



**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**

**Institutional Program Review
Report to the Board of Regents**

Use this form to submit a program review report to the system Chief Academic Officer. Complete this form for all units/programs undergoing an accreditation review, nationally recognized review process, or institutional program review. The report is due 30 days following receipt of the external and internal review reports.

UNIVERSITY:	NSU
DEPARTMENT OR SCHOOL:	Department of Art & Theatre
PROGRAM REVIEWED:	BA in Theatre
DATE OF REVIEW:	2/16/2023
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Institutional Program Review

University Approval

To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this report, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.

President of the University

5/8/2023

Date

1. Identify the program reviewers and any external accrediting body:

Dr. Kimi Johnson, University of Minnesota

2. Items A & B should address the following issues: mission centrality, program quality, cost, program productivity, plans for the future, and assessment of progress.

2(A). Describe the strengths and weaknesses identified by the reviewers

Strengths

- a. Current metrics show that enrollments have steadily increased since implementing the redesigned curriculum in 2020. The lower credit requirement for a Theatre Major has enabled double-majoring for interested students.
- b. NSU’s Theatre Program has a small, but incredibly dedicated faculty and staff. They model professional behavior and offer quality instruction to students in a welcoming and unbiased fashion. They also represent the program in the broader community, working as artists in the broader Aberdeen community, region, and in national venues.
- c. Courses are taught in both online and HyFlex modalities, and many program courses focus on writing as a primary expressive component.
- d. A new repertoire has focused on smaller, more intimate productions that are better suited to the size of the program and student/staff ability to execute prior to a production’s run. These shows allow a broader range of students to participate in the program, which welcomes a more diverse skill set.

Areas for Improvement & Limitations

- a. The program is challenged by low enrollments. The department currently houses 11 majors; theatre productions are open to all and average a quarter of each cast from other majors at the university. NSU administration continues to support the program and has a firm understanding of its value to the campus, Aberdeen, and regional communities.
- b. The program is currently understaffed.
- c. Nearly half of interviewed students indicated that they view participation in productions as a commitment they can't always accommodate. Many theatre students work evenings and weekends. As such, Faculty report partial rehearsals and under-filled work calls.

2(B). Briefly summarize the review recommendations

Additional Faculty - The need for a third full-time faculty member is critical. Currently, departmental duties are spread between two full-time faculty, one full-time instructor shared with the music department, and one full-time staff member shared with the music department. Theatre faculty also maintain active schedules for Service and Academic Research. Long-term planning raises the question of how the department will function during tenured faculty sabbaticals.

Faculty Retention - Staff retention may become an ongoing issue without administrative intervention in the near future. The scope of assigned duties and workloads must be addressed.

Role in the Larger University - It is recommended that in the current climate of low-enrolled program scrutiny that both the Theatre program and the NSU administrators re-emphasize the importance of an active theatre program in the university community. The types of art created by a university theatre program benefits the broader Aberdeen and South Dakotan communities beyond what enrollment numbers may indicate.

Pedagogical Updates - It is recommended that the program create a World Theatres course and its addition as a requirement within each of the BA emphases. It is recommended that the department also create a course for non-majors/non-minors that focuses on performance for professional spaces (e.g. Performance for Teaching, Performance for Business). This course would focus on the benefits of a theatre skillset in applied situations, helping to build confidence, improvisation skills, and professional manners for a student's future employment.

External Community Building - Changes to NSU Theatre's repertoire have necessarily changed the program's relationship with the broader Aberdeen community. The Season Selection Committee has been an excellent way to bring the community into this change, but additional community outreach may be warranted. It is recommended that the program offer community events prior to shows to educate and entice performance attendance. Where appropriate, utilizing student efforts for community outreach would also ensure that additional responsibilities are not added to the schedules of the Theatre faculty/staff. While the NSU community regularly attends program productions, additional advertising both on the NSU campus and in the broader Aberdeen media is also recommended.

Purchasing Cards - Limited distribution of purchasing cards to select individuals is a standard practice within professional companies and academic theatre programs and its lack at NSU was a notable exception.

2(C). Indicate the present and continuous actions to be taken by the college or department to address the issues raised by the review. What outcomes are anticipated as a result of these actions?

Enrollments

- a. Implementation of a revised Digital Media unit (Art) and a new Arts Technology Emphasis (Music). These will both draw upon Theatre students, and our productions, to provide hands-on experience to those majors. This co-curricular growth within the School of Fine Arts depends on the contributions of Theatre faculty.
- b. Beginning in Fall 2023, students who participate in theatre productions will be required to take credits.
- c. Anticipated outcomes include improved overall theatre enrollments and credit hour production.

Additional Faculty

- a. At this time, current formula ratios governing *credit hours to FTE* make it unlikely additional faculty will be hired until enrollments and credit hour production levels improve.

Pedological Updates

- a. It is unlikely that a World Theatre course can be added to the curriculum anytime soon. However, existing courses (THEA 250: Play Analysis) and theatre history (THEA 460: Theatre History) have been identified as courses that can both be taught with greater specialization in areas that expand *course content* offerings in world theatre.
- b. Anticipated outcomes include improved the delivery of broader course content.

Community Engagement

- a. Theatre faculty are considering partnering with Aberdeen Community Theatre as a means of broadening our audience.
- b. The student theatre group *Masquers* is being examined as a potential means of bringing in more student audiences, by leveraging peer connections and social media advertising.

Purchasing Cards

- a. At this time, current purchasing policies and procedures do not allow the issuing of Purchasing Cards for use by faculty or staff.

3. Starting in Fall 2019 reporting year, campuses will identify the undergraduate cross-curricular skill requirements as part of programmatic student learning outcomes and identify assessment methods for cross-curricular skill requirements as outlined in Board Policy 2:11. Program review completed prior to Fall 2019 need not include cross curricular skills.

Please see the curricular map on the following page.

Course Mapping - Cross-Curricular THEATRE (BA)							
	Core Required Courses						
Key	THEA 100: Introduction to Theatre	THEA 131: Introduction to Acting	THEA 241: Stagecraft	THEA 250: Play Analysis	THEA 289: Theatre Activities	THEA 351: Directing	THEA 498: Undergraduate Research (Senor Project)
K = creates knowledge							
C = creates competency							
M = creates mastery							
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLOS)							
<p>PLO 1: Critical & Creative Thinking, Foundational Lifelong Learning Skills</p> <p>Students will acquire and demonstrate an understanding of fundamental theatrical production techniques, and the ability to perform those techniques properly and safely.</p>	K			C	K		
<p>PLO 2: Critical & Creative Thinking, Information Literacy, Intercultural Knowledge</p> <p>Students will acquire and demonstrate analytical, preparatory, memorization, and interpretation skills around dramatic literature, which enable understanding and performance of roles in a wide variety of styles and formats.</p>		K	C			C	M
<p>PLO 3: Inquiry and Analysis, Information Literacy, Intercultural Knowledge</p> <p>Students will acquire and demonstrate an understanding of the history of theatre, its origins, and its evolution into current forms of practice and presentation.</p>	K			C		C	
<p>PLO 4: Critical & Creative Thinking, Problem Solving, Teamwork</p> <p>Students will acquire and demonstrate an understanding the theatre production process, and each individual's role in collaboratively bringing a production to fruition.</p>	K		K		K		M
<p>PLO 5: Teamwork, Access and Opportunity</p> <p>Students will acquire and demonstrate the skills needed to succeed in leadership positions. By working in both leadership and subordinate roles, they will learn to constructively give and receive feedback, work with diverse personality types, and learn empathy skills as they relate to working with people with various strengths and weaknesses in a theatre rehearsal setting.</p>		K				C	M