

**THE DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE'S**

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2005-2009**

[Approved on 11-11-05]

The Department of Theatre's Mission Statement:

The Department of Theatre serves the students by teaching and creating theatre as a discipline in the context of a traditional liberal arts institution. This means that students learn how to think critically and creatively about an important body of material and how to give those thoughts scholarly and artistic expression. Instruction in theatre is both theoretical and practical; it combines knowledge and skill. Students are required to test theory in creative practice and to become proficient in devising solutions to complex problems.

The department is committed to provide curricular and co-curricular programs of the highest quality. Through its programming, the department seeks to nurture and develop audience sensibilities and critical skills within the campus community and to bring distinction to the College through its productions.

Like the College as a whole, the Department of Theatre is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, and service to the community. The Department of Theatre's mission is articulated through the following specific descriptives:

- M1 To offer an exemplary curriculum designed to provide the Davidson student skills in problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking within the framework of an appreciation for the art and science of theatre;
- M2 To develop in students those abilities requisite to achieving a high quality theatrical production through their participation in theatre performances;
- M3 To provide theatre majors with a solid foundation in theatre studies within a liberal arts education, preparing them for professional training, graduate school or careers in a variety of disciplines;
- M4 To teach students effective leadership skills;
- M5 To offer yearly production seasons that reflect diversity in genre and aesthetic style coupled with academic panels and symposiums on related subject matters;
- M6 To support theatre students with theatre faculty and staff who remain artistically and intellectually active in appropriate professional arenas;
- M7 To invite all students regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, physical ability, and/or sexual orientation to participate in our classes and productions;
- M8 To provide performance facilities, construction shops and auxiliary spaces that enhance the student's learning experience; and
- M9 To foster and develop audiences within the Davidson community and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region through its high quality public programs.

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE'S VALUES

Ia. WHAT WE VALUE IN OUR FACULTY AND STAFF:

- We value excellence in teaching, advising, mentoring, and supervision of practical work at all levels.
- We value a diverse faculty and staff that possess a variety of artistic and intellectual philosophies, methods, and experiences.
- We value a faculty and staff who are committed to collaboration as the foundation of production.
- We value a faculty and staff who remain artistically and intellectually active in appropriate professional arenas.

Ib. WHAT WE VALUE IN OUR PRODUCTION PHILOSOPHY:

- We value artistic excellence.
- We value a production season that reflects diversity in genre and aesthetic style.
- We value providing performance and backstage opportunities to all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, physical ability, and/or sexual orientation.
- We value making efficient and effective use of all available resources including facilities, faculty, staff and the student body.

IIa. HOW OUR VALUES SERVE D. C. & THE LARGER COMMUNITY:

- We value diverse production seasons that both challenge and entertain.
- We value fostering advocacy for the arts.
- We value establishing and fostering relationships with alumni.

IIb. HOW OUR VALUES SERVE THE NON-MAJOR DAVIDSON COLLEGE STUDENT:

- We value assisting each student in developing confidence, discipline, self-awareness, and creativity in preparation for lives of leadership and service in a variety of fields.
- We value encouraging our students to experiment, to take artistic and intellectual risks, and to make bold choices, both in the classroom and in the production process.
- We value cultivating thoughtful, critical, and appreciative audiences.

IIc. HOW OUR VALUES SERVE THE THEATRE MAJOR:

- We value a departmental commitment to nurturing and assessing the individual student's artistic and intellectual growth.
- We value a balance between theory and practice.
- We value cultivating leadership within the context of a collaborative process.
- We value providing majors with a solid foundation in theatre studies within a liberal arts education, one which adequately prepares them for professional training, graduate school, or careers in a variety of disciplines.

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE'S VALUES AND GOALS

Ia. WHAT WE VALUE IN OUR FACULTY AND STAFF:

- We value excellence in teaching, advising, mentoring, and supervision of practical work at all levels.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To support faculty research, faculty-student collaboration, and professional/scholarly opportunities.

ACTION STEP:

a) Explore funding opportunities to support G1. (all: ongoing)

G2: To provide our faculty and staff with the best possible facilities and instructional support for both teaching and production.

ACTION STEP:

a) Conduct a feasibility study of Cunningham that assesses the needs of the department.
(Costa: projected due date: began April '05 & ongoing)

G2: To advocate for an additional FTE to College Administration (all: ongoing).

- We value a diverse faculty and staff that possess a variety of artistic and intellectual philosophies, methods, and experiences.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To stress the importance of diversity in all hiring decisions. (ongoing)

G2: To employ qualified adjuncts who have expertise in needed areas of teaching. (ongoing)

G3: To hire a costume designer. (ongoing)

- We value a faculty and staff who are committed to collaboration as the foundation of production.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To schedule regular production meetings and post-mortems for all of our productions. (ongoing)

- We value a faculty and staff who remain artistically and intellectually active in appropriate professional arenas.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To encourage our faculty and staff to work, produce, and/or publish regularly within the profession. (ongoing)

Ib. WHAT WE VALUE IN OUR PRODUCTION PHILOSOPHY:

- We value artistic excellence.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To maintain, to the best of our abilities and resources, the highest production standards within our performance season. (ongoing)

G2: To expose our students to the production process.

ACTION STEP:

a) Maintain an updated and user-friendly website that details the production process (ongoing)

- We value a production season that reflects diversity in genre and aesthetic style.

PROPOSED GOAL:

G1: To re-examine our play selection process.

ACTION STEPS:

a) Following a review of the play selection process, implement changes if necessary
(Gardner: projected due date: Feb. '08)

- We value providing performance and backstage opportunities to all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, physical ability, and/or sexual orientation.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To create a mandatory casting policy for our productions that incorporates the above value.
(projected due date: completed)

G2: To encourage more participation of minority students in our department.

ACTION STEPS:

a) To strategize ways we can get more minority students to audition for our productions
(Gardner: projected due date Feb. '08)

- We value making efficient and effective use of all available resources including facilities, faculty, staff and the student body.

PROPOSED GOAL:

G1: To secure the upper-administration's support for renovating Cunningham.

ACTION STEP:

a) To begin creating a space utilization plan for Cunningham, supported by available data on activities, so that such a plan can be used to advocate for improvements.
(Costa: began April '05 and ongoing)

IIa. HOW OUR VALUES SERVE D. C. & THE LARGER COMMUNITY:

- We value diverse production seasons that both challenge and entertain.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To offer production seasons that are attractive to the community at large.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Create and conduct a survey to discover what kinds of plays our audiences want to see.
(Ripley & Minogue: projected due date: May '06)
- b) Place a play suggestion box outside the theatre. (Shinn: projected due date: Oct. '05 and ongoing)

G2: To devise an effective marketing and publicity plan for our production season.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Consider conducting a survey geared toward non-attendees.
(Ripley and Minogue: projected due date: Jan '07)
- b) Meet with College Communications to discuss marketing and publicity.
(Costa: projected due date: Dec. '05)
- c) Design and implement a step-by-step effective marketing plan.
(Costa and Ripley: projected due date: May '07 & ongoing)

G3: To expose our audiences to diverse social, cultural, and historical perspectives.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Review carefully our play-selection process to determine whether or not the above value is being met and, if needed, recommend implementation strategies. (Gardner: projected due date: Dec '07)
- b) Explain to our audiences through production programs our departmental philosophy for determining play choices.
(Gardner: projected due date: Feb. '08)

G4: To place the study and practice of theatre within important, relevant contexts.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Create events annually that engage the audience in a critical response to the artistic choices and social issues sparked by a particular production. (all: ongoing)
- b) Whenever possible, involve faculty members from other disciplines into our production process.
(all: ongoing)

- We value fostering advocacy for the arts.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To encourage Davidson College students to attend and participate in various cultural events on and off campus.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Display a list of area performances in the hallway of Cunningham. (Shinn: ongoing)

- b) Recommend students' attendance at D.C.'s RSC productions and workshops, the Artist Series productions, local theatre performances, and other relative cultural events. (all: ongoing)
- c) Incorporate area productions into curriculum. (all faculty: ongoing)

G2: To raise the profile of the arts on this campus and in the greater Charlotte community.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Submit regularly faculty news to the Faculty Notes in the Davidson Journal. (all faculty: ongoing)
- b) Pitch theatre stories to the Davidson Journal on a regular basis. (all faculty: ongoing)
- c) Seek arts advocacy related opportunities in which theatre students, theatre faculty and staff can participate. (all faculty: ongoing)
- d) Serve as a coordinator for the Metrolina Theatre Association. (Higdon: ongoing thru July '08)
- e) Plan and execute a co-production of a mainstage musical with the Music Department. (Costa: projected due date: May '08 and ongoing)

G3: To encourage our theatre faculty and staff to contribute to the artistic and intellectual life of the community.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Serve on the Artist Series Committee whenever possible. (Green: ongoing)
- b) Serve on the Play Selection Committee of the Davidson Community Players. (Costa: ongoing)
- c) Continue theatre and social change projects within the Davidson community. (Costa: ongoing)
- d) Serve on DC's RSC Advisory Board. (Costa and Gardner: ongoing)
- e) Present panels and symposiums connected to our productions. (all: ongoing)
- f) Serve on various campus-wide committees. (all faculty: ongoing)
- g) Serve on the Friends of the Arts Board. (Chair: ongoing)
- h) Serve on Honor's thesis committees within other department when appropriate. (all faculty: ongoing)
- i) Coordinate the DC's RSC 2007 Symposium. (Costa: projected due date: May '07)

- We value establishing and fostering relationships with alumni.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To establish lines of communication between theatre alumni and our current students.

ACTION STEP:

- a) Meet with key players in the Alumni office to create an alumni action plan for G1. (Costa & Gardner: projected due date: May '08)
- b) Display on a Cunningham bulletin board a listing of alumni' recent accomplishments as well as current theatre department events. (Shinn: projected due date: Feb. '07 and ongoing)
- b) Post news of alumni on the department website. (Ripley and Minogue: projected due date: Feb. '07 and ongoing)

G2: To make connections with theatre and non-major alumni as potential donors for departmental needs, such as the Cunningham renovation and theatre scholarships. (all: on-going)

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Create and publish annually an electronic alumni newsletter/directory dating back to 1982.
(Ripley/Shinn/Minogue: projected due date: May '08)
- b) Transfer our theatre alumni list to the Theatre Department list on Banner.
(Shinn: projected due dates: May '07)
- c) Meet with College Relations to help expedite our Cunningham renovation goals.
(Costa: projected due date: May '09)
- d) Whenever possible, keep in close contact with potential donors through letters, email, in person meetings, etc.
(all: ongoing)
- e) Secure a second theatre scholarship.
(Costa & Green : projected due date: June '09)

Iib. HOW OUR VALUES SERVE THE NON-MAJOR DAVIDSON COLLEGE STUDENT:

- We value assisting each student in developing confidence, discipline, self-awareness, and creativity in preparation for lives of leadership and service in a variety of fields.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To design and teach our courses within a liberal arts paradigm.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Update the department's syllabi notebook in the main office: **(Beasley: projected due date: Dec '06)**
 - Identify missing syllabi and secure them for the notebook.
 - Update syllabi each semester.
 - Notify students regularly that the notebook is a resource for them.
- b) Create required content guidelines for the directing and acting courses.
(Beasley and Costa: completed: Oct.

2004)

- c) Create a required content guideline for THE 101. **(Green: projected due date: Dec. 2005)**

G2: To teach the student the benefits of discipline and commitment to a project.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Disseminate the *Student Actor Handbook* and *Student Director Handbook* to the students for each production. Explain their importance. **(Director's responsibility: ongoing)**
- b) Hand-out the applied theatre guidelines for each production. **(Director's responsibility: ongoing)**
- c) G2 is ongoing in our classes, productions, and more. **(ongoing)**

G3: To stress the importance of written and oral expression in our courses.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Whenever possible, include both written and oral graded assignments. **(Faculty: ongoing)**
- b) Provide evaluation of student's written and oral skills within a timely fashion.
(Faculty: ongoing)

G4: To provide opportunities for all students to participate in department activities regardless of major or year of study.

ACTION STEP:

- a) Sponsor bi-annual social gatherings by our department for all interested students. **(chair: ongoing)**
- b) Develop a strategy to attract students to our auditions. **(projected due date: May '08 and ongoing)**
- c) Attend Student Activities Fair to promote auditions to first year students. **(all faculty: ongoing)**
- d) Promote technical opportunities to non-majors. **(Higdon and Gardner: ongoing)**

- We value encouraging our students to experiment, to take artistic and intellectual risks, and to make bold choices, both in the classroom and in the production process.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To help students learn the value of constructive criticism as a tool for creativity. **(all: ongoing)**

- G2:** To design syllabi that encourage creative exploration. (all: ongoing)
- We value cultivating thoughtful, critical, and appreciative audiences.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To require our classes to attend two departmental productions each semester. (faculty: ongoing)

G2: To encourage students to attend productions outside of the department. (faculty: ongoing)

ACTION STEPS:

a) Form a carpool and secure free or rush tickets when available. (faculty:ongoing)

b) Create a link on the department website to area theatre websites. (Ripley/Minogue/Shinn:ongoing)

IIc. HOW OUR VALUES SERVE THE THEATRE MAJOR:

- We value a departmental commitment to nurturing and assessing the individual student's artistic and intellectual growth.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To review and assess our theatre curriculum for the major to determine whether or not s/he is receiving a solid foundation that possesses . (all: ongoing)

G2: To emphasize analytic skills, as well as written, oral, and non-verbal methods of expression, throughout the curriculum. (all: ongoing)

ACTION STEPS:

a) Consider adding the new course "Play Analysis for Production" to the Theatre major's required curriculum (Beasley: projected due date: Dec. '05)

b) Explore the possibility of a capstone course. (Green: projected due date: March '07)

c) Review curriculum for the theatre major/minor. (Green: projected due date: Feb. '06)

G3: To prepare students for summer and professional theatre opportunities.

ACTION STEPS:

a) Meet as a department twice a year with each junior and senior theatre major to assist in defining goals and to assess their development. (initiated by Chair Oct. '04 on-going)

b) Evaluate whether or not the meetings are beneficial. (Costa, projected due date: Sept. '06)

c) Create a student handbook. (All: complete by Nov. '05)

- We value a balance between theory and practice.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To combine the theory and practice of theatre in all of our classes and productions with the understanding that one informs the other. (faculty: ongoing)

G2: To provide practical experience in all areas of production. (all: ongoing)

ACTION STEPS:

a) Evaluate the efficacy of the new backstage requirements. (all, projected due date: May '09)

- We value cultivating leadership within the context of a collaborative process.

PROPOSED GOAL:

G1: To develop leadership capabilities within the production process.

ACTION STEPS:

a) Appoint the theatre major to backstage leadership roles whenever possible. (supervisor of particular project: ongoing)

- b) Hold experienced majors accountable for setting examples of appropriate behaviors and professionalism. (all: ongoing)

G2: To develop a system to provide students with constructive criticism for work done both on and off the stage.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Provide feedback, both formally and informally, to majors serving in backstage roles. (supervisor of particular project: ongoing)
- b) When necessary, utilize the department meeting following a production to evaluate a student. (projected due date: Nov. '05 & ongoing)

- We value providing majors with a solid foundation in theatre studies within a liberal arts education, one which adequately prepares them for professional training, graduate school, or careers in a variety of disciplines.

PROPOSED GOALS:

G1: To review and assess our theatre curriculum for the major to determine whether or not s/he is receiving a solid foundation that possesses both breadth and depth within the discipline.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Explore the possibility of a capstone course. (Green, projected due date: Dec '06)
- b) Explore the possibility of adding "Play Analysis in Production" to the major requirements. (completed)
- c) Revise theatre major curriculum. (Costa & Gardner, projected due date: Feb, '06)

G2: To assist students in researching summer theatre opportunities.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Direct students to the internship section in the Theatre major handbook (All: ongoing)
- b) Keep script library reference section current. (Green & Shinn: ongoing)
- c) Offer professional development as needed. (Green, projected due date: Feb '06)
- d) Continue making connections at summer theatres and institutes for our students. (all: ongoing)

G3: To provide student opportunities to work with theatre professionals through workshops, lectures, residencies, symposia, and other events.

ACTION STEPS:

- a) Utilize Friends of the Arts monies to support G3. (all: ongoing)
- b) Every spring, invite students to make suggestions for potential workshops for the upcoming academic year (all, projected due date: May '07)
- c) Explore other funding venues through grants, such as the Public Lectures Committee. (ongoing)

G4: To teach our students both traditional and current methodologies within the disciplines of theatre.

ACTION STEP:

- a) To examine our syllabi yearly to ensure that they reflect both current and traditional methodologies. (Faculty: ongoing)