

Theatre Degree Assessment

Learning and skill outcomes for the program have been shaped with careful reference to the National Association of Schools of Theatre guidelines. Program design and management are founded in the following standards:

1. A holistic approach to the practice of theatre shall be emphasized in program curriculum and related production activities. Students will be well-founded in the general discipline before specializing in elective courses.
2. Attention will be given to breadth in general studies and to attitudes relating to human and personal considerations that give communities and individuals their identities.
3. Students will be prepared to relate their understanding of artistic styles to human history and to contemporary issues.
4. Students will develop competence in essential professional, performance, production, and technical skills as a result of experiences in elective courses and production activities.

Expected Standards of Performance

Graduates of the program will have the following competencies:

1. The ability to think conceptually and critically about text, performance, and production.
2. The ability to develop and defend informed judgments about theatre.
3. An understanding of playwriting and production processes, aesthetic properties of style, and the way these shape and are shaped by artistic and cultural forces.
4. An acquaintance with a wide selection of theatre repertory including the principal eras, styles, genres and cultural sources.
5. An understanding of procedures and approaches for realizing a variety of theatrical styles.
6. Technical skills requisite for artistic self-expression in areas of performance and/or design and technology appropriate to individual needs and interests, and consistent with the goals and objectives of the specific emphasis program being followed.
7. 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.

Program Assessment

Individual courses are the building block components of the program, and the first level of program assessment will be tied directly to course assessment. Program success will be evaluated through accumulation and analysis of course assessment tools which are designed to measure achievement of specific course objectives. Data gathered from course assessments will be used to improve learning activities in areas showing lower student success. Students will demonstrate mastery of core and emphasis content knowledge through formative and summative course evaluations. Within a context of appropriate courses, students will demonstrate arts performance and production skills by preparing art works suitable for a public audience.

An additional major assessment tool will be senior projects, required of each graduating student in the degree. The projects will be designed to reflect acquired knowledge and skills. Senior projects represent assimilation of curriculum components and focus on performance and production activities, and will also include a written component. The projects will present a level of expertise and skill that could secure employment for students in their areas of emphasis. The response of the public, of critics, and of outside experts to senior projects will be used to assess success, and feedback from the projects will aid in further strengthening the degree design.

Standards of performance will be specifically assessed as follows:

Standards 1, 3, 6, and 7 will be assessed primarily in the senior project.

Standard 2 will be assessed through student papers that evaluate theatre performances at DSC and at other venues. Such papers are required in several courses throughout the student's experience in the program, including THEA 1001, THEA 1033, THEA 1513, THEA 2210, THEA 3600, THEA 3720, and THEA 3730.

Standards 4, 5, and 6 will be assessed through projects and papers in THEA 3720, Theatre History I and THEA 3730, Theatre History II, and through evidence of a production program that includes dramatic literature of varied styles and from varied historical periods.

Coursework within the proposed degree is designed to prepare students with baccalaureate level core knowledge and skills in the students' chosen area(s) of emphasis. It is anticipated that graduates will enter the professional job market or continue training in a master's degree program. Beyond graduation, the department advisement office will track experiences of graduates as they move forward in employment, graduate studies, and other professional activities. Information gathered from surveys of graduates will be used to identify program strengths and weaknesses to the end of improving the curriculum. A component of graduate surveys will be an evaluation of graduates' satisfaction with their training.

All of these assessment activities will be incorporated into the ongoing formal institutional accreditation process, which functions with regularly scheduled external evaluations and self-reports. Other specifically fine-arts-related external higher education accreditation organizations, such as the National Association of Schools of Theatre, will also be used to aid in assessment.