Expected Outcomes: Performance Proficiency & Professional Preparation

On completing the degree program, students will be proficient in professional acting, voice, and movement techniques, and have knowledge of best practices in auditioning and resume preparation.

Related typical general education outcomes:

1. Information Literacy
2. Oral Communication
3. Aesthetic Appreciation and Engagement

Assessment methods

Method: Exit Survey

Students prepare a detailed exit survey detailing the results of competitive auditions within and beyond the university.

Findings:

All students graduating with a degree in theatre performance prepared and utilized acceptable professional resumes, auditioned effectively, and performed in venues within or beyond the university. A high percentage of graduating students received offers of graduate training and/or professional employment in theatre companies or fields beyond the entertainment industry.

How did you use findings for improvement?

While all students achieved success in at least one audition situation, no student was cast as a result of every audition. Continuing emphasis on skill acquisition and practice is needed. This is a constant in an extraordinarily competitive industry.

Additional comments:

None

Method: Senior Recital

Students prepare and perform an adjudicated senior recital to demonstrate proficiency in acting, movement and voice techniques introduced and refined in the course of studio training.

Findings:

All students performed with passing proficiency in the senior recital, but not all students were adjudicated with ‘outstanding’ or ‘excellent’ ratings. Upon deliberation, faculty concluded that the lowest scoring seniors were performing in scenes that were much more challenging in complexity and style than higher rated students, and this put the lower scoring students at a disadvantage.

How did you use findings for improvement?

In future recitals, faculty will select material that is uniform in dramatic construction, in order to assess the actors on a level playing field.
Method: Fundamental skills assessment

The ability to orchestrate and clearly communicate a character's pattern of behavior was assessed in two different performance classes required of all BFA Theatre Performance Majors-- Acting I, taken no later than the sophomore year; and BFA Performance Studio IV, taken in the last semester of the senior year.

Findings:

Seventeen students took the Acting I pre-test last fall. As expected, the majority of students could not answer questions related to orchestration with any understanding of the terms as a practical applied acting skill. While actors assessed at the senior level showed significant improvement over the underclassmen, the majority of faculty assessing student performance in the senior recital noted a weakness in student ability to clearly communicate character intention in scoring and in performance.

How did you use findings for improvement?

Faculty identified a need to create more opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding of objective, obstacle, and tactic in both theory and practice—scoring and performance—in all performance related classes. Faculty also identified a need to review acting scores more carefully with students in the studio setting—before, during, and after they perform their scenes.

Additional comments:

While more data is needed to draw definitive conclusions, assessment at the beginning and advanced level of performance classes appears to be a promising practice in the department’s efforts to improve outcomes in its performance sequence.