

Form E-1-A for Boston College Core Curriculum: 2017

Department/Program Theatre Department

- 1) **Have formal learning outcomes for the department's Core courses been developed? What are they?** (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect students completing its Core courses to have acquired?)
 - a. To serve the University as a Fine Arts Core requirement:
 - i. Description of University Arts Core: (<http://www.bc.edu/sites/core/requirements/arts.html>)

“The need to make, experience, and comprehend art has been one of the essential, defining human activities since history began. The arts are thus integral to human experience and expression, the development of critical interpretive skills, an understanding of creative processes, and the fostering of imagination and empathy. The critically engaged practice of the arts, arrived at through rigorous training, uniquely nurtures creativity and innovation. Anchored in experimentation and creative problem-solving, the arts challenge students to make connections across traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Three credits of coursework in art history, studio art, film, music or theater are required and will address some combination of the following criteria: students will acquire a greater understanding of the technical skills required to create works of art; students will gain knowledge of the aesthetic questions raised by works of art; and students will understand the historical contexts in which such works were created. As a result, students will be able to engage meaningfully with art through creative work and/or to articulate their understanding of art in oral and written expression.”
 - b. Departmental goals for Theatre Core courses:
 - i. To inform students about the value and nature of theatre in and of itself in the hope that they will be able to enjoy theatre in the future; it is also to encourage them as playgoers and future supporters of the arts in general.
 - ii. To learn to approach variety of types of plays from a theatre perspective analytically, introduce students to the fundamentals of theatre practice, all with an eye toward providing a foundation upon which more advanced theatre classes can be built.
 - iii. To build an audience for our own Theatre Department productions via Intro student attendance at our productions.
 - iv. To encourage non-theatre students to take additional theatre courses here, perhaps even consider pursuing theatre as a major or minor.
- 2) **Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific.** (Where are the department's expected learning outcomes for its Core courses accessible: on the web, in the catalog, or in your department handouts?)

www.bc.edu/core for university goals

These Core Theatre Department outcomes are not published but the overall learning outcomes are published at <https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/theatre/about/learning-outcomes.html>

Learning Outcomes:

- A graduating Boston College Theatre major will be able to:
- analyze dramatic texts, theatrical events, and experimental forms with critical intelligence;
- articulate an understanding of the role of theater in culture and society and how each shapes the other over time;
- collaborate with others and solve problems in the planning and production of theatrical events;
- exhibit creativity and imagination in making theater—in attitude, process, and ability;
- demonstrate proficiency in one or more of the following disciplines: acting, directing, design, playwriting, stage management, and technical production.

3) **Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether students have achieved the stated outcomes for the Core requirement?** (What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes have been achieved more or less well?)

A survey was sent to the Introduction to Theater classes at the end of the Spring Semester. The questions address the core objectives for the arts. The results of this survey for 2018 are as follows. There were 117 total responses from students.

Responses:

The core class they enrolled in:

- Introduction to Theater: 97.2%
- Elements of Dance: 2.8%

Were you exposed to the art form of Theatre and the methods with which it is created?

- Definitely 92.2% (85.6% in 2017)
- Somewhat 7.1%
- Not at all 0.7%

Are you able to discern how theatre has been used through history to both teach and entertain its audience?

- Definitely 85.8% (80.7% in 2017)
- Somewhat 14.2%
- Not at all 0 %

Do you think that you are now able to have an intelligent discussion about theater and its practice?

- Definitely 61.7% (56.6% in 2017)
- Somewhat 36.2%
- Not at all 2.1%

Have found any connection between the Theater Core course and other disciplines on campus?

- Definitely 49.6% (46.3% in 2017)
- Somewhat 39.7%
- Not at all 10.6%

Do you feel your theater study has enhanced your awareness of the human experience?

- Definitely 50.4% (44.9% in 2017)
- Somewhat 40.4%
- Not at all 9.2%

Were you introduced to new concepts and methods of artistic expression through exposure to theater and theatrical practice?

- Definitely 78.0% (77.5 in 2017)
- Somewhat 19.9%
- Not at all 2.1%

Do you feel you better understand how quality theater is produced?

- Definitely 84.4% (76.7% in 2017)
- Somewhat 12.8%
- Not at all 2.8%

Do you feel your theater study has enhanced your awareness of your own culture and other cultures unlike your own?

- Definitely 50.4% (48.3% in 2017)
- Somewhat 41.1%
- Not at all 8.5%

Are you more likely now to see a play than before you took this class?

- Definitely 58.9% (53.8% in 2017)
- Somewhat 29.1%
- Not at all 12.1%

Do you feel you have gained new skills that help you creatively solve problems?

- Definitely 34.8% (27.7% in 2017)
- Somewhat 42.6%
- Not at all 22.7%

Would you have taken this course if it did not fulfill the Core requirement? (new question)

- yes 13.5% (15.1% in 2017)
- maybe 34.8%
- no 51.8%

How do you feel about what you have learned in this course? (new question)

- Very satisfied 67.3% (60.9% in 2017)
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 27.7%
- Dissatisfied 5%

- 4) **Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?** (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate? When does this occur?)

The survey will be given at the end of each semester. (This past year it was only sent at the end of the Spring term.) The Chairperson and the Assistant Chairperson will evaluate the data at the end of the academic year. If changes are warranted, they will be discussed with all of the teachers of the core courses at the beginning of the academic year or earlier if necessary.

Results:

- Human Experience
 - Over 91% of the students feel they have definitely or somewhat enhanced their awareness of the human experience and culture and that is up about 3 points from last year.
 - 100% of the students felt they definitely or somewhat gained knowledge of theater through history.
 - 98% felt they were introduced to theatrical methods of artistic expression.
 - 91% of the students said it definitely or somewhat enhanced their cultural awareness.
- Theatrical craft and skills
 - Students overwhelmingly agreed that they were exposed to theater as an art form but have less confidence about their ability to discuss it intelligently.
 - They clearly understand its historical significance.
 - 88% said they were more likely to see a play again in the future because of this class.

It is the consensus of the Chair, Crystal Tiala, and the Assistant Chair, Luke Jorgensen, that these are very positive results. We are not recommending changes at the current time. The Theatre Department is also heavily invested in the Core Renewal project.

Scott Cummings, Luke Jorgensen, Patricia Riggan and Crystal Tiala have all taught core pilot courses in the past. Patricia Riggan and Luke Jorgensen have or will repeat their course.

These results will be shared with all teachers of the core in Theater and their feedback will be encouraged.

- 5) **What were the assessment results and what changes have been made as a result of using this data/evidence?** (What were the major assessment findings? Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? How did the assessment data contribute to those changes?)

We did not implement any changes in the current curriculum. We will continue to monitor the outcomes and observe the progress of the core renewal project before determining any new directions.

While we believe the results have been very positive on all levels, we are planning on creating *Introduction to Theatre* courses with a cultural diversity focus that would also fulfill the cultural diversity core component. This will likely take a year to implement.

- 6) **Date of the most recent program review.** (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)

2013 was the most recent date for the Theatre Department comprehensive self-study and external review. We will review our program at the departmental level on an annual basis.