

22-23 Annual Progress Report

Recommended actions for improvement identified in the 5-Year Self-Study.

In our previous self-study (2019), we primarily targeted areas of improvement in productivity (+10% over five years), equity (reduce achievement gaps especially in African American student population), and increase completions (degree/certificate awards).

In improving and promoting student success with the goal of closing the Department's Equity gap in five years, the department identified these areas: 1) Implement survey to identify student needs and circumstances in online instruction. 2) Data analysis of late start and late add students to identify the cohort needing targeted measures for success. 3) Work with the Equity office to better engage learning communities. 4) Actively coordinate with Athletics to support their students in online classes primarily through F2F meetings with athletes enrolled in online courses.

Actions taken and progress made in accomplishing the improvement.

As described further below, COVID has made it challenging for us to meet the goals we set forth in 2019. Furthermore, we had less faculty capacity than anticipated in 2019 due to retirements both in Theatre Arts and in Music. Thus, our focus was on keeping the department operating and producing shows.

Nonetheless, we have taken actions in all three of our identified areas of improvement: productivity, equity, and completions. Now that we have begun to hire new faculty and emerge from the pandemic, we expect to be able to rededicate ourselves to these goals.

Productivity:

- Our productivity was on a steady trajectory of improvement. However, COVID and the recent retirement of two key faculty members resulted in declining productivity in 2020-21 and 2021-22. Acknowledging that this is clearly an area that needs additional work, we are striving to rebuild our productivity through multiple initiatives.
- Hybrid or online offerings have been a key part of our strategy to increase productivity. All of our Theatre Technology courses except for the production participation class (THTR 45A-F) are now hybrid, which we hope will allow for greater flexibility for students' schedules. Because of the upheavals of the pandemic, however, it is difficult to state with any certainty whether this is actually better for students.
- Stacked classes are also important for our productivity. Many of the participatory courses, including Acting, Scenery & Props Construction, Fashion & Costume Construction, Theatrical Makeup, Technical Theatre in Production, Music Theatre Production Workshop, and Performance Production are all stacked classes. Just recently, two additional Performance Production classes (49E & F) were submitted to allow students to continue participating in our productions for two more quarters.
- So as to work within the reduced course enrollments district-wide, we have reduced some course offerings in an attempt to maintain productivity in these circumstances.
- Dual enrollment courses at PAUSD high schools (Gunn and Palo Alto) were implemented in 2019-20, resulting in an additional 69 students enrolled in THTR 45. This dropped by 40% to 39 in 2020-21 during virtual instruction, but is beginning to rebuild, with 47 dual enrollment students in 2021-22. We hope to use our success of in PAUSD to recruit other schools into our dual enrollment program. Unfortunately, due to faculty turnover and the pandemic, we did not make progress on this in 2021-22, but we plan to resume efforts in 2022-23.

Equity:

- In 2020-21, we implemented a student survey in Introduction to Theatre (THTR 01) so that the instructor could reach out individually, offering some individualized, flexible grading standards where appropriate or available. While we received positive feedback from students, the data do not yet indicate that this has created better success outcomes for marginalized students. We will re-evaluate the survey and the processes around it. The fact that this class is currently taught by an adjunct, because we have not yet been able to replace a full-time faculty member who retired in 2019, also makes it more difficult to reliably implement better practices in this course.
- THTR8 curriculum content has been updated to represent a wider range of BIPOC communities and include leading-edge artists, as well as forerunners in the field. In addition, socio-artistic movements prevalent in today's theatrical landscape have been incorporated.
- With both sections of our THTR8 class as late start in 21-22, there was a 20% increase in course success rate relative to the prior year, suggesting that the late start is beneficial overall. Enrollment for Latinx students increased as well, but success rates for Latinx students continue to be low, indicating that the late start may not be as beneficial to these students and we will need to explore other ways to promote their success.
- We made contact in Fall 2021 with faculty leadership of the learning communities Puente and Umoja so as to encourage their students to participate in our production, resulting in the casting of one Puente student. While we remain limited in our capacity due to a shortage of full-time faculty, we believe that this is an avenue with good potential and would like to increase our work connecting with these communities.
- We attempted to connect with Athletics to enroll and support their students in our online classes, offering to provide tutorials for their students. However, Athletics was not able to accept the offer due to challenges of space and scheduling. We believe that our efforts in the immediate future would be better spent on other initiatives, such as connecting with learning communities as mentioned above.
- As productions are the public face of the department's mission, we believe that inclusive and equitable casting is key, not only to benefit students currently enrolled, but also to demonstrate to potential BIPOC students that their talents and voices are welcomed in our department. To that end, we are making concerted efforts to increase our casting of actors of color, particularly Black actors. Show

selection, casting, and staffing are a part of this effort. One recent success was the production of *Violet* as our summer 2022 musical, a show set during the Civil Rights Era with many Black characters, as well as numerous BIPOC members of the creative team. Another is that we have recruited a BIPOC director to work with us in the 2022-23 season. For our upcoming winter 2023 musical, *Into the Woods*, the casting process included extensive outreach to BIPOC actors and a second round of auditions specifically for BIPOC actors. As a result, the cast for *Into the Woods* is the most diverse we have ever had. These initiatives are showing results. Our 2021 production of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* had a 55% BIPOC cast and our 2022 production of *Radium Girls* had a 42% BIPOC cast. Because these numbers still show less BIPOC representation than the overall campus's 72% BIPOC population, we will continue to push forward with and expand these initiatives.

Completions:

Our two-year schedule offers regular degree-based schedules that enhanced pathways for timely degree and certificate completions. This schedule has been incorporated into the Guided Pathways initiative and we continue to work with the Guided Pathways team. COVID continues to interfere with our ability to truly evaluate the success of this initiative.

New pathways in General Theatre Studies, Acting and Music Performance were implemented in 2020 to increase completions. We have been in the process of reviewing our Theatre Technology Certificates and that process continues now that we have hired a new full-time faculty Theatre Technology program director.

Due to lower enrollment during COVID, particularly as our classes rely on face-to-face interaction, as well as several recent faculty retirements in the department, we have not yet seen a measurable increase in completions as a result of these efforts. We are very proud, however, that we have maintained the program as well as we have through three years of COVID. We hope that an upward trajectory in completions will commence now that our in-person class offerings are re-stabilizing.

Evidence used to evaluate progress.

(ex: What data are you using to make your progress judgment?)

We are relying on the Program Review Data Sheet, with the understanding that COVID caused a major disruption in our enrollment and course offerings, particularly as theatre is an art form reliant on in-person gatherings.

Our enrollment fell considerably in both 2019-20 and 2020-21, from 984 in 2018-19 to 448 in 2020-21. In 2021-22, we are beginning to see improvement, with enrollment at 554. With our increasing ability to return to in-person classes and productions, we expect this improvement to continue, though we are still potentially hampered by the fact that we have not yet been able to replace the faculty member who retired in 2019, greatly reducing the capacity of our department.

In the last five years, there has not been a consistent trend in the ethnic distribution of our students. There is also not a noticeable trend in success rates by ethnicity, with Black, Filipinx, Latinx, and Pacific Islander students in particular still succeeding at lower rates than Asian and White students. As noted above, this is an area where we still have work to do. We are pleased that most success rates did not drop even during the temporary move to fully online learning.

We have also not seen a clear or consistent trend in our number of certificates and degrees awarded. Again, this can be attributed to the influence of the pandemic as well as to the recent retirement of full-time faculty.

New trends, policies, or state initiatives that have impacted your actions for improvement.

Theatre enrollment is heavily dependent on face-to-face classes in the performance and technical areas. COVID, therefore, had a significant negative impact on our enrollment and on our ability to implement and assess our goals from the 2019 Self Study. Like the rest of the college, we continue to experience challenges in getting students back to in-person classes at pre-pandemic levels.

There would also be a new opportunity to grow our program and reach new and diverse students, if we had the personnel capacity and resources to do so. Several local colleges have significantly reduced or even eliminated their theatre offerings, opening up opportunities for us to engage more students. Currently, our reduced faculty makes this difficult.

Actions needed/designed to address the area of work/improvement for new trends, policies, or state initiatives.

The most urgent need for the department is to replace retiring faculty. Our department's connection to our students relies on on-going interaction with full-time faculty. We have maintained this program through COVID and budget cuts with ever decreasing faculty numbers, continuing to represent our college positively in our community. We cannot accomplish the goals of our self-study with the minimal staffing we currently have.

At the time of the last comprehensive plan, the data and statistics were based on Theatre Arts supporting 3.33 full-time faculty. One of these faculty members (McLeod) retired in 2022 and has been replaced, but his replacement (Henderson) is assigned only 70% to teaching and 30% reassigned time required to manage the theatre facility and act as Production Manager for our shows. Another of these faculty

members (Bergmann) retired in 2019 and has not been replaced, causing significant lack of faculty capacity in our department. Another of our full-time faculty members (Gough) is now on Article 18 and scheduled to teach only through Winter 2024. Once Gough retires, we will be left with only the equivalent of 1 full-time teaching faculty member (Henderson 0.7 and Carey 0.37) unless we are able to make new hires, which is totally insufficient to run a theatre program.

There is potential in this moment to hire new faculty who will help us to grow the program, particularly if we emphasize an equity lens in the hiring process. However, if we are not able to replace our retiring faculty members, we will quite simply lack the capacity to run the program in its current form, let alone concentrate on the areas for improvement identified in the self-study.

This form is completed and ready for acceptance.

Administrator's Name:

Date:

Comments: