

Department of Theatre Arts
Action Update 2010

Curriculum:

- Introductory theatre courses have been developed, specifically the THAR 100 Introduction to Theatre and THAR 200 Theatre, Acting and Performance classes. These courses have been offered as 2 semester-hour courses, and incoming majors are encouraged to take both courses concurrently as an introduction to the theatre arts curriculum. THAR 100 deals with reading and writing about plays, an overview of world and historical theatre, and the collaboration of theatre artists, while THAR 200 focuses on aspects of performance. These courses have attracted enrollment from non-theatre majors as well as incoming theatre majors. These courses have requirements for participation in departmental productions as course practicum, and students are asked to respond to performances in writing, which appears to have boosted the participation of non-majors.
- Changes in the requirements for the senior project have been instituted, including more frequent scheduling of mentor meetings with senior students, as well as a more rigorous written project to accompany the production component of the project. Though the nature of the project may vary, there are common requirements in planning and writing that each student must complete. These requirements have added rigor to the senior project, and specific requirements continue to be refined.

Production/Facility:

- A new Theatre Department Technical Director was hired in Summer 2010, and he has made improvements in the physical plant, and has implemented organizational plans for work-study and class practicum work calls. Enrollment in THAR 120 Stagecraft class is promising, and students report satisfaction with the class and production work.
- Classroom lighting has been improved in the Jane Dibbell Cabaret with the addition of tubular skylights that admit natural light. Worn-out audience seating in the Cabaret has been replaced by newly acquired portable seating risers, allowing the space to function as a flexible performance space with seating arrangements for a proscenium, thrust, or arena staging. Audio-visual wiring has also been completed in the Jane Dibbell Cabaret, and the space now functions as a “smart classroom” with video and computer projection capabilities.
- Expected funds for the building of a public entrance to the theatre were never allocated. The Dailey Theatre Mainstage and Jane Dibell Cabaret are still without formal audience access or public restrooms. With the creation of the Johnson Family Plaza, the originally proposed site for a lobby is no longer practical, so we

intend to propose a small lobby at the north side of the building, which would include public access to both performance spaces from Founder's Mall.

- With the increase in enrollments, classroom and rehearsal spaces are exceeding capacity. The Jane Dibbell Cabaret is serving the multiple functions of a performance and rehearsal space, as well as a classroom. The Dailey Theatre seminar area is essentially a single table and chairs surrounded by a curtain within the theatre common area, and is not practical for more than ten students at a time. The department must investigate additional rehearsal and classroom areas.
- We need the use of a truck. Our scenic storage area has been moved to the Campus West property, and we must now travel some distance to move set pieces, materials and props to and from storage. As the Campus Safety and Transportation Department no longer has a stakebed truck for us to use for this purpose, we are now told we must rent a truck each time we wish to move scenery. This has proven difficult, and it has become necessary for use to have the use of a truck for transportation of large items. We might possibly share a truck with another department, or seek donors to provide a truck for this use.

Recruitment:

- A graduate assistant position for audience relations and student recruitment has been created. With the help of this student, the department web presence has been improved, electronic mailing lists have been compiled for recruitment purposes, and manuals for public relations activities are being developed to ensure continuity of these functions.
- The addition of performance scholarships for two incoming students has prompted interest in the program, and we have seen many talented students apply to the program. The scholarship recipients show a good work ethic and continued success. The continuation of the scholarship program shows great promise for recruitment and for student leadership.

Advising:

- Continued participation by Theatre Department advisors in new-student advising and Summer Orientation, Advising and Registration (SOAR) days has improved early integration of new theatre students to the theatre community and curriculum.
- In addition to advising appointments with individual students at the end of each semester, faculty meet with theatre majors in the first two weeks of each semester to respond to a required audition or portfolio presentation. Students are required to maintain and develop their headshot, resumes and portfolios, and are given feedback each semester.

Staffing:

- Part-time graduate assistant position was created to handle shop supervision and safety program training and oversight.
- Theatre administrative assistance is still critically needed. A theatre manager should coordinate and track budgets and budget reporting, manage the public interface with the department including telephone reception, publicity (mailings, press, posters, PR and special events), programs, ticket sales, front of house management and post production archiving.

Immediate action requests:

- Theatre administrative assistance
- Increase technical and facilities budget by \$10,000 per academic year
- Secure truck for hauling of materials, scenery, etc. (may be shared, if necessary)
- Health and safety improvements (sprinklers, dust collection, ventilation)
- Create plan for public entrance creation and stage/seating renovation