

RECEIVED FEB 10 2009
APPROVED APR 22 2009

To: CLASS Undergraduate Studies Committee and Undergraduate Council
From: Brian Byrnes, Head of Undergraduate Programs (Director of Undergraduate Studies),
School of Theatre & Dance
RE: MEMO THREE - Justifications of Changes/Revisions to the Undergraduate Program
(Unanimously approved by the School of Theatre & Dance Faculty)
Date: 04 February 2009

Overall Justification for Changes and Revisions to the Undergraduate Program:

In keeping with the University of Houston's mission toward a Tier One university, and to align our teaching and training with the other Arts programs on campus, the Undergraduate Program we are proposing will make the UH School of Theatre & Dance highly competitive and attractive within the state of Texas and nationally.

We are creating a cohesive program that will attract stronger students to the program – and provide a structure that will allow students to graduate in four years. This will aid students in committing to the UH graduation pledge, as well as increase our retention and graduation rates.

The specific curricular progressions will provide a better through line of training for each given track.

Inherent in the revisions, we are also serving the UH Quality Enhancement Plan via research-intensive courses and opportunities throughout the progression of the curriculum/s. We will also be able to enhance our Institutional Effectiveness efforts to a higher degree and further improve our assessment processes.

Capstone courses will provide a culminating research and learning experience for the students to focus on their area of specialty, as well as begin to integrate them into the professional market.

Upon completion of their degree, our students will be better trained to enter the professional market, which will ensure a greater potential for success in theatre or dance and related fields.

Justification for Audition/Acceptance into the program:

- 1) The School of Theatre & Dance has implemented an active recruiting program in an effort to attract a higher level of student to the University of Houston.
- 2) The pre-screening of prospective majors will ensure that the School of Theatre & Dance's curriculum meets the needs to fulfill the students' goals.
- 3) The screening and mentoring of majors will assist in retaining students committed to completing the degree plan and will increase retention and graduation rates.
- 4) The recruitment and implementation of standards-based entrance and retention will ensure potential for success as students enter the field following graduation.

Additionally – For a number of years we have had catalogue language stating:

All students in the School of Theatre & Dance are expected to meet high standards of work and discipline. To strengthen the quality of education for those who meet and exceed these standards, those who fail to maintain these standards will not be permitted to continue in the program.

We are now identifying more specifically what those “high standards of work and discipline” entail. The proposed changes will clearly establish and track our “standards” and “measures” for the Institutional Effectiveness (I.E.) efforts. These changes will also have an inherent benefit to the university-wide Quality Enhancement Plan (Q.E.P.) throughout the academic progression of our new curriculum/s.

Approved by CLASS USE

 2/6/09

Justification for Changes and Revisions for the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Theatre:

BA in Theatre – Playwriting/Dramaturgy track:

- Almost all theatre production coalesces around a single center: the play script. Students in this new track will receive a comprehensive education in the creation and elucidation of the foundational material of our field.
- Students completing this track will leave UH with both the specialized tools necessary to succeed in the professional arena and the broad-based grounding of a liberal arts B.A. that will help them to become better informed, more curious people. Graduates of this track will be able to exchange ideas confidently with the highest echelon of theatrical professionals.
- Although they were originally under consideration as separate tracks, it is the firm conviction of the theatre faculty that a combined playwriting/dramaturgy track will offer the best possible learning opportunities for the students. The best playwrights possess the critical, research, and communication skills of a dramaturg, and the best dramaturgs know the craft of playwriting intimately and intuitively. By way of example, one of the professors involved in this new track, Mark Bly, is trained and works as a professional dramaturg but also headed the graduate playwriting program at Yale for twelve years.
- The combination of playwriting and dramaturgy will further serve to make the unified track more competitive, thereby allowing us to recruit students of much greater focus and promise than is possible under the present generalist B.A.
- The addition of this track will give us a critical “arm” that will prove essential in helping us to create a cohesive program. The students involved in this track will be an active part of our season productions, which are necessary extensions of the classroom work.
- The highly structured 4-year curriculum will improve our retention and graduation rates.

BA in Theatre – Design and Technology track:

- Changes and Revisions to the curricular progression of this track will create a better through line of training. This progression will more effectively prepare students for success in the design and technology areas of the professional theatre.
- The 4-year curriculum will improve our retention and graduation rates.
- The continued integration of modern technology into our training program will provide students with the job skills that are in immediate demand in the industry.
- The broader focus of our undergraduate design and technology programs will better prepare students for the specialized, in-depth design training offered at the graduate level.

BFA
BA

BA in Theatre – Teacher Certification in Theatre Arts track:

- Ten of the twenty undergraduate actors that we recruited in this year alone have an interest in teaching theatre at either the elementary or the secondary level.
- There is a shortage of qualified theatre teachers in Texas.
- Students are coming out of our undergraduate theatre programs and going through the Alternative Certification Programs in order to teach in public schools. We need to be able to serve these students and prepare them for employment on our campus rather than requiring them to seek post-baccalaureate or ACP programs to meet their goals.
- We are losing students to the three other respected university programs in the state that offer a Teacher Certification in Theatre Arts. Many of these students would choose UH if we offered Teacher Certification as an option.
- We have a Summer MA program for theatre educators, which was approved in March 2008. By May 2008 we had 34 qualified applicants. This illustrates the need for teacher training in the area of Theatre Arts.
- Fine arts directors around the Greater Houston Area are eager to place pre-service teachers from The University of Houston. They hope to hire teachers who have trained in their districts upon their graduation.
- The School of Theatre & Dance has shown a commitment to Theatre Education by employing a full-time Associate Director of Theatre Education to oversee the MA program and the Undergraduate Theatre Education Program (once it is approved).

Justification to Recognize DANCE as its own Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree:

BA in Dance:

- The UH Dance Division has the only degree-granting program for dance as an art in Houston. In the last 10 years we have developed a dance curriculum that is competitive with dance programs both regionally and nationally. Our students graduate with a knowledge base that best matches a degree in dance.
- In recognizing dance with its own BA degree, we will be better able to recruit a consistently higher level of dance student. Students with prior training in dance tend to seek University settings that offer specific dance degrees.
- In 2007, the title of our school changed from “School of Theatre” to “School of Theatre & Dance.” The title change (unanimously approved by our faculty) was based on the recognition that our Dance Division functions as a separate curriculum and supports dance as a fine performing art (as opposed to dance as a sub-field of theater). A degree in dance would best match our vision for dance within the School, the Dance Division, and our current dance curriculum.
- Students that graduate from our Dance Division are moving forward with careers in dance. A degree that matches their dance education and training at the University of Houston is important to our School, the University, and the student.

- Our focus on the creative activity of choreography is integral to our curriculum. Students should receive a degree that reflects their development as choreographers, and a dance degree better represents this focus and development.

Conclusion: The Dance Division operates as a separate program within the School of Theatre & Dance. We offer a complete curriculum of dance training with a focus on choreography. Our faculty is comprised of three full-time dance faculty, and ten highly qualified adjunct instructors of dance technique and theory. We offer a high level of technical training in dance, a strong dance theory component, and an emphasis on dance pedagogy. Our students are graduating to jobs in dance performance, dance teaching, and dance administration. A Dance Degree would best match our current program and future goals.

Justification to Create a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Theatre (track: Acting):

BFA in Theatre – Acting track:

- A BFA degree in Acting at the UH School of Theatre & Dance will be a desirable and competitive degree within the state of Texas and nationally for students who wish to make Acting their profession. This keeps with the University's mission of moving toward Tier One status.
- The addition of this degree and track will raise the profile of our program, which will draw top Acting students who have already developed a proficient level of skills and talents in rigorous high school training programs. Most of the top high school theatre programs in the state of Texas are located in the Houston area. Currently, the top BFA theatre programs in the country heavily recruit these Houston-area schools, and these other institutions currently draw these high-performing students away from our region. We intend to recruit and retain these competitive students for our own UH program.
- The students will take on an intensive four-year training process, which will prove indispensable in helping us to create a cohesive program as a whole. A higher level of undergraduate acting talent will also improve the level of our season productions, which are necessary extensions of the classroom work and serve as a link to our community and to financial donors.
- The four-year curriculum will improve our retention and graduation rates.
- This track will effectively prepare students for success in acting for the professional theatre, film and television.

Morales, Jeanette F

From: Brian.Byrnes@mail.uh.edu
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2009 2:33 PM
To: Richard.Scamell@mail.uh.edu
Cc: bbyrnes@uh.edu; Morales, Jeanette F
Subject: Re: Theatre and Dance Program Proposals
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed
Attachments: THEA - ADDENDUM 1 - BA in Playwriting_Dramaturgy - Four Year Degree Plan-Sept. 22.2008.xls; THEA - ADDENDUM 2 - BA in Design and Technology - Four Year Degree Plan - Sept. 22.2008.xls; REVISED- THEA ADDENDUM 3 - BFA in Theatre (Teacher Cert. in Theatre Arts) - Four Year Degree Plan - Feb. 18 2009.xls; THEA ADDENDUM 4 - BFA in Acting - Four Year Degree Plan - Mar. 13. 2009.xls; THEA ADDENDUM 5 -Compiled Syllabi.doc

Richard,

Here's the information and updates regarding the information you requested:

1) I need to meet with the Heads of Dance to compile an "ADDENDUM 6" which will lay out a Four Year Degree Plan for a BA in Dance. This Addendum will be title "ADDENDUM 6" -- because we had already created a "ADDEMDUM 5" containing compiled syllabi -- which is noted below and also attached.

2) To be added as a part of MEMO THREE (UC 10244 09S):

Justification to PHASE OUT the BA in Theatre, Performance track:

The School of Theatre & Dance is phasing out the "BA in Theatre, Performance track" and replacing it with a "BFA in Theatre (track: Acting)". The BFA in Acting will serve as a much stronger training program for actors. Also, we do not have the resources (space and faculty) to maintain both a BA and a BFA in the acting area. Therefore, opting for the BFA in Acting is our best prospect.

3) The attached documents serve as additional reference material for the UC -- to see how we have laid out the Four Year Curricular Progression of the various degrees under consideration.

THEA - ADDENDUM 1 - BA in Playwriting/Dramaturgy - Four Year Degree Plan-Sept. 22.2008.xls

THEA - ADDENDUM 2 - BA in Design and Technology - Four Year Degree Plan - Sept. 22.2008.xls

REVISED- THEA ADDENDUM 3 - BFA in Theatre (Teacher Cert. in Theatre Arts) - Four Year Degree Plan - Feb. 18 2009.xls

THEA ADDENDUM 4 - BFA in Acting - Four Year Degree Plan - Mar. 13. 2009.xls

THEA ADDENDUM 5 -Compiled Syllabi.doc

(Please note -- "ADDENDUM 5 - Compiled Syllabi" is a 98-page document, so you may or may not want to use it as a reference document.)

3/27/2009

THEA/DAN ADDENDUM 6 - BA in Dance - Four Year Degree Plan - Mar. 13. 2009.xls

(Please note -- "ADDENDUM 6" is currently being compiled -- and is not attached to this email. I will have a copy to you asap.)

Please let me know if you have questions, or need further information.

Sincerely,
--Brian Byrnes

School of Theatre and Dance

BA in Theatre (Track: Design and Technology)		ADDENDUM 2
Major Requirements		CORE / CLASS / Lang.
Fresh. Fall 15 cr.	1332. Fundamentals of Theatre (Visual & Perf. Arts - CORE) 2334. Fundamentals of Design 2335 or 2336 or 2373. Scenic / Lighting and Sound / Costume Technology	ENG 1303. Comp I MATH 1310. Algebra
Fresh. Spring 16 cr.	1342. Fundamentals of Acting 2335 or 2336 or 2373. Scenic / Lighting and Sound / Costume Tech 1111:1112. Production (2nd Semester Jury/Assessment)	ENG 1304. Comp II Math Reasoning Social Science
Soph. Fall 18 cr.	2342. Dramatic Structures & Genres 2390. Technical Drawing 2335 or 2336 or 2373. Scenic / Lighting and Sound / Costume Technology 1111:1112. Production (3rd Semester Jury/Assessment)	Natural Science Foreign Lang. I (5 cr.)
Soph. Spring 18 cr.	2344. American Drama (Writing in the Disciplines - CORE) 3364. Costume History I 3371. History of Architecture, Interiors and Decorative Arts 1111:1112. Production	Natural Science Foreign Lang. II (5 cr.)
Jr. Fall 16 cr.	ART 3328. Rendering and Scetching 3362 or 3385 or 3387. Costume Des. I / Scenic Des. I / Lighting De 3362 or 3385 or 3387. Costume Des. I / Scenic Des. I / Lighting Des. I 1111:1112. Production (5th Semester Jury/Assessment)	HIST 1377 Foreign Lang. III
Jr. Spring 16 cr.	3362 or 3385 or 3387. Costume Des. I / Scenic Des. I / Lighting De 3372. Digital Design Techniques 3383. Stage Management 1111:1112. Production	HIST 1378 Foreign Lang. IV
Sr. Fall 16 cr.	3335. History of the Theatre I 3373 or 3374 or 3375 or 3384. Makeup and Hair Design / Intelligent Lighting / Costume Technology and Allied Crafts / Scene Pain 1111:1112. Production (7th Semester Jury/Assessment)	POLS 1336 Humanities CLASS
Sr. Spring 15 cr.	3336. History of the Theatre II 3376 or 3386 or 4367. Advanced Drafting / Theatre Sound Design / Costume Cutting and Draping	POLS 1337 CLASS CLASS
69 Credits in Major (including 3 credits in ART) 36 in CORE / 9 in CLASS / 16 in Lang.		
<i>In addition, each student must complete an approved minor, an approved 2nd major, a senior honors thesis, or an interdisciplinary cluster (9 approved credits, related could no more than 3 credits from Theatre & Dance).</i>		