

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Bachelor Arts in Theatre

The BA degree in Theatre has the following learning outcomes, as stipulated in the NAST 2009-2010 Handbooks:

Purpose - The degree focus is breadth of general studies combined with theatre studies and an area of emphasis in theatre such as performance, design, theatre history, and so forth.

*Competencies/Learning Outcomes - Students holding undergraduate liberal arts degrees must have:

- (1) The ability to think conceptually and critically about text, performance, and production.
- (2) An understanding of playwriting and production processes, aesthetic properties of style, and the way these shape and are shaped by artistic and cultural forces.
- (3) An acquaintance with a wide selection of theatre repertory including the principal eras, genres, and cultural sources.
- (4) The ability to develop and defend informed judgments about theatre.
Operational Guidelines - Objectives of this type are ordinarily emphasized in courses such as acting, speech, play analysis, design technology, history and literature of the theatre, and through regular practical and intimate contact with living theatre.

Performance and Theatre Electives

*Competencies Learning Outcomes - Students holding undergraduate liberal arts degrees must have:

- (1) The ability to think, speak, and write clearly and effectively.
- (2) An informed acquaintance with fields of study beyond theatre such as those in the arts and humanities, the natural and physical sciences, and the social sciences.
- (3) A functional awareness of the differences and commonalities regarding work in artistic, scientific, and humanistic domains.
- (4) Awareness that multiple disciplinary perspectives and techniques are available to consider all issues and responsibilities including, but not limited to, history, culture, moral and ethical issues, and decision-making.
- (5) The ability to identify possibilities and locate information in other fields that have bearing on theatre questions and endeavors.

Operational Guidelines

- (1) Some theatre courses, if conceived and taught in relation to other realms of human experience, may be appropriately included in the category of general studies. Some theatre history, literature, theoretical or cultural studies may meet this criterion.
- (2) Many areas of inquiry from general education are directly supportive of various specializations in theatre.

Common Body of Knowledge and Skills

1. Production

Students must acquire:

- a. Technical skills requisite for artistic self-expression in at least one major area of production (for example, acting, design/technology, playwriting, directing) and those skills must be progressively developed to the highest level appropriate to the particular area of concentration. Technical proficiency standards should be established for each level of study. The achievement of a specified level of proficiency in technique should be required for retention at each level and must be required for graduation.
- b. An overview understanding of the major aspects, techniques, and directions in the area of concentration.
- c. Fundamental, comprehensive understanding of the various elements and basic interrelated processes of creation, interpretation, performance, and production.
- d. Fundamental, conceptual understanding of the expressive possibilities of theatre.
- e. Knowledge and skills sufficient to work in both collaborative and individual roles in matters of theatre interpretation.
- f. Growth in artistry, technical skills, collaborative competence, and knowledge of repertory through regular performance and production experiences. Students must have such experiences throughout the degree program.

2. Repertory

Students must acquire:

- a. Familiarity with theatre literature of various historical periods, cultural sources, and modes of presentation.
- b. Experience with specific repertories and comparative standards of production quality through performance, academic study, and attendance at productions.

3. Theoretical and Historical Studies

Students must acquire:

- a. The ability to analyze plays perceptively and to evaluate them critically.
- b. An understanding of the common elements and vocabulary of theatre and of the interaction of these elements, and be able to employ this knowledge in analysis, including analyses of their productions.
- c. The ability to place works of theatre in historical and stylistic contexts and have some understanding of the cultural milieu in which they were created.
- d. The ability to develop and defend informed judgments about theatre.
 - The competencies listed above are achieved by course work and studies in such fields as repertory, playwriting, theatre history, theatre criticism, philosophy of theatre, dramaturgy, performance studies, movement, anatomy and kinesiology, and production design.
 - In certain areas of specialization such as costume and scenic design, it is advisable to require that students study the historical development of works within the specialization.

4. Technology

Students must acquire a working knowledge of technologies and equipment applicable to their area(s) of specialization.

5. Synthesis

While synthesis is a lifetime process, by the end of undergraduate studies students should be able to work independently on a variety of professional problems by combining, as appropriate to the issue, their capabilities in performance, repertory, theory, history, and technology, as well as other fields they have studied.

Where are these learning outcomes published?

- These learning outcomes are published on the National Association of Schools of Theatre web-site www.nast.arts-accredit.org .
- The Theatre and Speech Communication Department homepage at www.salemstate.edu references our NAST accreditation.

Other than GPA what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree?

- Students are required to take eight semesters of Theatre Participation courses. These courses require the student to apply classroom learning into real word application. The department developed an assessment form for the Theatre Participation courses to improve the educational feedback to students on their production work.

The follow methods are used to assess students in the Theatre Education program:

- Having established goals and objective rubrics for classes
- Auditions for productions
- Open forum meetings with majors
- Post-production meetings with faculty, staff, cast and crew
- Having respondents from KCACTF respond to our productions and individual student work
- Our involvement in KCACTF
- Exit interviews with graduating seniors
- Use of assessment form for performance students in productions to evaluate analysis of objectives, tactics, beats, character research, character relationships, etc.
- Use of assessment forms for designers, technicians, and stage managers.
- Faculty and staff assessment meetings with formalized documentation in the awarding of grades for the Theater Participation classes.
- In our involvement in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, we conduct an "Irene Ryan Screening Day" to encourage our students in their time management skills, accountability, partnering and material selection. Criteria and guidelines have been incorporated into the Theatre Handbook for all those actors nominated from our productions for the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship. Students nominated and their partners perform their 2 scenes and 1 monologue for each

other and for the full Performance Faculty, followed by feedback and guidance. This process proves to be successful.

Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?

The Theatre faculty, with the input of department staff, regularly assesses student progress at department meeting, weekly production meetings, post-production meetings, and post production TPH meetings. With this input, the department chairperson, faculty production supervisors, academic advisors, and classroom instructors are able to give students written and verbal feedback on their work. Since we produce two productions a semester, students are able to be evaluated twice in one semester. This feedback gives the student a clear understanding of their progress in program. Positive evaluations of students work has a direct impact on whether a student is promoted to more responsible production positions.

In course work, students are assessed based on objective rubrics. Faculty feedback on class objectives helps the student produce class assignments, such as, performances, designs, play analysis, directed scenes, etc.

What changes have been made as a result of using the data?

The department Curriculum Committee meets each semester to discuss pedagogy and to review books for courses. We are working towards an overall shared vocabulary to deepen and integrate the various courses. Three new textbooks have been selected for courses.

Date of most recent program review.

Spring 2004. The Theatre and Speech Communication Department is currently doing its self-study for our accrediting organization. Representatives from NAST will be doing their site visit during the Fall 2010 semester.