



Revised 10-14-2004 (see top sheet)

BY:.....

- A. College: Arts and Sciences
Department: SCTD/Theatre Division
Date of Submission: November 1, 2004
- B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan:
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Director of the Graduate Program in Theatre
- C. Program: Master of Arts in Theatre
- D. Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Plan
 - 1. Student Learning Outcomes
Of the twelve Student Learning Outcomes, our program will focus upon the following two outcomes in our three-year assessment plan.

1. A competency in a chosen specialization (acting, directing, design, etc.) as demonstrated in a final Master's Project, and/or general proficiency in a broad based background in Theatre Arts demonstrated through coursework and a final Master's Report or Thesis.

2. The ability to think critically and analytically, and the capacity to demonstrate this ability in writing and in speech.

Special rationale for selecting these learning outcomes (optional):

None

Relationship to K-state Student Learning Outcomes (Insert the program SLO's and indicate all that apply):

1. A competency in a chosen specialization (acting, directing, design, etc.) as demonstrated in a final Master's Project, and/or general proficiency in a broad based background in Theatre Arts demonstrated through coursework and a final Master's Report or Thesis.

This SLO fulfills all three of the Kansas State Student Learning Outcomes at the Graduate level: Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes and Professional Conduct.

2. The ability to think critically and analytically, and the capacity to demonstrate this ability in writing and in speech.

This SLO fulfills two of the Kansas State Student Learning Outcomes at the Graduate level: Knowledge and Skills.

D. 2. "How will this learning outcome be assessed? What groups will be included in the assessment?"

SLO Number 1: A competency in a chosen specialization (acting, directing, design, etc.) as demonstrated in a final Master's Project, and/or general proficiency in a broad based background in Theatre Arts demonstrated through coursework and a final Master's Report or Thesis."

This outcome will be assessed via a compiling of portfolios of the capstone work of the program: the final project, thesis or report required of all graduate students. Portfolios will include, if relevant, representative work of the student undertaken in the particular area of the final project/thesis/report, and all materials associated with and comprising the final/project/thesis/report. All graduate students in the Masters program will be included within the assessment group.

The above procedure is a direct method of assessment. An additional indirect method will be utilized by adding one or more questions pertaining to assessment to Graduate student exit interviews.

SLO Number 2: .The ability to think critically and analytically, and the capacity to demonstrate this ability in writing and in speech.

The groups included within this assessment parameter are the three dramatic literature, theory & criticism courses taught at the 800 level (Greek & Roman Theatre--THTRE 870, Medieval & Baroque Theatre--THTRE 871, Modern Theatre--THTRE 879), required of all graduate students.

This assessment parameter will consist of a representative portfolio of student's work in the class. The classes are *heavily* oriented toward critical thinking; there are three tiers of written assignments that are used in assessment:

1) All classes involve a reading assignment for that session, either a representative work of dramatic literature, or an essay/book chapter of dramatic criticism and/or theory. Each student is required to "interrogate the text" for the session by preparing written answers to such questions as: "[for plays] What does the play 'mean?' How do we determine meaning with reference to a work of dramatic imagination? Has the passage of time altered the meaning in any way? How? Is the play purely a product of its own time and place, or does it carry universal implications? Is this a good play, a great play? Why or why not? On what basis do we determine what is 'good,' anyway?" [And for critical essays]: "What points or issues brought up by the material raise implications that are worth following up on? What is problematic about the material; what, if anything, do you find yourself disagreeing with? What possible contrary views would you like to offer instead? When issues are raised or opinions expressed in class discussion, do you agree with everything that is said? If not, why not?" The overall point of the daily written assignment is to encourage students to approach the material with an alert, questioning, *active* intellectual perspective, rather than just passively receiving it."

2) Each student is required to prepare two plays for presentation to the class in the form of short (app. 1000 words), formal papers that are read to the class, and then turned in for grading. The papers require the students to research the critical literature surrounding the plays, choose one essay for presentation, and then write a formal paper summarizing the critic's evaluation and interpretation of the play, together with the student's own critical response to the critical essay, all with reference to the underlying work of dramatic literature which is being critiqued and examined for that class session. The assignment additionally requires that one of these formal papers adopt a critical essay with which the student disagrees, and then justify this disagreement.

3) A final, longer paper (15-20 pages) on one or more of the plays and essays comprising the content of the class, that involves extensive research, and the construction of an original, critical argument oriented with reference to the topic of the paper.

The assessment of the critical thinking parameter is as follows: the work of the class as indicated above is graded/"assessed" into three tiers on the basis of the following criteria:

1) Work that is above average to excellent. The student's written assignments are generally lucid, stylish, and executed with compelling force. The student's work exhibits sophistication, conceptual density, the ability to synthesize new ideas, and independence of mind. The student shows potential to proceed to the doctoral level in the field of Drama and Theatre Studies.

2) Work that is acceptable, average, or mildly above average. The student's written assignments are capably written with reference to grammar and syntax, and display a basic understanding of both the material and the primary critical issues surrounding the material, but reveal no deeper aptitude for critical evaluation. At this time, student's work is acceptable at the Masters level, but reveals only a weak or dubious aptitude for more advanced study. Typically, most students in this category have previously expressed a preference for continued work in the Theatre in some aspect of performance or production, rather than scholarship.

3) Work that is problematic or significantly flawed and needs, minimally, remedial attention. The student's written assignments are more or less chronically flawed grammatically, frequently reveal not even a literal understanding of the material (or, better, take everything at face value), and reveal almost no aptitude for abstract, critical, or conceptual thinking. Students in this category can occasionally improve dramatically (the underlying problem was poor work habits and personal discipline), but more often are eventually dismissed from the program.

For purposes of assessment, portfolios for this SLO will contain only the second written assignment indicated above, the two one thousand word shorter critical papers.

The above procedure is a direct method of assessment. An additional indirect method will be utilized via adding one or more questions to the TEVAL evaluations (student's own evaluation of the class/group) pertaining to assessment.

D. 3. When will the outcomes be assessed? When and in what form will the results of the assessment be discussed?

Assessment will begin Spring semester, 2006. The portfolios will be utilized primarily at the time of the oral final examination for the Master's degree, and will be assessed, in this context, by the graduate committees of individual students.

All grading for individual materials will be done by the faculty person who is the instructor of the course in which the assignment is made. In the case of final projects/theses/reports, this responsibility will pass to the head of the student's individual committee. The assessment will be conducted by the graduate committees of each individual student at the time of the oral examination, and rated on the following rubric:

- 1) Work that is above average to excellent.
- 2) Work that is acceptable, average, or mildly above average.
- 3) Work that is problematic or significantly flawed and needs, minimally, remedial attention.

The specific criteria of these ratings will depend, with respect to SLO #1, on the nature and field of the final project/thesis/report (Note: all "projects" in this SLO have potential wide variability given the various individual sub-disciplines within the Theatre division: acting, directing, playwriting, scene design, costume design, technical theatre & stage management, etc.). With respect to SLO #2, the criteria will follow the model as indicated in D.2. above.

Assessment will begin in the Spring semester, 2006. All committees will report their results to the entire graduate faculty during the Fall Semester of each school year.

Portfolios will be instituted Spring 2005.

Assessment question on Tevals will begin Spring 2005.

First review of portfolios will begin Spring 2006.

D. 4. What is the unit's process for using assessment results to improve student learning?

The graduate faculty will meet in the Fall of each year to review the rated portfolios and Teval responses. On the basis of this review, the faculty will suggest possible revisions to the curriculum, the assessment process and or the Student Learning Outcomes. The Theatre program is also accredited by NAST (National Association of Schools of Theatre) and is reviewed periodically. Self evaluation is central to this self study and visitation and will also be a means of continuing assessment.