SCHOOL OF THEATRE
STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVES
2009-2013

Mission Statement

The Penn State School of Theatre is a pre-professional, professionally oriented academic unit with the primary goal of preparing literate, well-trained Theatre artists, artisans, and crafts persons for careers in the entertainment industry. Embedded in this mission is the belief that theoretical and practical courses and laboratory and practicum experiences are all essential parts of the education and training of our students.

Vision

• To continuously create a dynamic, rich environment that fosters excellence in research, production, teaching, learning, and collaboration.
• To provide a climate that affirms cultural diversity, encourages internationalization, and positions the School as a leader within regional, national, and global communities

Core Values

We believe in:
• The Intrinsic Value of Theatre in the Life of the University and Society
• Imagination and Creativity
• Disciplinary Mastery as well as Transdisciplinary Engagement
• Collaboration and Individual Achievement
• Open Inquiry coupled with Critical Dialogue
• Diversity and Respect
• Tradition and Innovation
• Art for Art’s Sake as well as political and social engagement through Theatre
• Individual Virtuosity within an Ensemble Environment
• Informed Decision-Making according to a Super Objective
• Preparation followed by Improvisation
• Programmatic Autonomy and Inter-institutional Cooperation
• Informed Risk coupled with Instruction in and Consistent Modeling of Safe Practices in Production

We believe:
• The Show Must Go On.
GOAL #1 – “Strengthen our significance and reputation in the arts”

Objective 1:
To gain greater recognition that our BFA and MFA programs are among the top tier nationally

Actions:
• Increase national awareness of these programs
  o Participate in national recruitment consortia
  o Advertise in national media
  o Improve website and written materials
    ▪ Allocate personnel resources to continually update content and information
  o Increase use of guest artists and faculty
  o Faculty participation in National Organizations
    ▪ USITT
    ▪ ATHE
    ▪ U/RTA
    ▪ NAST
    ▪ BTN
    ▪ ASTR
    ▪ NTC
    ▪ The Big Ten Conference
    ▪ KC/ACTF
    ▪ ACDF
    ▪ VASTA
    ▪ IATSE
    ▪ USAA
    ▪ AEA
    ▪ SSD&C

Objective 2:
To serve our students effectively and efficiently

Actions:
• Establish a clear identity for all programs in order to attract top students
• Increase recruitment efforts in order to maintain a full complement of students in each program area.
• Regularize teaching load and course offerings in all programs (majors and minors)
• Create a schedule of classes that is more conducive for BA, BFA, and MFA Theatre Students to be able to participate in Dance classes
• To begin collaborative efforts for classroom and performance experiences between the Dance minor program and with other areas of the School.
• To regularize the primary basis of acceptance to the BA Theatre major upon superior talent and a target number of 20.
• To return the primary graduation outcome focus of BA Theatre students on graduate school enrollment.
• Establish an advanced Acting course for non-majors
• Establish a regularized recruiting pattern for MFA programs with all programs synchronized with the same student residency pattern.
• Continue to target undergraduate scholarship funds for recruitment of the most talented students and diversification of the student population.
• Increase activity of alumni networking to enhance reputation and students’ entry into the profession

Objective 3:
Find legitimate means to reduce the current demand General Education requirements place on students

Actions:
• Explore appropriate double counting of courses
• Pursue GWS status for appropriate Theatre courses (e.g. Portfolio Presentation, Audition Seminar, Professional Preparation)
• Pursue GQ status for Music Theory courses
• Coordinate Dance courses available for Theatre majors suitable for GHA credits

Objective 4:
Perform a feasibility study to assess the viability of the creation of a Center for Musical Theatre Training

Actions:
• Define parameters of such a center
• Write a mission statement
• Perform cost/benefit analysis
• Initiate a vocal pedagogy for Musical Theatre Masters Degree in collaboration with the School of Music

Objective 5:
Increase visibility and importance of School of Theatre productions to the university community

Actions:
• Clarify relevance of productions and disseminate to particular constituencies
• Explore new means of promotion
• Explore the use of non-traditional performance spaces for School of Theatre productions (i.e. high student volume areas)
Objective 6:
Secure viability of Minor in Theatre

Actions:
• Rewrite curriculum
• Create courses as needed
• Relieve enrollment burden on courses required for major

GOAL #2 – “Prepare students to thrive in a global and diverse environment

Objective 1:
Work to continually improve our graduate International Program

Actions:
• Regularize international study for all graduate programs
• Increase participation in the Independent Study International program

Objective 2:
Strive to maintain diversity of the faculty, staff, and student body within the School

Actions:
• Continue to proactively search for candidates from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities during every faculty search
• Explore more sources of scholarship funding to enhance student diversity recruitment

Objective 3:
Perform feasibility study for regularized Penn State sponsored international study for all theatre undergraduate degree programs
GOAL #3 - "Continue to enrich the lives of the University and the region by celebrating and disseminating the arts through our commitment to outreach"

Objective 1:
To continue to serve our current audience even as we strive to reach new audiences

Actions:
• Produce an optimum number of productions and dance concerts in a variety of venues, scaled appropriately to serve the plays and/or choreographic vision, our students, and our audiences
• Emphasize and continue to implement URTC’s roots as a professionally oriented main stage company including faculty, staff, students, and–on a regular basis–guest artists.
• Utilize guest directors as a bridge to the profession for design, stage management, and acting students
• Create programming for the Big Ten Channel (e.g. Musical Theatre Cabarets, 304 podcast series)
• Define and centralize all marketing strategies for School of Theatre academic programs and performance offerings.

GOAL #4 - "Develop a 10-year master plan for facilities and technology"

Objective 1:
Continue oversight of the completion of current renovations in Arts Building (including Playhouse Theatre), TAPS, and Visual Arts Building.

Objective 2:
Establish a long-term plan for a new building to ensure Theatre’s future viability at the University and meaningful contributions to the field

Actions:
• Identify a space on campus for a new building
• Create a Program Statement for a new Theatre building
• Create rough designs for a new Theatre building

Objective 3:
Create a master plan for IT and other technology for production, teaching, and communication
Actions:

• Establish standing committee of School of Theatre Faculty and IT Staff to articulate ongoing and future IT needs
• Improve communication to faculty of IT resources.

Objective 4:
Implement “green” standards in all areas of production.

Actions:
• Replace old lighting instruments with newer, more efficient ones
• Recycle Production materials as efficiently as possible

GOAL #5 - "To develop a comprehensive business plan for the School to acquire and husband the financial resources necessary to achieve excellence in teaching, research/creative activity, and service"

Objective 1:
Maximize our resources

Actions:
Allocate resources according to priorities clarified by the strategic plan

Objective 2:
Increase Revenue

Actions:
• Increase ticket sales
• Actively pursue grants
• Target funds available as part of the University’s return of recision first to production costs and then to technology needs.

Objective 3:
To Increase Efficiencies

Actions:
• Eliminate unwanted redundancy
• Reduce waste (e.g. unnecessary photocopying and travel)
• Recycle Production materials as efficiently as possible
METHODS OF ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

• INTERNAL RECYCLING

• Reallocate 7,000 square feet of space currently designated for the relocation of Printmaking and Chemical Photography from the Arts Building to the Visual Arts Building. Instead, these two programs will retain c. 3,500 square feet they now occupy, and the School of Theatre will be assigned equivalent space on the second floor of VAB.

• As a result of this move >$300,000 will be saved and reallocated for other purposes
  - Create a Shared Music/Theatre Computer Lab Arts Building
  - Create Singing Studio/Faculty Offices for SOM teachers in Arts Building
  - Create a Shared Music/Theatre Recording Studio in Music Building II

• Reallocate 1 FTE faculty teaching assignments from graduate teaching to undergraduate teaching as possible

• Reduce spending
METHODS OF MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

- Number of majors (by program)
- Programmatic Demand
- Recruitment Yield
- Number of General Education Credit Hours Generated
- Number of minors served (Theatre and Dance)
- Diversity of Student Body
- Diversity of Faculty
- Attendance Figures for Performances
- Alumni Placement and Accomplishment
- Dissemination of Research
- Faculty and Student Performance Record
- Number of Citations
- Awards Received
- Fellowships Received
- Rankings
- Development Record
- Number of “Hits” in cyber space
- Endowment Income
- Scholarships Available