**2013-2014 CLASS FACT Assessment Year End Report, June, 2014**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Program Name(s)** | **FACT Faculty Fellow** | **Department Chair** |
| B.A. in Theatre Arts | Darryl Jones | Thomas Hird |

**A. Program Student Learning Outcomes**

|  |
| --- |
| Students who graduate with a B.A. in Theatre Arts will be able to:1. communicate in writing, orally, non-verbally, and visually in their area of emphasis;2. conduct background research, evaluate scripts, and analyze performance for use in scholarly and performance applications;3. employ historical, contemporary, and cultural performance techniques and production technology appropriate to their area of emphasis;4. reflect on performance techniques and concepts of other performers and apply high standards of reflection to their own production work; and5. solve problems of production by creating roles, dancing, designing, managing, building, directing, or choreographing performances that address issues of life in striking and remarkable ways. |

**B. Program Student Learning Outcome(s) Assessed**

|  |
| --- |
| Theatre and Dance Department SLO 5:Students will solve problems of production by creating roles, dancing, designing, managing, building, directing or choreographing performances that address issues of life in dynamic ways. California State University East Bay ILO A & C:Students will learn to think critically and creatively and apply analytical and quantitative reasoning to address complex challenges and everyday problems. |

**C. Summary of Assessment Process**

|  |
| --- |
| We assessed intermediate and mastery courses in the culminating senior classes (Final Directing or Choreographing or Designing projects) in order to determine whether or not the material being taught in the courses was progressively helping students to improve solving production problems in Theatre and Dance in order to fulfill the SLO and ILO listed above. The courses assessed were divided into Intermediate Level and Mastery Level. The courses: Intermediate Level: THEA 4151 Senior Festival Preproduction (3 units) Mastery Level: THEA 4152 Senior Festival Production (3 units)To begin we will report on the Senior Festival Preproduction course (THEA 4151). The assessment process for this portion of the senior projects was the Direct Indicators of written work by the students to define and develop the eventual performance of their projects (which would be in Senior Festival Production – THEA 4152 - the following quarter) since the Indirect Indicator would be the performance itself, which is – so to speak – the proof of the pudding. We will begin with a report on these Direct Indicators.There are two faculty members who teach these two courses, which are taught in sequence in Winter and Spring quarters: Marc Jacobs (Theatre) and Nina Haft (Dance). In order to get a comprehensive understanding of what the primary essential core indicators were for each course, the syllabi from each course was collected and analyzed. As we were assessing these production classes, while the Direct Indicators are written assignments, the clearest indication of ability and successful learning are the Indirect Indicators of the performance results (Senior Festival Production). It was clear that there are ways in which we must evaluate a student’s mastery of production problem solving that cannot be obtained through written assignments, quizzes and exams. Therefore many of the Indirect Indicators that are used in these courses are skill and technique based. The syllabi were analyzed for common Written Indirect Indicators and Skill/Technique Direct Indicators, which are key for the evaluation of a student’s progress. In addition, the most important common touch stone for both of the courses was the Culminating Performance Project. A Culminating Performance Activity Rubric was created for the assessed courses. The rubric has been designed to assure that the core Common Written and Skill/Technique Direct Indicators for the courses lead to a performance in which the course work is fully realized (Indirect Indicator). Moreover, by creating Common Written and Performance Direct Indicators and a Culminating Performance Activity Rubric for the Intermediate and Mastery level courses, we are better able to assess the path of progression from course to course and what skills the students ideally have mastered upon completion of the Mastery level course. In the mastery level course they are directing, choreographing or performing a large role with skill and technique in a presentation of a dance performance or an entire one-act play. |

**D. Summary of Assessment Results**

|  |
| --- |
| Design:Going from the top of the grading table the first thing one notices is the difficulty our set design student had in identifying a theme, subject and style for the project she had chosen to work on (a set design for the play “Mother Courage”). Also, research was weak. This was a student for whom English was a second language and I believe that was part of the problem. After receiving more individual guidance from the instructor she rethought and resubmitted her work with much improved results. Directing:While the directors generally did well with assignments, some (representing 33%) had trouble with research, especially finding visual imagery to inspire their set, costume and lighting designers. In these cases we did not see a strong connection between understanding the theme of a piece with an ability to translate that into visuals based on research.Choreographers:Were also weakest in this area, along with an inability to identify the style they were looking for in their project and how to use symbolism in an artistic way that brings out the meaning of their work. Acting:As with the other disciplines, there was a similar lack of research and little use of visual inspiration that could result in finding a proper style. Nor was there a clear sense of how these tools could be used to inspire a specific desired response from the audience. Also, in this particular case, there was an unwillingness to work with a director due - I believe - to the student’s personality disorder, which resulted in poor time managementIn all these cases, we (as the Instructors) wanted to see a stronger sense of developing a theme and realizing that theme in striking visual theatrical terms that could be applied to their projects. In other words, an ability to focus on the big picture and using research and the tools of Theatre to enrich their work.Closing the Loop: Much of the growth we see between THEA 4151 and THEA 4152 is the result of the students having the practical experience of creating their own theatrical works (Directing, Choreographing, Design and Acting and sometimes also Playwrighting). The fact that this work is done under the supervision of CSUEB Theatre and Dance Dept. Faculty from Directing, Dance, Set and Costume Design provides a concentrated growth “spurt” where students are required to use all the skills they have learned in the Department’s beginning and intermediate courses in the realization of a physical production (or, in the case of a set designer, completed renderings, ground plans, elevations and models).There is no substitute for the practical, hands on experience of actually going through the production process and facing the test of putting one’s creative work in front of a paying audience. In that respect the CSUEB Senior Festival Preproduction and Production classes offer students the extremely valuable chance to take everything they have learned in the Department and apply it in a culminating performance which will demonstrate their mastery (on a student level) of the theatrical process.Where we see the weaknesses in this process is not in actual production but in research that will provide the students with richer, broader and more varied information from which they can make their creative choices, whether those are based on history and culture, theatrical performance practices, or the field of fine art. The cognitive quotient of how to use and refine this information so it helps express the project they are working on is often not applied at the early creative stages.These problems were discussed with the Theatre and Dance Department faculty. We recognized that part of the problem is that so many students use original scripts (that they have written themselves) for these final projects, and because the ideas have sprung from themselves, they don’t see the need for research. It was decided to put a greater emphasis on using pre-existing, proven material (plays) in order to encourage more academic research. If a student felt very strongly about doing their own material, they would be required to take: Theatre 2073 - Beginning Solo Plays from Personal Experience (3 units:Making your point using personal experiences. Writing and performance techniques that maximize impact for your audience. Two hrs. disc., 2 hrs. act. Taught by Professor Ann Fajilan).This class will be broadened so that it will cover more than solo performance for the Seniors who are then entering THEA 4151 to help them develop their original material. We also decided to have students spend time at the beginning of THEA 4151 devoted more specifically to how to do research, recognizing symbols, using metaphor and exploring the rich amount of artistic inspiration available through the worlds of Art and Photography. This kind of research is already a part of the preliminary Design and Directing classes that students must take before THEA 4151. However students entering class are under the pressure of coming up with the subjects for their Senior Performance projects, and often forget how these tools of research can enrich their performance pieces. Specific research assignments (perhaps all centered around a pre-existing well known play such as “Hamlet” or “A Streetcar Named Desire” and not connected to the students’ own projects) can be used to provide a template on how to use research to inspire and enliven their own theatrical or dance productions in THEA 4152. |

**E. Suggestions and Recommendations for the CLASS FACT Project in the Future**

|  |
| --- |
| None. |