

Department of Theatre
2014-2015 Assessment of Student Learning Plan

A. College, Department, Date:

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Department of Theatre

12 March 2015

B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan:

Meghan Brodie, Assistant Professor of Theatre

C. Degree Program:

B.A. in Theatre

D. Assessment of Student Learning

IDENTIFICATION OF OUTCOMES

i. Four Departmental Learning Outcomes:

*Theatre students will acquire the critical thinking and written and oral communication skills necessary to pursue a career both in Theatre and in a broad range of related fields.

*Theatre students will gain a working knowledge and practical experience in the following three areas: acting/directing, theatrical design/technical work, and theatre history/dramatic literature.

*Theatre students will receive the professional training they need to pursue an apprenticeship, job, or graduate school placement in a variety of fields upon graduation.

*Theatre students will be familiar with some of the vast traditions and cultures that extend beyond their experiences as students at the University of Southern Maine.

ii. Two Departmental Learning Outcomes Assessed During 2014-2015.

OUTCOME 1: Theatre students will gain a working knowledge and practical experience in the following three areas: acting/directing, theatrical design/technical work, and theatre history/dramatic literature.

OUTCOME 2: Theatre students will receive the professional training they need to pursue an apprenticeship, job, or graduate school placement in a variety of fields upon graduation.

HOW OUTCOMES WILL BE ASSESSED

OUTCOME 1: Each student enrolled in THE 141-144: Theatre Workshop is asked to complete a production assignment. Students rate their top five assignments and then will be given one of those assignments for the semester. Assignment positions include, but are not limited to, actors, designers, dramaturgs, board ops, deck crew, wardrobe crew, stage managers, etc. for USM Theatre Department main stage productions. All production assignments draw on knowledge and experience the students gain in other Theatre courses. At the first faculty meeting after each show closes, the all faculty and staff members working on the production will assess each student's work and provide written feedback to the student. Students are evaluated on participation, quality of work, effort, willingness to learn, attitude, preparedness, and promptness. Faculty and staff will use the following rubric (provided to students before they commence work on their production assignments):

Grade	A	B	C	F	+
ATTENDANCE: Present and on time for ALL required rehearsals, performances, work calls, photo calls, and show strikes?	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Showed improvement
Helpful and eager to learn?	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Showed improvement
Able to apply new skills?	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Showed improvement
Respectful of others?	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Showed improvement
Committed to the success of the show?	Always	Often	Rarely	Never	Showed improvement
Would you recommend this student to another position of responsibility?	Yes	Yes, after more experience	Needs improvement	Never	Showed improvement

Did this student show any extraordinary skill or care that should be noted? Did this student exhibit any habits that may make difficult for them to successfully take on responsibility in the future?

OUTCOME 2: Each student enrolled in THE 141-144: Theatre Workshop is asked to complete a professional resume. Professor Meghan Brodie provides feedback on each resume and students resubmit them for grades. And each student enrolled in THE 495: Capstone is asked to create a professional portfolio (that includes the aforementioned resume) to prepare the student for work or further study upon graduation. Students in capstone class seek appropriate Theatre faculty mentors who can provide advice on shaping different types of portfolios. THE 495 instructor Professor Wil Kilroy will consult with each student's mentor to determine a grade for the final portfolio. Students'

grades will be determined based on the following criteria: the originality of the work, students' ability to create a smart and cohesive portfolio, and evidence of critical thinking and writing skills in the required electronic portfolio component. Additionally, each project will be evaluated based on the following questions:

- a. Did the student draw upon the training s/he received with respect to her/his chosen portfolio?
- b. Did the chosen recommendations for the electronic portfolio reflect competence in the student's chosen area of interest?
- c. In the presentation portion of this project did the student demonstrate synthesis of the fundamentals of her/his area of interest and independent thought in her/his creative choices?

Here are the assignment guidelines for this portfolio:

PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES: Each student will complete a minimum of one of the assignments below. If you are in a split discipline such as Acting/Directing, you may opt to present a combination in consultation with the instructor. With all of the projects below, your choice should be reflected in your career plan/manifesto.

Actors: Research, analyze, memorize, and perform a portfolio of monologues including: contemporary comedy, contemporary drama, dramatic Shakespeare, comedic Shakespeare, and one other of your choosing. Create an electronic portfolio including current headshots, a resume in the professional format as provided in class, production photos, reviews, and recommendations from past directors and/or professors.

Designers: Research, analyze, and present your design concept for a chosen text – as supported by your research, followed by actualized drawings, models, and mock-ups as appropriate for your discipline and agreed upon in advance with the instructor. Create an electronic portfolio including a resume in the professional format as provided in class, production photos, reviews, and recommendations from past directors and/or professors.

Stage Managers: Research, analyze, and create a prompt book for a chosen text, to include all potential cues and an analysis on how to address the challenges of the chosen text. Create an electronic portfolio including a resume in the professional format as provided in class, examples of some of the polished materials you have created as a stage manager, production photos, reviews, and recommendations from past directors and/or professors.

Directing: Research, analyze, and present your concept for a chosen text, followed by a complete notation of the script including blocking, sound choices, acting notes, and proposals for costume, lighting, and set design. Create an electronic portfolio including a resume in the professional format as provided in class, production photos, reviews, and recommendations from past directors and/or professors.

Dramaturgy/Graduate School Preparation: Research, analyze, and present complete dramaturgy (in the form of a dramaturgy book) for a play of your choice (a dramaturgy

handout will be provided to you) OR prepare a personal essay and writing sample (a thesis-based paper of the appropriate length for the schools for which you are applying) for graduate school. Create an electronic portfolio including a resume in the professional format as provided in class, production photos, reviews, and recommendations from past directors and/or professors.

WHEN OUTCOMES WILL BE ASSESSED

OUTCOME 1: Each student enrolled in THE 141-144: Theatre Workshop in Fall 2014 will complete a production assignment and be assessed before the end of the Fall 2014 semester. At the first faculty meeting after each show closes, the all faculty and staff members working on the production will assess each student's work and provide written feedback to the student. [Please see rubric in the "HOW" section above.]

OUTCOME 2: Each student enrolled in THE 495: Theatre Capstone in Spring 2015 will complete a portfolio and Professor Wil Kilroy, in collaboration with the faculty mentor(s) for each student will determine a grade for the student's portfolio using the criteria outlined above.

USING ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

The faculty and staff of the Department of Theatre will meet as a group to discuss both production assignments and portfolios. Using the assessments of student work, we will address the following questions:

OUTCOME 1:

1. Do we need to guide students into certain areas of production work during their first year at USM to help students make a success of their initial production work?
2. Do we need to be more explicit about the expectation of each position and provide more specific grading criteria for each?
3. Could we use more senior students as mentors for newer students or would this create conflict?

OUTCOME 2:

1. Do we need to have students begin work on their portfolios (beyond their existing work for Theatre Workshop) prior to their capstone?
2. How can we collaborate with professionals outside of USM to help students network as a part of their Capstone/portfolio experience?
3. Can we find an efficient method for helping interested student develop multiple portfolios?

E. Other Course Assessment Activities:

If your department/program is unable to complete any of the above steps, are you able to report any assessment-related activities at the Course-Level; for example: created grading rubrics to use in required courses, examined student progress in an entry-level course, developed a new course, redesigned a course to include community-based learning, etc.

Briefly explain.

N/A (All above steps were addressed in terms of assessment-related activities.)

F. Are there “community engagement” activities integrated in your departmental curriculum?

a. Please indicate which of the components, listed below, are included in your program’s curriculum, and then indicate if the activities are required or optional for students in your major.

<u>Community Engagement Activity</u>	<u>Included</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	<u>_X_</u>	R *O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	<u>_X_</u>	R *O
Internship, or a Field Experience	<u>_X_</u>	R *O
Independent Study (community-related project)	<u>_X_</u>	R *O
Capstone Course (community-related project)	<u>_X_</u>	*R O
Service-Learning (a component of a course)	<u>_X_</u>	R *O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	<u>_X_</u>	R *O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	<u>_X_</u>	*R O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	<u>_X_</u>	*R O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	<u>—</u>	R O
Other Activities (not mentioned above):		

b. *Please list the courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a “community engagement” activity in your program:*

Entry-level courses: THE 131-134: Musical Theatre Workshop
THE 140-143: Theatre Workshop
THE 195: Rehearsal and Production

Mid-level courses: THE 271: Creative Drama
THE 295: Advanced Rehearsal and Production

Upper-level courses: THE 490: Independent Study
THE 491: Independent Project
THE 492: Theatre Internship
THE 495: Capstone

Additional Comments:

Please note that nearly all Theatre courses have student research components so we have omitted a complete listing of all courses. Additionally, more than half of our courses are related to public performances, a form of community engagement. We have highlighted a few courses above, but an honest assessment of courses with community engagement components would include nearly all Theatre courses. A complete listing of our courses can be found at <http://usm.maine.edu/theatre/course-descriptions>