



WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY
Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities

To: Weber State University Department Program of Performing Arts
Theatre program Faculty

From: Interim Dean, Amanda Sowerby

Re: Dean Response to Theatre Self-Study, Reviewers' Report, and Theatre Faculty Response

11.12.2020

A sincere thank you to the Theatre faculty for the input of thoughtful detail, time, and dedication to the Program Review process. Your comprehensive report reflects the care you address in strengths, strategies, and areas of concern for your program and the Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities. I would also like to express a special thanks to Kevin Crouch, Jessica Greenberg, Jennifer Kokai, Kara Thomson, and Scott Rogers, who generously gave their time to this process.

After analyzing the documents generated for the self-study and review of the Theatre program, I want to comment on components that I believe deserve attention.

- 1) The Theatre program is commended for meeting or exceeding all outcomes of its mission statement. It is recognized for efforts made to increase honesty and transparency as they prepared for the self-assessment.
- 2) The Review Committee notes the program's intentionality in aligning curriculum with mission, goals, and outcomes. The Committee did suggest that it would be helpful to have a roadmap of course offerings to assist students in planning their undergraduate career schedules. The Committee indicated a demonstrated need for additional faculty hires, via student and faculty feedback, and that the renting of theater spaces for performances was unusual given that the productions are required curriculum.
- 3) The Review Committee applauded the "equitable and transparent" nature of the program's learning outcomes and assessment. I do agree, as the Committee suggested, that it is necessary to have a curriculum map specific to each focus area within the program.
- 4) The program was commended for the varied professionalizing experiences and internships available to their students. Indeed, this preparation supports a healthy transition to working in the field and is included in their recruiting materials, as the faculty point out in their response. The Review Committee recommends that the program

clarifies its advising efforts. I suggest that the Theatre program advisors meet with A&H college advisors to define the best student advising strategies.

- 5) The Review Committee recognizes the dedication faculty demonstrate to the program and its students. The Committee did express concern that uncompensated overload is a burden to the existing faculty. This is partly due to a need for additional faculty members and the serving of Film Studies students within the Theatre program. Film Studies is an interdisciplinary program that includes several Theatre courses as major requirements. I agree that the Theatre program would benefit from additional faculty to carry the weight of course offerings, student advising, and administrative duties.
- 6) In the section regarding program support, the Review Committee highlighted the need for additional technical staff to assist the lighting and sound design programs. Additionally, the Committee put forth suggestions for the arrangement of the scene shop. The program faculty responded with examples of space limitations, strategies to address concerns, and the acknowledgment of ongoing communications with the campus OSHA Officer (also current Fire Marshall).
- 7) Although the Review Committee did not address the Theatre program's relationship with external communities, I can attest to the strength of community engagement that they provide. The Department of Performing Arts is a forward-facing and highly visible member of the college. The Theatre program's engagement with school districts and local arts organizations and nonprofits develop ongoing High Impact Educational Experiences for all of the students.
- 8) As interim dean, I look forward to assisting the incoming dean with strategies and solutions to address the needs presented here. The Department of Performing Arts Theatre program is committed to student success. This commitment is evident by the faculty and staff's dedication to providing innovative education to their students by preparing them to excel in a complex world.



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