

Form E-1-A for Boston College Core Curriculum: 2020

Department/Program: Theatre Department

- 1) **Have formal learning outcomes for the department's Core courses been developed? What are they?** (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect students completing its Core courses to have acquired?)
 - a. To serve the University as a Fine Arts Core requirement:
 - i. Description of University Arts Core: (<http://www.bc.edu/sites/core/requirements/arts.html>)

“The need to make, experience, and comprehend art has been one of the essential, defining human activities since history began. The arts are thus integral to human experience and expression, the development of critical interpretive skills, an understanding of creative processes, and the fostering of imagination and empathy. The critically engaged practice of the arts, arrived at through rigorous training, uniquely nurtures creativity and innovation. Anchored in experimentation and creative problem-solving, the arts challenge students to make connections across traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Three credits of coursework in art history, studio art, film, music or theater are required and will address some combination of the following criteria: students will acquire a greater understanding of the technical skills required to create works of art; students will gain knowledge of the aesthetic questions raised by works of art; and students will understand the historical contexts in which such works were created. As a result, students will be able to engage meaningfully with art through creative work and/or to articulate their understanding of art in oral and written expression.”
 - b. Departmental goals for Theatre Core courses:
 - i. To inform students about the value and nature of theatre in and of itself in the hope that they will be able to enjoy theatre in the future; it is also to encourage them as playgoers and future supporters of the arts in general.
 - ii. To learn to approach variety of types of plays from a theatre perspective analytically, introduce students to the fundamentals of theatre practice, all with an eye toward providing a foundation upon which more advanced theatre classes can be built.
 - iii. To build an audience for our own Theatre Department productions via Intro student attendance at our productions.
 - iv. To encourage non-theatre students to take additional theatre courses here, perhaps even consider pursuing theatre as a major or minor.
- 2) **Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific.** (Where are the department's expected learning outcomes for its Core courses accessible: on the web, in the catalog, or in your department handouts?)

www.bc.edu/core for university goals

These Core Theatre Department outcomes are not published but the overall learning outcomes are published at <https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/theatre/about/learning-outcomes.html>

Learning Outcomes:

A graduating Boston College Theatre major will be able to:

- analyze dramatic texts, theatrical events, and experimental forms with critical intelligence;
- articulate an understanding of the role of theater in culture and society and how each shapes the other over time;
- collaborate with others and solve problems in the planning and production of theatrical events;
- exhibit creativity and imagination in making theater—in attitude, process, and ability;
- demonstrate proficiency in one or more of the following disciplines: acting, directing, design, playwriting, stage management, and technical production.

- 3) **Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether students have achieved the stated outcomes for the Core requirement?** (What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes have been achieved more or less well?)

The survey, which has been consistent from year to year, will be sent next year. [See Addendum A on page 3 for the 2018 results].

Course evaluations from this this academic year were used to as insight into students learning. Taking their comments verbatim from the forms, it demonstrates that they are achieving the learning outcomes we intended. Here are some selected comments from the course evaluations spanning all sections.

- 4) **Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?** (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate? When does this occur?)

The Chairperson and the Assistant Chairperson will evaluate the data at the end of the academic year. If changes are warranted, they will be discussed with all of the teachers of the core courses at the beginning of the academic year or earlier if necessary.

It is the consensus of the Chair, Crystal Tiala, and the Assistant Chair, Luke Jorgensen, that these are positive results. We are not recommending changes at the current time.

Four out of our eight full-time faculty have all taught core pilot courses in the past but there are no plans at this time to apply to teach another one. Megan Stahl, one of our part time teachers, taught a course that was developed as a Core course within the new initiative, Difference, Justice, and the Common Good. Her course is called “*Performing the Immigrant Experience*” and was rolled out in the Spring, 2020, with great reviews.

These results will be shared with all teachers of the core in Theater and their feedback will be encouraged.

- 5) **What were the assessment results and what changes have been made as a result of using this data/evidence?** (What were the major assessment findings? Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? How did the assessment data contribute to those changes?)

Megan Stahl created *Performing the Immigrant Experience* through the DJCG initiative to add a diversity component to the Theatre Department. The course went very well and we have it on the schedule for next year. Now that we have heard the very positive reviews, we will likely add more sections in the future.

6) **Date of the most recent program review.** (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)

2013 was the most recent date for the Theatre Department comprehensive self-study and external review. We will review our program at the departmental level on an annual basis.

Addendum A

Survey results from 2019F and 2020S. The questions address the core objectives for the arts. There were **261 total responses** from students for the Fall & Spring semester combined

Responses:

The core class they enrolled in:

- Introduction to Theater: 90%
- Elements of Dance: 3.4%
- Dramatic Structure and Theatrical Practice 3.1%
- Performing the Immigrant Experience 3.4%

Were you exposed to the art form of Theatre and the methods with which it is created?

- Definitely 82.8% (92.2% in 2018, 85.6% in 2017)
- Somewhat 15.3%
- Not at all 1.9%

Are you able to discern how theatre has been used through history to both teach and entertain its audience?

- Definitely 74.3% (85.8% in 2018, 80.7% in 2017)
- Somewhat 23%
- Not at all 2.7%

Do you think that you are now able to have an intelligent discussion about theater and its practice?

- Definitely 60.2% (61.7% in 2018, 56.6% in 2017)
- Somewhat 32.6%
- Not at all 7.3%

Have found any connection between the Theater Core course and other disciplines on campus?

- Definitely 47.5% (49.6% in 2018, 46.3% in 2017)
- Somewhat 33.7%
- Not at all 18.8%

Do you feel your theater study has enhanced your awareness of the human experience?

- Definitely 51.7% (50.4% in 2018, 44.9% in 2017)
- Somewhat 35.2%
- Not at all 13.0%

Were you introduced to new concepts and methods of artistic expression through exposure to theater and theatrical practice?

- Definitely 72.4% (78.0% in 2018, 77.5 in 2017)
- Somewhat 23.0%
- Not at all 4.6%

Do you feel you better understand how quality theater is produced?

- Definitely 72.8% (84.4 in 2018, 76.7% in 2017)
- Somewhat 19.9%
- Not at all 7.3%

Do you feel your theater study has enhanced your awareness of your own culture and other cultures unlike your own?

- Definitely 50.2% (50.4% in 2018, 48.3% in 2017)
- Somewhat 37.9%
- Not at all 11.9%

Are you more likely now to see a play than before you took this class?

- Definitely 52.5% (58.9% in 2018, 53.8% in 2017)
- Somewhat 34.1%
- Not at all 13.4%

Do you feel you have gained new skills that help you creatively solve problems?

- Definitely 32.2% (34.8% in 2018, 27.7% in 2017)
- Somewhat 42.1%
- Not at all 25.7%

Would you have taken this course if it did not fulfill the Core requirement?

- yes 12.6% (13.5% in 2018, 15.1% in 2017)
- maybe 26.1%
- no 61.3%

How do you feel about what you have learned in this course?

- Very satisfied 65.1% (67.3% in 2018, 60.9% in 2017)
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 26.1%
- Dissatisfied 8.8%