+ C D+ D F I have no idea.
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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 70 students in Spring 2008. This was two sections (under two different instructors) of about ten sections taught during the academic year. The results are include below.

1. What grade do you expect in this course?
 A (34.3%) B+ (22.9%) B (27.1%) C+ (5.7%) C (4.3%) D+ (1.4%)
 D (0%) F (0%) "I have no idea." (4.3%)
2. I am _____ to see a theatre production on campus as a result of taking this course.
 A. more likely (65.7%) B. neither more or less likely (30%) C. less likely (4.3%)
3. I feel I understand the theatrical process _____ I did before taking this course.
 A. much better than (78.6%) B. about the same as (21.4%) C. much less than (0%)
4. I feel it will be _____ to enjoy the experience of watching a play now that I've taken this course.
 A. easier (75.7%) B. more difficult (0%) C. neither easier nor more difficult (24.3%)
5. I feel I have a(n) _____ understanding of the theatrical process as a result of this course.
 A. above average (30.0%) B. basic (70.0%) C. less than basic (0%)
6. I feel I am _____ of reading a play for its production possibilities as a result of this course.
 A. more capable (67.1%) B. just as capable as before this course (32.9%)
 C. less capable (0%)
7. I am _____ to pay to see a theatre production off campus as a result of taking this course.
 A. more likely (45.7%) B. neither more nor less likely (51.4%) C. less likely (2.9%)

8. How many productions had you seen prior to taking this course?
 A. 0 (17.1%) B. 1-3 (50%) C. 4-10 (21.4%) D. More than 10 (11.4%)
9. How many productions did you see during this semester?
 A. 0 (0%) B. 1 (47.1%) C. 2 (21.4%) D. 3 or more (24.3%)
10. Did you participate in plays before this course?
 A. No. Never. (48.6%) C. Yes. A few times. (27.1%)
 B. Yes. Once. (28.6%) D. Yes. A lot. (2.9%)
11. Now that you've taken the course, how likely are you to participate in a play if the chance arises?
 A. Very likely. (8.6%) C. Not very likely. (25.7%)
 B. Maybe. (48.6%) D. Definitely not. (17.1%)
12. How difficult was this course in comparison to your other general education courses?
 A. more difficult (7.1%) C. less difficult (34.3%)
 B. about the same (58.6%)

Given this year was the first 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;">2006-2010</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>The faculty had attempted to award scholarships earlier than the start of the fall semester. At least half of available scholarships have been awarded prior to the start of the fall semester in the last two years. The goal is to have all scholarship money awarded prior to the start of the fall semester. This year faculty will be visiting more high school events in an attempt to use scholarship money more effectively as a recruitment tool.</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>Unfortunately, there is little the department can do about this situation currently. The delay of the construction of the new Performing Arts Center means instructional space will be at even more of a premium as we begin a new Music Business major this fall. However, the plan is for the new Performing Arts Center to be completed by Spring 2010, so hopefully the 2010-2011 academic year will see an improvement in this area as the center will contain classroom and rehearsal space for the Music program as well as new performance spaces for the Theatre program.</p>

<p>2006-2009 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 in the next year is to create a brochure to be used for a departmental mailing.</p>
<p>2006-2009 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>2007-ongoing Recruitment and Scholarships</p>	<p>FMU will be hosted the Palmetto Dramatic Association (PDA) competition in February 2007 and will do so again in February 2008. As a result of this year's event, we actively recruited several students and hope to have several new majors in the fall as a result.</p> <p>University administration had been in the process of developing an annual event to be used primarily to raise scholarship money for music and theatre students. The event was to have occurred in 2007 but did not happen. The hope is that the inaugural event may soon occur. Theatre faculty are currently in discussion about fundraising for theatre scholarships.</p> <p>Obviously, these issues will be ongoing.</p>
<p>2006-2008 Lack of real world experience</p>	<p>Thanks to financial incentive from the department, the faculty was finally able to convince students to attend the SouthEastern Theatre Conference in March 2008. 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>2005-2010 Need for improvement in movement skills among actors.</p>	<p>Once again, adjudicators pointed out a weakness in movement skills among upper-level acting students. In the past two years, the acting faculty has dedicated more time in lower division acting courses to develop the students' awareness of character physicalization and movement (Theatre 203: Acting I and Theatre 205: Acting II) and will continue to so. Faculty are also looking at the possibility of bringing in outside artists for specialty workshops.</p>