

Cover/Signature Page – New Programs Follow-up Report

Institution Submitting Request: Dixie State University
Program Title: Theatre Program
School or Division or Location: School of Visual & Performing Arts
Department(s) or Area(s) Location: Fine Arts Department
Recommended Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code¹: 36.0117
Board of Regents' Approval Date: April 1, 2010

Proposal Type (check all that apply):

Regents' General Consent Calendar Items		
<i>R401-5 OCHE Review and Recommendation; Approval on General Consent Calendar</i>		
SECTION NO.		ITEM
5.6.1	X	Three-Year Follow-Up Report of Recently Approved Programs
5.6.2		Two-Year Follow-Up Report of Fast Tracked Certificate

Chief Academic Officer (or Designee) Signature:

I certify that all required institutional approvals have been obtained prior to submitting this request to the Office of the Commissioner.

Signature

Date: XX/XX/XXXX

Printed Name: Bill Christensen

¹ CIP codes must be recommended by the submitting institution. For CIP code classifications, please see <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=55>.

Report – Third-Year Report Template
Dixie State University
Theatre Program
04/17/2014

Program Description

The Utah State Board of Regents approved the BS/BA in Theatre on April 1, 2010. The Utah State Board of Regents approved the BS/BA in Theatre Education on November 18, 2011. To date there have been 20 majors who have graduated with a BS/BA in Theatre and the Fine Arts Department expects the first graduates with a BS/BA in Theatre Education by Spring 2015.

Dixie State University Theatre is a comprehensive college theatre program with an active production program in support of academic activities. The program is structured to meet the following main objectives:

1. Provide general education theatre course work to fill requirements in fine arts and humanities categories.
2. Provide lower division theatre education to meet the transfer needs of prospective theatre majors.
3. Provide theatre education to meet the needs of the community.
4. Provide a production program to serve as a laboratory in support of theatre curriculum. The production program is designed to create a rich cultural experience for Dixie State University students and to provide the community at large with quality theatre experiences.

Prospective theatre majors choose between a performance emphasis or a technical theatre emphasis. Students who successfully complete Dixie's theatre program course work will be prepared to transfer to four-year institution theatre programs as juniors. The production program prepares a full season of plays and musicals for performance each year. Serious theatre students are expected to be involved in production activities on a continuous basis. The production program emphasizes development and application of skills, effective collaboration and professional discipline. Serious theatre students should counsel with a theatre faculty member to plan course registration for each semester.

Some noteworthy accomplishments since the approval of the degrees are:

- DSU has had 20 Baccalaureate graduates since the Theatre Emphasis was approved.
- DSU Theatre established an official campus Theatre Club, holding monthly activities for theatre majors and other members of the campus community who want to explore or be involved in theatre.
- The school of Fine Arts hired a new F/T Dance/Theatre faculty member, Sara Gallo enhancing the collaboration effort with the Dance Program.
- DSU established an outreach section of its Children's Theatre course, which tours local elementary schools presenting a children's theatre production each spring.
- 21 DSU Theatre students and faculty travelled to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland in August 2013. They presented DSU's production of *Trojan Women*, directed by Varlo Davenport. Brent Hanson, Joe Fox and Varlo Davenport facilitated the trip and production. The program is working to make this an annual event.
- DSU Theatre major John Mitchell took the Region 8 Title in Lighting Design at the Region 8 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) in Los Angeles, CA January 2013 and travelled to Washington D.C. in April 2013 to compete for the National Title.
- DSU Theatre was invited to perform a scene from their 2012 production of *(The) Odyssey* adapted by Michael Harding at the Region 8 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) in Los Angeles, CA.

- In February of 2012, DSU's Varlo Davenport received the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival *Excellence in Education* Award.
- DSU Theatre Program brought in a professional guest artist, Jasen Wade (*17 Miracles, Saints and Soldiers Airborne Creed*) to play Edgar Allan Poe in their production of *Nightfall with Edgar Allan Poe*, directed by Mark Houser. The production sold out and was extended another week.
- Christian Roa, Devin Trop and Grace Wells attended the Open Jar institute, a Broadway musical theatre, preparation-training program in New York City.
- In November 2011, DSU Theatre presented the original production of *Nathan Hale*, a musical written by Associate Dean of Fine Arts and Professor of Theatre, Brent Hanson, in collaboration with the DSU Music Department, students and graduates. Western Washington University opted to produce *Nathan Hale* as part of its 2013/14 Season.
- The Theatre Program successfully hosted The Utah Theatre Association Conference in January 2011. Mark Houser lead the collaboration with UTA and coordinated the conference.
- In 2010 DSU's production of *Almost Maine*, directed by Varlo Davenport, was invited to perform at the KCACTF conference.
- DSU Theatre has been collaborating with the DSU English Department using common texts to link our spring season with the curriculum of many English courses. Michael Harding has made that collaboration successful on the Theatre Program's behalf.
- DSU Theatre major Whitney Cox and her scene partner John Dodart took the national Irene Ryan title in acting at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) in Washington D.C. 2010
- Many of the DSU graduates who achieved their BS/BA in theatre have moved on successfully to graduate school or are working in regional and professional theatre. Spencer Potter is successfully pursuing a graduate degree in theatrical design from Utah State University. Melissa Erickson is working as a Stage Manager in Missouri. Rebecca Wright is currently at the Mary Baldwin College Graduate Program in Elizabethan Studies. Jarom Brown has successfully finished his graduate degree and now teaches as an adjunct professor for DSU Theatre. Jarom has received his MLitt with High Honors. Many of the current theatre students continue to work with professional organizations in the area such as The Utah Shakespearean Festival and Tuacahn Center for the Arts. Alumnus Slate Holmgren appeared in the Classic Stage Company Off-Broadway productions of *Double Falsehood* and *The Cherry Orchard*, (Starring Diane Wiest). Alumnus Adam London headlines his own show at Showroom D in Las Vegas. Adam has worldwide credits and recently appeared in the TV sitcom *Raising Hope*.
- Current students, Koby Campbell and Bryant Larsen both worked at Starlight Mountain Amphitheatre in Idaho, summer of 2012.
- DSU Theatre hired Hanna Rahilly as a Theatre Lecturer/Advisor in 2010. Hanna, as a theatre Advisor and an instructor is focused on the student experience and success in fulfilling the requirements of the program in four years. Hanna teaches Children's Theatre, Intro to Theatre, First Year Experience Theatre and the Professional Aspects of Theatre courses. She has been instrumental in helping our majors become more aware of the registration process and theatre tracks to ensure a targeted completion of their degree. Hanna has taken the Children's Theatre Productions on the road to local area elementary schools for the last two years. This year she is presented *An Arden Forest Dream*, a children's play she wrote for the course. Hanna also directed *The Bug*, by Richard Strand, for the DSU 2012 Summer Comedy Storm Season. The writer, Richard Strand, and his wife attended the production and stayed after for a talk-balk with students.
- DSU Theatre hired Mark Houser in August 2010 as Audience Development Coordinator and a faculty member. He teaches Stage Management, Understanding Film, Professional Aspects, and Acting and has served as a director for the program's productions. His fresh marketing and publicity efforts, and his successful work with the community and its leaders has manifested in the significant increase in quality of marketing, exposure and increased ticket sales for the program's mainstage season between 2010-2013. Mark has doubled the audience base for the Mainstage productions. His marketing savvy has earned the program's Summer Comedy Storm season four times the average audience compared to years passed. He was elected Director of the program in July 2011 and led the program to overcoming a large and

longstanding deficit within his first year as director. He continues to keep the Theatre Program operating in the green. He continues to work with DSU's Cultural Arts to build a stronger marketing and public image for the Theatre, Art and Dance Programs and the university at large. One of his main focuses has been reconnecting with the community and especially local area high schools to assure them of the need at DSU to recruit local students and assure retention as they receive their education at the university. Mark has directed two productions in the last two seasons, one selling out to the point that the run was extended. Mark is currently directing the first Children's Theatre production offering of *James and the Giant Peach* to be presented in September 2013. Mark continues working professionally, producing and directing film and television and continues to use his contacts to provide paid and educational opportunities to students. Mark has many, high caliber professional Film and Television contacts. In 2013, Mark was also elected by Fine Arts faculty to serve as the Chair of Fine Arts. He is currently working with the Art Program to build a new student gallery in the North Plaza to enhance the educational experience and to encourage a more professional public perception for the program. Mark is also working with the Dance Program to ensure the success of the Integrated Studies Degree in Dance and to streamline the programs operations and recruitment efforts. Mark has successfully led a push for more organization and heightened safety standards and professional standard equipment in the Theatre Scene Shop and Costume Shop.

- Joe Fox was hired in 2012 as DSU Theatre's new Technical Director. Joe teaches DSU Theatre Lighting Design, Sound Design and Intro to Theatre courses. He also contributes by designing lights for the major productions of the season. He has proved to be a true mentor to the student technicians, taking time to teach them Vectorworks, as well as focusing on practical experience and safety in the Theatre environment. Joe has done a phenomenal job of bringing order to the scene shop and to the entire production process. His focus on safety and efficiency in our production scene shop has increased safety protocol and awareness, and timely operations. His influence has also increased the production value and built morale in our shops again. Joe has been working tirelessly to increase the safety standards and to ensure they are met in the shops and during production. Safety has been his number one priority from the beginning.
- DSU Theatre hired Russ Saxton, a reputable local high school theatre teacher, as their part-time Theatre Education consultant and faculty member, beginning Fall 2013. Mr. Saxton has already begun recruiting and is collaborating with other higher education institutions from around the state to build an outstanding Theatre Education Program. Russ has also been a great influence in reconnecting with local high schools and building the bridge to the community.

Enrollment and Revenue Data

	Prior to Program Implementation	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
		Est.	Actual	Est.	Actual	Est.	Actual
Departmental/Unit Enrollment and Staffing Data							
Total Department Student FTE (Based on Fall Third Week Data)	367		339		399		415
Total Department Faculty FTE (A-1/S-11/Cost Study Definition)	5	6	5	6	6	6	6
Student FTE per Faculty FTE (from Faculty FTE and Student FTE above)	73.4		67.8		66.5		69.17
Program Level Data							
Total Number of Declared Majors in Program	30	44	52	64	75	78	55
Total Number of Program Graduates	0		0		6		6

Departmental Revenue		Est.	Actual	Est.	Actual	Est.	Actual
Total Revenue to Department (Total of Funding Categories from R401 Budget Projection Table)			347,910		414,493		436,103
Departmental Instructional Cost per Student Credit Hour (per Institutional Cost Study Definition)		X	195,310	X	249,227	X	239,278

Enrollment Related Information

The DSU Theatre Program currently has 55 Theatre Majors: 24 female majors and 31 male majors. The average age of our theatre majors is 29.5. Ages range from 19 to 59. The average high school GPA of our theatre majors was 3.36. The average ACT test score of our majors was 26. Nine out of 55 majors reported that they have a job: but this was in response to a survey in which twelve students responded. Nine of 12 majors reported having a job while in college. One student reported "African American" as their ethnicity, and 11 out of 12 students reported "Caucasian" as their ethnicity. The program is working on recruiting effort to build diversity the program. We also expect an influx of Theatre Education Majors now that the Degree Emphasis is approved.

Institutional Analysis of Program to Date

Strengths

The program has developed the performance aspects of the program to a regionally competitive level. The majority of the faculty members continue to work in theatre, film, and television industries professionally. Each member of the faculty is committed to increasing standards within the curriculum and productions.

With a new program director and new networking, public relations, and marketing efforts, the program is rebuilding community bridges. There is a greater perception that DSU Theatre cares about its local talent and community. Due to new publicity efforts, the regular audience base is increasing. The additional income is allowing the department to increase production value and provide higher quality programming.

DSU Theatre is working to build a greater relationship with the community and desires to be on the forefront of rebuilding community support for the institution and the program. Part of the program's bridge-building strategy is to create awareness of our programs at the local high schools. We want to let our local high school students know we want them to attend Dixie State University. We have also made it a point to consider the local audience perspective more when selecting productions for each season. The balance achieved in DSU Theatre offerings over the last three years has supported the program's production budgets, aided in increasing the audience base, and eliminated an extreme 2012 budget deficit.

The program has been fortunate to see its faculty grow to support the undergraduate curriculum. The majority of faculty are adapting well to the change. Change, in general, has been a strength to the program, offering opportunities for introspection and innovation. It has also encouraged the program to rise to a higher standard.

With the organizational skills of new administration, the program has become more self-supporting and financially stable. The curriculum and the attitude of the faculty have become more centered on the student experience. Student morale and satisfaction is leveling out again and we are overcoming some of the growing pains we faced in the transition to university status and in rolling out our baccalaureate degrees.

Weaknesses

Technical programming. The program is working to build the technical aspects of the program. There is a need for balance in the technical areas to meet the needs of the performance and production aspects of the program. Currently the technical portion of the program is very weak.

Student-centered mentality. Some of the faculty are just realizing that the curriculum, production activities, opportunities and decisions should be more student centered. The program is working to create a more student-centered mentality.

Unprofessional behavior among faculty. There has been an air of distrust and disrespect toward new faculty and administration. Some of this is the result of the learning curve for new faculty and administration. The disconcerting issue is that faculty are speaking ill of other faculty members to colleagues outside the program and often to students in the classroom. This lack of professionalism sets the wrong precedent and puts students and colleagues in an unprofessional situation. This also contributes to retention challenges. Students and colleagues outside the Theatre Program are noticing the tensions among faculty. Administration has been working hard to build support, trust, and relationships that keep morale and a student-centered vision a priority. We are also working to provide more support to faculty to help them adjust and accept change.

Nepotism and confidentiality. The employment and enrollment of family members in the program has raised DSU nepotism policy issues. The DSU Human Resources Office and the president have recommended against the hiring of relatives within the Theatre Program due to past experience. Private and sensitive faculty meeting information has leaked out to faculty family, students, and to the public; causing unnecessary gossip and anxiety among the students or community toward the program and individual faculty members. This has happened numerous times, even with a precursor statement in each meeting and in private conversations that the information should not be discussed outside the body of the faculty or the office.

Ownership/entitlement issues. Opportunity for growth and mentoring of new faculty is often hindered by attitudes of ownership or entitlement among some of the long-standing faculty and staff. This challenge is clearly evident when it comes to course development, production assignments, and the summer Comedy Storm Season efforts developed by the faculty and staff of the program. Faculty are constantly reminded by administration that no one is entitled or owns any portion of the program. Administration has been working to encourage openness to allowing new faculty opportunities associated with production activities, assignments, and course instruction. The mandated 24 credit annual workload has also made it necessary to provide more diverse experiences for faculty while ensuring the same outcome for the students.

Developing relationships and a greater respect for our community. Recent assessment results show evidence that more work needs to be done to reconnect with the community. Conversations with some of the faculty over the last few years reveals a feeling of obligation to “reeducate an audience that is sheltered and un-cultured”. There seems to be a serious misperception that our “audiences do not matter.” The new Cultural Arts and Theatre audience development efforts have cultivated a new respect between the community and the program. Mark Houser is working with the DSU Cultural Arts Department to form a cultural arts board to rejuvenate community involvement.

Outreach, relationships with local high schools. The new Theatre Program Director spent his first year reconnecting with local high schools and continues the effort of connecting with local high school theatre programs and exploring rumors that local high schools were not recommending their students attend DSU for their college education. The

director found the answers to these rumors were the same in many instances – someone had voiced in public that the local students were expected, or obligated, to attend DSU, and that DSU did not need to reach out to local students and they would just come. Until recently, efforts to recruit local students or the lack thereof, have had the local high schools and their students confused and feeling like DSU in general did care about them. The program has just begun to see the results of DSU Theatre's efforts to reach out in a genuine manner to local high schools. The Fine Arts Department has recently formed a new recruitment committee, led by Mark Houser, to create an outreach arm of the School of Visual & Performing Arts. The effort is long overdue and anticipated to make an impact.

Overcoming Weaknesses

The two primary challenges and/or obstacles that make it difficult for the program to overcome its weaknesses are: 1) former leadership and faculty who are hesitant to accept change, and 2) trusting the new faculty to do what is best for the students and the program. Progress is being made but some of it appears to be on a superficial level.

Striking a balance between what is best for the students, what the faculty needs, and what the community needs, is an ongoing challenge with the dynamic of the faculty. The program has agreed to a season balance, which has benefited the students, strengthened community perceptions, served the broader demographic of the community, and allowed for personal, professional and artistic development of faculty. The financial stability of the program is another positive result of that agreement. If that balance can be maintained, the program will thrive on all levels.

The new administration is committed to maintaining the balance and to allowing the program faculty to operate democratically with the majority of faculty making decisions together for the good of the program. The Visual and Performing Arts Dean has been supportive in guiding the new department chair and director toward that balance in a more tactful manner. Executive administration has been aware of the many issues in the Theatre Program and has fully supported change and growth to help bring focus to the program's efforts.

Plan for the future

Over the next five years, the Theatre Program plans to hire new employees to fill the current positions for Technical Director, Scenic Design and Technology Faculty, and a part-time Costume Shop Manager. The program is asking for the part-time Costume Shop Manager position to be approved as a part-time staff position. The Theatre Program also needs a Theatre History and Literature Faculty position to enhance the program and provide greater curriculum coverage. The current hiring committee is looking at the secondary areas of expertise among candidates for the Technical Director and Scenic Design and Technology candidates to fill those requirements of the program.

From a human resources standpoint, and because of the nature of theatre, it may be appropriate to incorporate personality testing into the recruiting and hiring practices of the faculty. It is appropriate to help existing faculty adapt to change and gain new skills by providing them professional development opportunities that will benefit the program in terms of communication and professionalism. Administration is looking in to these types of opportunities and welcomes suggestions.

Building and bringing balance to the technical programming will be a priority within the next few years. The program will also be using existing funding to recruit for and build the technical program. This will provide the balance and resources to support the liberal arts curriculum and production activities.

A next priority is to build the Theatre Education Emphasis. With Russ Saxton currently as the Theatre Education Advisor and faculty member, the program has already seen some growing interest and improvements in the

emphasis area. This has also restored a relationship with Dixie High School (DHS) and many of the DSU theatre are looking to DSU for their continued education experience. Mr. Saxton has been a great influence and his research and ideas are getting our students excited for the future of the program.

A committee has been formed by the Director of Theatre/Chair of Fine Arts, to develop an outreach arm for the School of Fine Arts to increase awareness in our local high schools and build relationships with the school district and arts program teachers for recruiting.

The Theatre Program will continue to provide a balanced offering during their Mainstage, Black Box and summer production seasons, to serve the students and community. Currently, the agreement among the faculty is to provide more traditional and universally accessible productions on their Mainstage and more contemporary, experimental work in the Eccles Black Box space, during the Mainstage Season. All Seasons and productions in the venues, including Comedy Storm, will showcase a variety of offerings so there is something for everyone. Student experience and the curriculum will of course take priority but operations and show selections will continue with the surrounding community in mind. This train of thought and action ensures alignment with the mission of the institution.

Current administration is dedicated to working with the faculty to create a more cohesive environment, to build respect among students and faculty, and to continue to build morale. This will ensure the continued success of the students and faculty in the program while promoting an atmosphere of greater professionalism.

The DSU Theatre Costume Shop and storage are too small to adequately handle construction and storage of costumes. Furniture storage is also minimal. The program is exploring opportunities to expand, but this is likely long-term and at additional cost that exceeds current program resources.

DSU Theatre takes pride in the already established diversity of its student body, production offerings and faculty, and will continue to work to promote diversity in all areas.

Employment Information

The Theatre Program and their Theatre Advisor are working to gather more information on the alumni and graduates of the program. Many of the DSU graduates who achieved their BS/BA in theatre have moved on successfully to graduate school or are working in regional and professional theatre. Here are some achievements:

- Spencer Potter is successfully pursuing a graduate degree in Theatre Design from Utah State University.
- Melissa Erickson is working as a stage manager in Missouri.
- Rebecca Wright is currently at the Mary Baldwin College Graduate Program in Elizabethan Studies.
- Jarom Brown has successfully finished his graduate degree and now teaches as an adjunct for DSU Theatre. Jarom has received his MLitt with High Honors.
- Alumnus Slate Holmgren appeared in the Classic Stage Company Off-Broadway productions of *Double Falsehood* and *The Cherry Orchard*, (Starring Diane Wiest).
- Adam London headlines his own show at Showroom D in Las Vegas. Adam has worldwide credits and recently appeared in the TV sitcom *Raising Hope*.

Many of the current theatre students continue to work with professional organizations in the area such as the Utah Shakespeare Festival and Tuacahn Center for the Arts. One of our current students is working as a makeup artist in a new Broadway production in New York City. Other graduates are working successfully in jobs that DSU theatre's liberal education was designed to prepare them for in retail and other commercial industries.