Assessment Plan  
THEATRE  
College of Visual and Performing Arts  
Kean University  

Mission:  
In relation to the College and University mission, the primary mission of the Department of Theatre is to prepare theatre artists, administrators, scholars, and educators for the 21st century. The Department of Theatre aspires to engender lifelong artistic appreciation by providing cultural and educational experiences for the student body, the university, and surrounding communities. We are deeply committed to exploring cultural diversity through learning about oneself and the human condition and learning about world cultures, past and present.

In support of the above mission statement, we have developed specific goals for the department, attainable via coursework, mentorship, and participation in the theatre production series:

- Educate students to enter the professional realm of theatre or advanced graduate studies.
- Prepare students for the profession through one-on-one mentorship with members of our theatre academicians and practicing artists.
- Promote Kean University as a regional and statewide cultural resource in theatre.
- Support faculty development through active participation in state, regional, national, and international professional organizations and through scholarly, artistic and creative pursuits.
- Demonstrate the importance of networking within the professional community by encouraging students and faculty participation in professional activities and providing opportunities through Premiere Stages, a professional theatre in residence at Kean University, and in the regional, national, and international arenas.

Assessment Process:  
Theatre students have nine core courses to take as part of the requirements for the major. These core courses provide a sound foundation from which all of the four degree programs are built. Beyond the core foundation courses, students complete a prescribed series of courses tailored to the degree program. Each theatre course has assessment instruments that are incorporated within the evaluation process. As all majors complete a common set of foundation courses, our assessment reliability allows for a focus on the core elements of theory and practice in theatre.

Each core course has assessment tools such as research and reflective writing assignments, performances, quizzes, exams, portfolio work, group projects, teacher work samples, etc., as part of the evaluation process and the Department of Theatre uses results of the course and annual assessments when considering curricular, pedagogical, or programmatic revisions. The most recent changes to the theatre curriculum include a refocusing of the THE 4900 BA Senior Seminar to allow for a wider array of

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Students who graduate with a degree in theatre should be able to:

- Complete final projects, allowing the specialties of each student to be further developed. In addition, the BFA in Design and Technology has revamped the laboratory experience so as to provide more meaningful experiences, leading to a higher level of proficiency in the design/tech specialty. We have also realized that the Contemporary Acting III course is in need of an update to assure that methods and scripts reflect current professional practice.

Beyond course embedded instruments, assessment in theatre takes place via four mechanisms. There is an initial admission audition, an annual assessment review, capstone, and a final assessment review.

First, each student who applies to the theatre major at Kean must undergo an admission audition/interview/portfolio review. It is at this time that the faculty convenes to assess the entry level proficiencies of all who wish to be theatre majors. The Admission rubric is attached to this document.

Second, every theatre major is scheduled annually for an assessment with the faculty. The Annual Assessment measures progress for the given year measured against the entrance audition or portfolio review and departmental learning objectives. Progress and performance in academic coursework is discussed, as well as career and academic goals. Students are required to perform a pair of contrasting monologues or present an education or design/tech portfolio. Students are also asked to complete an anonymous survey at each of their annual assessments. The surveys provide a mechanism for feedback on multiple programmatic elements.

Third, the cumulative assessment of learning outcomes within each of the four degree programs takes place in the Capstone courses: THE 4150 Acting as a Profession (BFA Performance), THE 4900 Senior Seminar (BA), THE 4350 Portfolio Preparation (BFA Design and Technology), and THE 4220 Topics in Theatre Education (BA with theatre teacher certification). The capstone courses are offered every year, enrolling all students who will graduate within that academic year. The capstones require students to complete several program specific assignments that are used to assess how well they have met the goals of the program’s curriculum.

Finally, all graduating seniors participate in a summative final assessment during which they either present their audition material or a technical theatre or education portfolio, or specialized portfolio. During this session, all faculty and all seniors are present and a discussion about the program’s strengths and areas in need of development takes place following the individual student presentations.

At the conclusion of each academic year the theatre faculty convenes to review the data and findings from course level, programmatic, and department assessments. At this time, recommendations for program improvements are determined and adjustments considered.

Student Learning Objectives and narrative description:

Students who graduate with a degree in theatre should be able to:
SLO1: Identify and articulate humanistic values and cultural diversity found in the study of theatre, represented by knowledge of the history, socio-cultural traditions, and literary richness. [KU1, KU2, KU4, GEK3, GEK4, GES3, GES4, GES5, GEV4]

Students should be able to identify representative plays from the following eras and regions and describe in basic terms how they were staged: Ancient Egypt; Classical Greece and Rome; Classical India and Japan; Medieval Europe; Elizabethan and Restoration England; Golden Age Spain; Neoclassical France; nineteenth century Europe (Romanticism and Realism); and Modern and Contemporary Anglo-European, African American, Latin@, and Post-Colonial contexts. Students should be able to comment on the specific social and cultural milieus surrounding these productions as well as audience/performance dynamics inside the theatre spaces and offer some insight into the meaning of the plays in their original circumstances. Students should be able to use this knowledge to enhance their understanding and appreciation of both canonical and new plays today.

Students should be able to speak, in general theoretical and specific historical terms, about the major characteristics of genres such as tragedy, comedy, tragi-comedy, melodrama and farce. Students should also be able to discuss a wide range of theatrical styles, such as romanticism, realism and non-realism. Students should be able to give specific examples of these genres and styles and to draw upon them in discussions and projects.

Direct Measure: Culminating projects/assignments/written examinations
Indirect Measure: Graduating Student Survey

SLO2: SLO2: Develop oral and written communication skills, analytical ability, critical and creative thinking, as well as research techniques. [KU1, KU4, GEK1, GEK3, GEK4, GES1, GES3, GES4, GES5]

Students should demonstrate: the ability to think, speak, and write clearly and effectively, and to communicate with precision, cogency, and rhetorical force; an informed acquaintance with the mathematical and experimental methods of the physical and biological sciences, and the historical and quantitative techniques needed for investigating the workings and developments of modern society; An ability to address culture and history from a variety of perspectives; Understanding of, and experience in thinking about, moral and ethical problems; The ability to respect, understand, and evaluate work in a variety of disciplines; The capacity to explain and defend views effectively and rationally; Understanding of and experience in one or more art forms other than theatre.

Students should be able to respond to a script (a) analytically, using ideas and insights developed by theatre historians, theorists and practitioners working in different historical periods and cultures; (b) imaginatively, using the text as the basis for the artistic collaborative creation; and (c) personally, demonstrating the capacity to meaningfully discuss the text in a way that ties it to issues and concerns that actually matter to the student, the community and to the world.

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Students should demonstrate the ability to provide detailed, insightful and thoughtful responses when discussing the work of their peers. They should also demonstrate a strong, personal connection to their own work during presentations.

Students should be able to articulate an understanding of plays as performance texts as well as dramatic literature. Students should be able to compose an essay that develops a claim or production concept and advances an argument based upon a socially contextualized understanding of performance. Students should be able to advance that argument through logically sequenced, well developed paragraphs and clear, grammatically sound sentences. Their writing should demonstrate command of basic dramatic and theatrical terminology and adhere to basic academic standards of research and documentation. Students should be able to articulate their sense of beauty, artistry, and an emerging personal aesthetic—either by example or description; they should be able to compare and contrast their developing concept to existing philosophies and theories as well as to the perceptions of their colleagues; and they should be able to conceptualize the expression of their personal aesthetic in a theatrical context.

Direct Measure: Culminating projects/assignments/written examinations
Indirect Measure: Graduating Student Survey

SLO3: Demonstrate, both independently and collaboratively, synthesis of the various elements of theatre by combining capabilities in production, performance, repertory, theory, and history. [KU1, KU2, KU3, KU4, GEK1, GEK4, GES1, GES2, GES3, GES4, GESS, GEV1]

Students will have an understanding of the titles that comprise both the creative and production teams and, in a standard production process, know what the responsibilities are for each position. Students should also have an understanding of the collaboration required to coordinate these various responsibilities into a unified production.

In discussions, papers, and practical experiences: students should be able to discuss their own particular sets of skills and talents, and recognize how those skills fit in to the broader perspective of theatre productions here and elsewhere. In performance projects: students should actively participate and collaborate with others; be both a leader and supporter as appropriate; and engage the particular skills of their craft and help to fulfill those of their collaborators, in an artistically coherent and theatrically effective presentation as a whole, reflecting the particular effort of each student.

Direct Measure: Culminating projects/assignments
Indirect Measure: Graduating Student Survey

SLO4: Demonstrate entry-level competence in the profession, with a focus on the major area of specialization, including proficiency in technique, capability to produce work, solve

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Performance students will demonstrate: ability to act (i.e., to project one’s self believably in word and action into imaginary circumstances, evoked through improvisation or text); Ability to engage effectively in improvisations both by oneself and in an ensemble; Ability to create characters convincingly from plays drawn from different genres and styles in an ensemble relationship with other actors; Technique for analyzing the specific tasks required in performing varied characters from written plays; Understanding of the specific demands of the acting styles for major periods and genres of dramatic literature; Clear, articulate, and expressive speech, normally with demonstrated ability to use appropriate tools and systems to learn and perform dialects, and the ability to perform effectively in verse plays; A flexible, strong, and controlled voice with trained breath support; appropriate vocal range and freedom from vocal and postural tension in rehearsal and performance; ability to use the voice effectively as an instrument for characterization together with the ability to project the voice effectively in theatre spaces of varying sizes and in media productions; A flexible, relaxed, and controlled body trained in basic stage movement disciplines, including dance and mime; demonstrated ability to use the body effectively on stage as an instrument for characterization and to be responsive to changing time/rhythm demands and spatial relationships; An overview understanding of makeup materials and techniques; Comprehension of the basic business procedures of the actor’s profession, including audition procedures, résumés, agents, and so forth; Solo and ensemble performance experience in a variety of formal and informal settings shall be provided throughout the degree program including the opportunity for a significant role in a major production no later than the senior year.

Design and Technology students will demonstrate: Knowledge of the history of decor, for example: furniture, decorative arts, and architecture, including theatre architecture; Knowledge of the history of costuming, including techniques for producing theatrical costumes; The ability to produce freehand drawings, technical drawing: production drawing, mechanical drafting, and the adaptation of these techniques to scenic and technical drawing for theatre (floor plans, technical elevations, painters’ elevations, perspective drawing for scene plates); Knowledge of computer-aided design (CAD) is recommended; Familiarity with of color and light, and control of these elements for aesthetic use; Basic understanding of audio technology and sound design; Knowledge of federal and local health and safety codes and practice; Ability to apply the principles of two-dimensional and three-dimensional design aesthetic; and Functional skills in design visualization, such as model-making and rendering in various media.

Students who successfully complete the B.A. in Theatre with Theatre Certification (K – 12) will be able to: Demonstrate: the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to deliver Standards-based theatre curriculum as a NJ-certified Instructor of Theatre (K-12); An understanding of child development and the identification and understanding of psychological principles of learning as these relate to theatre education; An understanding of the philosophical and social foundation underlying theatre in education and the ability to express a rationale for personal attitudes and beliefs; An ability to assess aptitudes, experiential backgrounds, skills, and interests of individuals and groups of pupils, to devise learning experiences to meet assessed needs, and to manage classrooms and rehearsals effectively; Knowledge of current methods and materials available in all fields and levels of theatre education; An understanding of
the principles and methods of developing curricula and the short-and long-term units that comprise them; An understanding of evaluative techniques and the ability to apply them in assessing both the progress of students and in the objectives and procedures of the curriculum; An awareness of the need for continuing study, self-evaluation, and professional growth; An understanding to make pupils emphatically aware of the all-important process of artistic creation from conceptualized image to finished work; An ability to be a competent director, able to create expressive performances with various types of groups and in general classroom situations.

Direct Measure: Culminating projects/assignments
Indirect Measure: Graduating Student Survey

Kean University Student Learning Outcomes:
(KU 1) Think critically, creatively and globally
(KU 2) Adapt to changing social, economic, and technological environments.
(KU 3) Serve as active and contributing members of their communities.
(KU 4) Advance their knowledge in the traditional disciplines and enhance their skills in professional areas.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes – Knowledge

Students will demonstrate proficiency in knowledge and content by:

1) applying the scientific method to understand natural concepts and processes (GEK1)
2) evaluating major theories and concepts in social sciences (GEK2)
3) relating literature to historical context (GEK3)
4) evaluating major theories and concepts in the fine arts (GEK4)

Student Learning Outcomes – Skills

Students will demonstrate the skills and technology necessary to:

1) write to communicate and clarify learning (GES1)
2) communicate effectively through speech (GES2)
3) solve problems using quantitative reasoning (GES3)
4) think critically about concepts in multiple disciplines (GES4)
5) demonstrate information literacy (GES5)

Student Learning Outcomes – Values

Students will exhibit a set of values that demonstrates:

1) personal responsibility (GEV1)
2) ethical and social responsibility (GEV2)
3) social and civic engagement (GEV3)
4) respect for diverse cultures and perspectives (GEV4)
5) life-long learning (GEV5)