

# **Academic Program Review**

**California State Polytechnic University, Pomona  
College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences  
Department of Theatre & New Dance**

**Bernardo Solano, Chair  
Sara Garver, Interim Dean**

## **BA Theatre**

### Major Sub-plans:

Acting  
Dance Theatre  
Design & Technical Production  
General Theatre  
Theatre in Education & Community Engagement

### **Visiting Team:**

**Risa Brainin, UC Santa Barbara  
Dave Mickey, CSU Fullerton**

### **Date of visit:**

**Online: 2/16/22  
In-person: 2/24/22**

Dear Jocelyn S. Chong, Ph.D.,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Department of Theatre & New Dance. It has been a pleasure to meet with the faculty and staff to review the operations, strengths and challenges within the department. Thank you for the opportunity to provide recommendations to create opportunities for the department's development. This summary report is our combined unbiased evaluation of the department's self-study and on-site visit. The report is organized into four topics: strengths, challenges, reviewers recommendations and comments / requests from faculty, students and staff, followed by the Program Review Summary Sheet for External Review outline.

Thank you,

Risa Brainin, UC Santa Barbara

**Signature:**   
Risa Brainin (Mar 9, 2022 16:32 PST)

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## **STRENGTHS**

**The Department of Theatre and New Dance has a great heart and soul. The faculty, staff and students are passionate about what they do. The Chair is much beloved. Faculty appreciate that they can speak frankly to Chair Solano. There is great faith in his leadership.**

**The mission for students to learn by doing (as defined by Cal Poly and the department) is being practiced successfully. Students are very satisfied, very positive and love their faculty. In particular, they mentioned Sarah Krainin, Jesse Portillo, Richard Klein, Linda Biseti and Brian Newman. In the area of faculty mentorship, students report they feel very supported. In particular, they mentioned that they are allowed to fail without being judged, and encouraged to learn from their mistakes. Faculty members play a strong role in academic advising, spending many hours working with individual students on their particular sub plans. Students also expressed appreciation for the staff, especially Vanessa Poveda in the costume shop.**

**The bones of the mainstage performance space are excellent. The faculty and staff are working well together to maximize and organize all of the areas in the theatre in order to utilize them fully.**

**Faculty have a strong vision for equipment needs in order to provide current instruction and model best practices. They are proactive in seeking additional resources and planning for the future. The opportunity provided by the Dean's office for a yearly wish list is helpful for the department.**

**The staff is unified and works well together.**

**The overall climate of the department is very positive. Students, faculty, staff and lecturers report a congenial and collaborative work environment.**

**Students spoke positively about the guest directors and appreciated what they bring to their education.**

**Students greatly appreciate that the curriculum requirements are well-rounded. Students from different sub-plans appreciate learning skills outside of their area of focus.**

One student expressed appreciation for the faculty's organization, preparedness and understanding during the pandemic. They learned new skills such as video editing, while also moving forward in their core courses.

#### **CHALLENGES (Threats and Weaknesses)**

**Note: Many of the recommendations from the Program Review of 2010 have not been implemented.**

**Costume Shop Supervisor must be expanded to full time.** On average, the department requires 15 full costumes to be built each semester. Each costume takes around 30 hours to complete. With a part-time costume shop supervisor it would take 22.5 weeks to complete one show. This work is being completed through overtime and providing volunteer hours at home. Without a costume faculty member, costume shop supervisor Vanessa Poveda becomes the de facto mentor. When supervising student designers, she must be in contact with them as they research, shop, help build and complete their designs.

**The costume shop manager and technical director are spending thousands of dollars out of pocket for materials** because there is no p-card available to the department for this purpose. Materials must be purchased on a limited schedule in order for costumes and scenery to support the curricular productions.

**Classroom and performance space allocation is inadequate for the number of majors and sections required to meet GI 2025 goals.** As raised in the 2010 report, the number of students has more than doubled, yet there are no additional cost-free spaces available for instruction.

**Office space is maxed out within the theatre building.**

**Faculty need more time and resources for professional development/research.** Currently, the faculty workload prohibits their ability to take on creative and scholarly activities.

**Faculty are overworked.** The department needs more faculty members to help carry the load and expand curriculum in the following areas: acting, costume design, sound design, projections design, dance.

**The Dance Theatre option has only six students and no tenure track faculty.**

**A refresh plan is needed for technical equipment currency. With outdated equipment, students are not in line with the Polytechnic approach requiring learning by doing. The theatre space is akin to a science lab where students perform their research.**

**A larger production budget is needed to meet the growing costs of materials, yet allocations have remained the same.**

**Enrollment has doubled creating the need to provide more students with adequate performance and design opportunities.**

**The tenure track faculty are challenged in the RTP with the addition of the “creative contribution to the department” requirement.**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Philanthropy.**

**-We recommend that the Chair meet monthly with the development team. A philanthropic strategic plan is needed to identify and cultivate donors. Scholarships, production costs, underwriting tickets for students, fundraising for expanded and upgraded facilities and equipment are some of the needs identified by the department that cannot be met by the University allocations.**

**-Consider applying for new ASI/IRA grants for each of the different department sub-plan programs.**

### **Recruitment and Retention.**

**-Hire TT faculty in Acting, Costume Design, Sound Design, Projections Design to meet the mentorship and curricular needs of the students.**

**-The department must decide the direction of the Theatre and New Dance Option. How does the dance program integrate into the major? This includes examining the need to replace the two TT faculty in Dance who have recently retired.**

**-The costume shop staff position must be expanded to full time. Please see the challenges section for supporting information.**

**-We recommend expanding the publicist staff position to full time and/or creating a team shared with the Music Department.**

**-Review and update the Department Personnel Standards. When revising the DPS, we recommend removing the fourth criteria "creative contribution to the department " to be in line with the CBA and University Standards.**

### **Workload**

**-Summer Retreat. The faculty lack the time during the school year to focus on the department's operational and curricular needs. To complete all of the planning, we recommend an off-site summer retreat funded by the Dean's office with ample time to discuss and strategize for the future.**

**-The faculty need to agree on WTU equity between directing, mentoring, and designing for productions. A clear document explaining WTU may be helpful to all - especially new faculty coming into the department.**

**-Provide WTU letters to the T/TT faculty each semester outlining the faculty's workload including the WTU value for each teaching assignment including directing, designing and mentorship of student designers.**

**-Partner with the College's Student Success Center team to help with the advising workload. The SSC could help with the GE and graduation advising, allowing the faculty to focus on major advising.**

**-Consider providing reassign time for one faculty member to act as the department's undergraduate advisor to help with the advising workload.**

**-Create committee workload documentation to demonstrate how it is shared between the faculty.**

**-Develop a process map for the department's yearly activities. A process map outlines the required activities by week or month for the year. This helps with planning and workload commitments.**

**Facilities. The theatre and dance spaces directly support the curricular needs of the department. Theatre/dance labs should be treated in parallel to scientific**

research labs. The department currently lacks adequate space for performance classes and faculty offices.

-The department has outgrown the current theatre building due to the increasing number of students within the major. To support the future growth of the department we recommend adding a new performing arts building to the campus master plan.

-Consider creating an outdoor space for classes. A huge advantage to being situated in California is the ability to work outside most of the year. However, a permanent structure would be required to protect faculty and students from weather and to provide a more intimate classroom environment.

-Faculty should set the appropriate class capacity size based on the curricular needs and safety in the studio and classroom.

-Provide the department with the first rights to schedule classroom 24B-1421 to help with the space and noise issue from performance classes next door.

-Consider using dressing rooms 104 and 105 as office spaces.

-The department's storage locations could be better utilized. We would recommend removing items that are no longer needed by the department to free up storage space.

-The University should provide new furniture to tenure track faculty hires.

**Equipment.** An equipment refresh plan should be developed between the college and department for curriculum currency.

-The chain motors in the scene shop and on stage need to have yearly maintenance and safety checks.

-The department needs to purchase a wireless ClearCom system.

-The department needs to purchase an LED Wall for scenic and projection design.

-The Dance studio classroom needs technology updates including sound equipment and a smart classroom projector/computer for lectures.

-The lighting dimmers are out of date which can become a fire hazard. We recommend purchasing new, current dimmers and moving the dimmers off the deck of the stage to a safe location.

-The department has many Parcans in storage and in use in the Studio Theatre. Parcans lamps are no longer being manufactured. All of the lighting instruments need to be replaced by more modern fixtures.

**COMMENTS AND REQUESTS**

from faculty, students and staff that are not covered above:

The University needs to provide safe drinking water in the theatre building. This is greatly needed for activity-based classes like dance and movement.

Lecturers would like to be invited to department meetings to promote inclusivity.

Lecturers expressed the need for a larger community space for gatherings outside of the green room. They also requested more opportunities to gather with students, staff and faculty.

Lecturers in dance report a need for more dance technique courses to be included in the curriculum.

Staff requested that the department’s marquee be replaced with a new LED marquee.

E = Exemplary	S = Satisfactory	N = Needs Improvement	U = Unclear and Requires Exploration and/or Changes	N/A = Not Applicable
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Section 1 – Introduction (Criteria to Consider)	Evaluation
Does the program’s vision, mission, and values align to those of the College and University?	E

<p><b>Has the program aligned department and academic program activities to the elements of the <u>Cal Poly Pomona Inclusive Polytechnic Education</u>?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent has the program considered and implemented recommendation from its previous program review?</b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>
<p><b>Has the program demonstrated that all courses (i.e. face to face lectures, hybrid lectures, asynchronous classes, laboratory work, research, internships, practica, studio work, etc.) meet the federal <u>credit hour policy</u>?</b></p>	<p><b>S</b></p>

<p><b>Section 2 – Program Quality (Criteria to Consider)</b></p>	<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>
<p><b>Admission and Enrollment</b>  <b>To what extent has the program admitted and enrolled students who are well-suited for success?</b></p>	<p><b>S</b></p>
<p><b>How has the program provided evidence that it supports enrolled students?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>

<p><b>Curriculum and Pedagogy</b>  <b>To what extent has the program made curricular changes that are appropriate to the level and purpose of the program, and reflective of current debates, trends, technologies, and latest important developments in the discipline?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent are the general education, service learning, honors and/or other service courses (related areas) appropriate to the program? (if applicable)</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent has the program provided an analysis and plan on reducing the impact to students in bottleneck courses? (if applicable)</b></p>	<p><b>S</b></p>
<p><b>Student Retention and Graduation Rates</b>  <b>To what extent has the program ensured that students are persisting and graduating based on the <u>2025 Graduation Initiative</u>?</b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>
<p><b>How has the program addressed/reduced/eliminated equity gaps?</b></p>	<p><b>S</b></p>

<b>Section 2(cont.) – Program Quality (Criteria to Consider)</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Assessment of Student Learning</b> <b>To what extent do the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) reflect the core themes and discipline content areas of the major (goals of the overall program)?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent do the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) reflect the measurable skills, knowledge, and values of the discipline/profession?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent does the design of the curricula support student’s achievement of the SLOs?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent does the curricula offer the necessary depth and breadth of study, sensible flow and sequencing of courses, and ample culminating opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of SLOs?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent does the assessment plan allow for each SLO to be evaluated at least twice to allow for observation of continuous improvement over a typical seven-year program review cycle?</b>	<b>S</b>
<b>To what extent has the program used appropriate assessment activity and tools?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent has the program used assessment results to close the loop on each Student Learning Outcome?</b>	<b>S</b>

<p><b>Student Support, Satisfaction and Services</b>  <b>To what extent does the program/department integrate co-curricular experiences (e.g., clubs, research, scholarship, creative activities, etc.) meaningfully?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent does the department value student advising?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>Does the program/college/university have an advising structure that supports student success?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent are students satisfied with the program?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>Does the program prepare graduates for meaningful lives, further education, and successful careers?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>Section 3 – Faculty (Criteria to Consider)</b></p>	<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent does the program have a faculty body composed of diverse expertise to teach all the necessary areas within the curriculum?</b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent is the appropriate balance between courses taught by tenure/tenure track faculty vs. adjunct lectures/part-time faculty?</b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>
<p><b>Does the program engage student graders, teaching assistants, adjunct and part-time faculty appropriately within the department?</b></p>	<p><b>S</b></p>

<b>Section 4 – University Support and Resources (Criteria to Consider)</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Does the program engage non-teaching personnel (coordinator, technicians, etc.) appropriately to meet the needs of the department (consider type of appointment, time commitment, level, etc.)	N
To what extent does the program engage in space utilization improvements associated with teaching and laboratory facilities?	N
To what extent are the library resources current and sufficient for the program?	N
How has the department worked with the library to help strengthen student success?	N
To what extent has the program engaged with other campus resources (e.g., Learning Resource Center, Bronco Advising Center, Graduate Study Room, Maker Space, Center for Community Engagement, Division of Student Affairs, etc.) to strengthen student success?	N
To what extent does the program utilize their current budget adequately?	E
Are the expenditures aligned to the program, department, college, and university priorities?	E

**Review based on Site Visit**

Curriculum and Instruction within the Program - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
<p><b>Extended Course Syllabi/Outlines: Do course outlines provide a clear course description, list the general content that the course will cover, and course learning outcomes that are appropriate to the level of the course and degree awarded? (<i>Department Chair can provide samples for your review during site visit</i>).</b></p>	S
<p>To what extent does the department offer classes in different modalities (e.g., face-to-face, hybrid, remote, etc.) Do they ensure the credit hour policy is met? (<i>Department Chair can address this request during meeting</i>)</p>	NA
<p>To what extent are faculty within the program engaged in innovative pedagogy to facilitate student success? (<i>Faculty to Address</i>)</p>	E
<p><b>To what extent are students provided sufficient experiences with equipment and technologies that will prepare them for success after graduation? (<i>Faculty to Address</i>)</b></p>	N

Faculty (Tenure and Tenure Track) - Criteria to Consider	Evaluation
<p><b>To what extent are faculty aware of the Student Learning Outcomes for the program?</b></p>	E

<b>To what extent do faculty align Student Learning Outcomes to their course(s)?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent are faculty engaged in co-curricular (e.g., clubs, research, scholarship, creative activities, etc.) experiences with their students?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent are faculty engaged with advising outside of the course(s) they are teaching?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent are faculty familiar with current disciplinary and professional expectations?</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>To what extent have faculty received support from their department/college/university associated with teaching, scholarship and service?</b>	<b>N</b>

<b>Adjunct, Part-Time and Non-Tenure Track Faculty- Criteria to Consider</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>To what extent are adjunct/part-time faculty familiar with the disciplinary and professional expectations?</b>	<b>U</b>
<b>To what extent are adjunct/part-time faculty receive support from their department/college/university associated with teaching, scholarship and service?</b>	<b>U</b>

<b>Student Experience – Criteria to Consider</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<p><b>To what extent are students aware of the program-level student learning outcomes that they are expected to achieve?</b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent do students seem satisfied with faculty engagement in co-curricular experiences?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent do students find faculty approachable and ready to provide the necessary advice to improve their likelihood for success?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>
<p><b>To what extent are students satisfied with the program’s curriculum, faculty, degree of academic challenge, academic support, advising, mentoring, co-curricular learning opportunities, career preparation, and opportunities for leadership?</b></p>	<p><b>E</b></p>

<b>Assessment of Student Learning – Criteria to Consider</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<p><b>Based on your review of the assessment plan, student work samples, and annual learning outcomes assessment reports, to what extent does the program regularly and effectively use assessment findings to improve student learning. <i>(Program Assessment Chair)</i></b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>

<b>Facilities - Criteria to Consider</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
To what extent does the program have adequate facilities for teaching, research and scholarship (e.g., labs, library, etc.)	N
If applicable, to what extent are the equipment within the laboratories adequate?	N

<b>Diversity and Climate - Criteria to Consider</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
To what extent do students feel that the learning environment in the program is inclusive and that diversity is valued?	E
To what extent do faculty feel that the working environment in the program is inclusive and that diversity is valued?	E

<b>Overall - Criteria to Consider</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
To what extent are the program's website and marketing material accurate and adequate?	N

**What are the top three goals that you would suggest that the programs set for the next seven years?**

- 1. Expand the costume shop supervisor to full-time in order to meet the curriculum requirements of the department.**
- 2. Identify and expand classroom and performance space options.**
- 3. The faculty needs to make a clear decision on how the dance program is integrated into the major.**