



TOPIC: Towson University: Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting

COMMITTEE: Education Policy

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: June 6, 2012

SUMMARY: As a part of its 2008 accreditation review by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), Towson's Department of Theatre Arts reviewed the curricular structure within the existing undergraduate theatre arts program. The existing program included three tracks (acting, theatre studies, and design/production). The curricular review process revealed a need to strengthen the preparation of students in the acting track. In response to this review, the department added a screening process for admission to the track and increased the number of required credits from 18 to 28. The additional coursework focused on professional protocols: business skills (auditions, resumes, etc.), and advanced acting skills. NAST reviewed the proposed modified curriculum and suggested the acting track had reached the threshold of the professional BFA degree in terms of credits, purpose and coursework. (A BFA requires a higher percentage of the total credits required for graduation to be completed within the Theatre Department than a BA/BS.) The NAST evaluators recommended the creation of a BFA in Acting.

The rationale for the proposed change from BA/BS to BFA is that students who would be completing the proposed modified BA/BS curriculum in the acting track would essentially earn a BFA, and it is only fair and more accurate to award them the professional degree. The creation of the BFA program more accurately reflects the focus of the curriculum, and potential applicants would have a clearer understanding about program objectives and philosophy at program entry.

Student interest in the existing track is strong. The department does not anticipate growth in the number of majors. The program plans to continue to admit 16-20 students into the major each year. Like the BA/BS acting track, the BFA will be a "screened major" with a competitive application process that includes an audition/interview. During the past four years, approximately 60 applicants per year have auditioned for the 16-20 spaces currently available. The development of separate professional major will communicate the expectations of the acting curriculum, and will enhance the applicant pool, as students seeking rigorous professional training (especially those from local performing arts high schools like Baltimore School for the Arts, Carver Center for the Arts, and Patapsco High.

ALTERNATIVE(S): The Regents may not approve the program or may request further information.

FISCAL IMPACT: No additional funding is necessary. The program will be supported through tuition.

CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee on Education Policy recommend that the Board of Regents approve the proposal from Towson University to offer the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

DATE: June 6, 2012

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

SUBMITTED BY: Irwin Goldstein (301) 445-1992 irv@usmd.edu

**MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
ACADEMIC PROGRAM PROPOSAL**

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND PROPOSAL FOR

NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

SUBSTANTIAL EXPANSION/MAJOR MODIFICATION

COOPERATIVE DEGREE PROGRAM

WITHIN EXISTING RESOURCES or **REQUIRING NEW RESOURCES**

Towson University

Summer 2012

Projected Implementation Date

B.F.A.

Acting

Award to be Offered

Title of Proposed Program

Main-campus (Towson)

Traditional (Face-to-Face)

Location

Method of Delivery

1007.02

500506

Suggested HEGIS Code

Suggested CIP Code

Theatre

Robyn Quick

Department of Proposed Program

Name of Department Head

Robyn Quick

rquick@towson.edu

410-704-2792

Contact Name

Contact E-Mail Address

Contact Phone Number

Signature and Date

President/Chief Executive Approval

Date

Date Endorsed/Approved by Governing Board

Introduction

Towson University is proposing the creation of a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Acting. The proposed acting program will replace the acting track within the existing BA/BS in theatre. The development of the an acting major is largely the result of recommendations from the National Association of Schools of Theatre to develop a free-standing major as the track within the major is more professionally focused from the other tracks within the existing majors and requires significantly more coursework within the field.

Undergraduate degrees in theatre are classified professional or liberal arts. Liberal arts programs typically result in the BA or BS degree and focus on theatre in the context of a broad program of general studies, while professional programs typically result in the BFA and include more intensive work in theatre than is supported by a program in general studies.

The existing track within the theatre program will be terminated once the major is approved and after curriculum is approved by the National Association of Schools of Theatre.

As a part of the recent NAST accreditation process (2008), the Department of Theatre Arts reviewed the curricular structure within the existing undergraduate theatre arts program. The existing program included three tracks (acting, theatre studies, and design/production). The curricular review process revealed a need to strengthen the preparation of students in the acting track. In response to this review the department added a screening process for admission to the track, and increased the number of required credits from 18 to 28. The additional coursework focused on professional protocols: business skills (auditions, resumes, etc.) and advanced acting skills. NAST reviewed the proposed modified curriculum and suggested the acting track had reached the threshold of the professional BFA degree in terms of credits, purpose and coursework. (A BFA requires a higher percentage of the total credits required for graduation to be completed within the Theatre Department than a BA/BS.) The NAST evaluators recommended the creation of a BFA in Acting.

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Student interest in the existing track is strong. The department does not anticipate growth in the number of majors. The program plans to continue to admit 16-20 students into the major each year. Like the BA/BS acting track, the BFA will be a “screened major” with a competitive application process that includes an audition/interview. During the past four years, approximately 60 applicants per year have auditioned for the 16-20 spaces currently available. The development of separate professional major will communicate the expectations of the acting curriculum, and will enhance the applicant pool, as students seeking rigorous professional training (especially those from local performing arts high schools like Baltimore School for the Arts, Carver Center for the Arts and Patapsco High

School) seek a BFA over a BA/BS program. With the institution of a BFA program, we anticipate those students will now be looking at Towson.

The National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) reports in their 2009/2010 Academic Year Summary that thirty-three percent (33%) of schools offering a theatre degree award the BFA in Acting rather than the BA or BS.

Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees are offered by 61 of the 182 drama programs affiliated with NAST. 4,576 students were enrolled in 182 BFA programs in academic year 2009/2010 with 913 graduating.

Department of Theatre Arts: Acting Track Summary							
Academic Year	Number of Students Auditioning for Program	Number of Students Admitted Program	Number of Students Who Left the Program	Number of Acting Track Graduates	Students Pursuing Master Degree in Theatre	Graduates Involved in Theatre	Graduates Professionally Active in Theatre
2010/2011	16	First audition held on 12/3/11 and ten other auditions to follow					
2009/2010	71	18	0				
2008/2009	63	21	1				
2007/2008	58	28	2				
Data below are from years before the audition into the program were instituted							
2006/2007	0	61	45	16	1	11	4
2005/2006	0	69	56	12	0	5	0
2004/2005	0	65	44	21	0	7	1
2003/2004	0	71	56	15	1	4	1
2002/2003	0	58	47	11	0	8	0

Reason For Selecting Not to Attend Towson					
Years	Responses	BFA	Musical Theatre	Financial	Another School
2010/2011					
2009/2010	16	6	6	2	2
2008/2009	9	5	2	2	0
2007/2008	11	7	2	1	1

Mission

Our proposed BFA in Acting is consistent with and supportive of the larger mission of Towson University, which states: “Towson’s academic programs develop students’ capacities for effective communication, critical analysis and flexible thought, and they cultivate an awareness of both difference and commonality necessary for multifaceted work environments”

Professional actor training (as typified by the BFA degree) requires students to acquire historical and cultural information, perform literary and linguistic analysis, and synthesize these with the specific dramatic techniques required to arrive at a fully formed

performance of a theatrical work. Collaboration (the center of the theatrical process) requires the student to impart their vision clearly and compellingly, and to be responsive and flexible when melding their vision with the visions of other artists. As a result students learn to negotiate the balance of unified vision with individual expression as it impacts the various expressions (text, design, and performance) within the theatrical whole.

Further, our expectation is that the number of students auditioning for the BFA will be 2 or 3 times the number auditioning for our current BA. This will allow us the opportunity to attract a wider range of students to build a more diverse “learning community” which “mirrors the surrounding population.” which is one of the Guiding Principles of the TU 2016 plan

Characteristics of the Proposed Program

The proposed acting program is for students who are seeking rigorous, developmental training in performance. The proposed program is designed to prepare students for graduate study, professional internships, and/or entry-level work in the field. The BFA degree gives students both the skills and credentials to make them more attractive to MFA programs in acting, which would be the logical next step in performance training for an actor at the graduate level.

The BFA in Acting will achieve the following student learning outcomes (coordination with TU Core Learning Outcomes is indicated in the parentheses):

- 1) Apply in practice a range of expression within a specific art while exhibiting rigorous standards of technique. (Creativity and Creative Development)
- 2) Demonstrate content knowledge through an analysis and synthesis of representative examples, ideas and skills. (Creativity and Creative Development)
- 3) Articulate by means appropriate to the discipline the ways in which theory and practice meet in the creation of the specific art form. These means may include verbal, written and observable products and or presentations. (Creativity and Creative Development)
- 4) Show how history, aesthetics, form and composition, techniques and/or pedagogy contribute to the process of creative development. (Creativity and Creative Development)
- 5) Demonstrate understanding of a perspective other than their own (Diversity and Difference)\
- 6) Integrate material effectively from outside sources into their own prose. (Advanced Writing Seminar)
- 7) Demonstrate a developed ability to compose clear, effective prose, including through the practice of revision.(Advanced Writing Seminar)

The proposed program is designed to address the needs of individuals intending to pursue professional careers as actors and performing artists. The proposed program consists of a developmental, sequential course of study designed to prepare undergraduate students of acting to compete for entry level positions. The BFA degree program requires completion of 120 credits including coursework in the major, theatre arts and the University Core.

The following are required courses in the major and the department:

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL MAJORS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS (28 credits)

THEA 125 - Script Analysis (3)
THEA 142 - Introduction to Theatre Design (3)
THEA 211 - History of Theatre and Drama I (3)
THEA 212 - History of Theatre and Drama II (3)
THEA 213 - History of Theatre and Drama III (3)

THEA 201 - Scene Design I (3)
or
THEA 255 - Lighting Design I (3)
or
THEA 353 - Costume Design I (3)

THEA 331 - Directing I (3)
THEA 499 - Special Project in Theatre Research (3)
THEA 492 – Theatre Production: Acting (1)
THEA 497 Theatre Production: Running Crew (1)

And two of the following four courses:
THEA 494 Theatre Production: Scenic Elements (1)
THEA 495 Theatre Production: Lighting, Sound (1)
THEA 496 Theatre Production: Costume (1)
THEA 498 Theatre Production: Administration (1)

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL BFA CANDIDATES (30 credits)

THEA 110 - Acting I for Acting Track Majors (3)
THEA 111 - Voice for the Actor I (3)
THEA 105 - Movement for the Actor I (3)
THEA 202 - Acting 2 (3)
THEA 319 - Studio-to-Stage (3)
THEA 322 - Voice 2 (3)
THEA 335 - Movement for the Actor II (3)
THEA 302 - Intermediate Scene Study
THEA 489 - Senior Acting Seminar

Performance Elective (3) - 300 or 400 level performance elective which teaches physical, vocal or interpretive skills intended to hone, deepen or expand an actor's performance. These courses may be chosen from the list below or from other theatre course or other university courses selected in consultation with their advisor. NOTE: only those electives in which a grade of "B" or better is achieved may count toward this requirement.

THEA 301 - Techniques of Comedy (3)
THEA 308 - Voice and Movement Integration (3)
THEA 309 - Acting III (6)
THEA 317 - Ensemble Theatre Laboratory (3)
THEA 312 - Shakespeare (3)
THEA 315 - Advanced Scene Study (3)
THEA 345 – Speech and Dialect (3)

Demonstrable Number and Quality of Program Faculty

There are a total of 12 full-time tenure or tenure-track faculty members in the existing program. Their education background, experience and scholarship are all appropriate. The most recent NAST review did not identify any issues with respect to faculty numbers of qualifications. The use of part-time faculty is appropriate and supplements the background and experiences of the full-time faculty.

In any given semester at least 90% of all BFA requirements will be taught by full-time faculty. Some electives and - in some special circumstances - (such as sabbatical coverage) a few required classes may be taught by highly qualified adjuncts.

Student Services

No additional student service programming is required to support the proposed program. Students enrolled in the program will have access to student service programming and support.

Every major in the Department of Theatre Arts is assigned a faculty advisor within the department for their entire Towson career (as long as they remain a Theatre major). Theatre majors are advised every semester, and are not allowed to register for classes if they have not had an advising appointment.

Library Requirements

No additional library resources are required to support the developing of an acting major as the acting track has been in place of a number of years. The 2008 NAST review concluded that the library holdings and services met the standards and guidelines of NAST. The department also continues to maintain a play script library. The collection is well developed and supports both student and faculty needs adequately.

Facilities and Equipment

All facilities are currently adequate as expressed in our most recent five-year NAST accreditation review.

The Department of Theatre Arts has the following facilities:

Acting Classrooms: There are four acting classrooms and each acting classroom measures 1,700 sq. ft. Each acting classroom has a sprung wooded floor, a stereo sound system, rehearsal furniture, and 24’ ceilings. Two of these acting classrooms have one mirror wall each.

Rehearsal Space: There are three acting rehearsal spaces and each acting rehearsal space measures 300 sq. ft. Each rehearsal space has a set of rehearsal furniture and is used throughout the day and night by acting students.

Performance Space #1: The main stage theatre sits 325 patrons and has a 20’ X 40’ proscenium arch. This space has 225 circuits and 400 lighting instruments. The space uses ten speakers, a mixer board, and a light control console. In addition this space has a 24’ turntable and a 60’ fly loft with 21 line sets.

Performance Space #2: The Marder Studio Theatre sits 100 patrons and is a 40’ X 40’ black box. This space has 56 circuits and 100 lightning instruments. The space uses four speakers, a mixer board, and a light control console

Performance Space #3: The Studio Theat4re sits 150 patrons and is a 52’ X 52’ black box. This space has 225 circuits and 225 lighting instruments. The space uses eight speakers, a mixer board, and a light control console. In addition this space has a tension wire grid 26’ above the stage floor

Performance Space #4: Stephens Hall Theatre sits 750 patrons and is a 46’ X 23’ proscenium arch theatre. The space has 400 circuits and 350 lighting instruments. This space uses twelve speakers, twelve wireless microphones, a mixer board, and a light control console. This space has a 65’ fly loft with 28 line sets. In addition, this space has an orchestra pit that can accommodate 40 musicians

Demonstrable Number and Quality of Program Faculty

A total of 12 faculty teach in the existing program and they will all be teaching in the BFA program. Their education background, experience and scholarship are all appropriate. The most recent NAST review did not identify any issues with respect to faculty numbers and/or qualifications.

Faculty Member 1	Full Time	Yale University	MFA
Faculty Member 2	Full Time	Union International	PhD
Faculty Member 3	Full Time	University of Hawaii	MFA
Faculty Member 4	Full Time	Boston University	MFA
Faculty Member 5	Full Time	Univ. of Massachusetts	MFA
Faculty Member 6	Full Time	University of Hawaii	MFA
Faculty Member 7	Full Time	New York University	PhD
Faculty Member 8	Full Time	University of Michigan	PhD

Faculty Member 9	Full Time	Univ. of Connecticut	MFA
Faculty Member 10	Full Time	Florida State University	MFA
Faculty Member 11	Full Time	York University, Toronto	MFA
Faculty Member 12	Full Time	Pennsylvania State Univ.	MFA

Resources and Expenditures

Because the proposed major has been in place for many years as a track within the existing theatre major, no additional resources will be required to support the proposed program. The 2008 NAST review team concluded that the production and operational budgets of the department adequately served the needs of the department.

The existing acting track has been in existence for 22 years. All course required within the acting track have been taught regularly by the current faculty, the Theatre Arts Department already has the personnel and resources in place to successfully manage the proposed program.

Tables 1 and 2 are included on the following pages and reflect the ability to implement the proposed modifications with no direct costs.

NOTE: The fields in Tables 1 and 2 are empty, because there will be no changes in the resources or expenditures

TABLE 1: RESOURCES

Resources Categories	(Year 1)	(Year 2)	(Year 3)	(Year 4)	(Year 5)
1. Reallocated Funds¹	0	0	0	0	0
2. Tuition/Fee Revenue²	0	0	0	0	0
a. Annual Full-time Revenue					
Number of Full-time Students					
Annual Tuition Rate					
Subtotal Tuition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Fees					
Subtotal Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Full-time Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
b. Annual Part-time Revenue					
Number of Part-Time Students					
Credit Hour Tuition Rate					
Annual Fees Per Credit Hour					
Annual Credit Hours Per Student					
Subtotal Tuition	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Part Time Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3. Grants, Contracts & Other Sources³	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4. Other Sources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL (Add 1 - 4)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

TABLE 2: EXPENDITURES

Expenditure Categories	(Year 1)	(Year 2)	(Year 3)	(Year 4)	(Year 5)
1. Total Faculty Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
(b + c below)					
a. #FTE					
b. Total Salary					
c. Total Benefits	0	0	0	0	0
2. Total Administrative Staff Expenses	0	0	0	0	0
(b + c below)					
a. #FTE					
b. Total Salary					
c. Total Benefits	0	0	0	0	0
3. Total Support Staff Expenses	0	0	0	0	0
(b + c below)					
a. #FTE					
b. Total Salary					
c. Total Benefits	0	0	0	0	0
4. Equipment					
5. Library					
6. New or Renovated Space					
7. Other Expenses					
TOTAL (1-7)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0