

Internal Reviewer Review Report – BA in Theatre California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

The purpose of this internal review of the BA Theatre Program is to provide an unbiased examination of the quality of education and service in the program, and to identify opportunities for improvement and growth. After carefully reviewing the program’s Self Study, we took part in a virtual department visit on Tuesday, April 5, 2022 with the Theatre Department to review. This report is divided into sections based on the lines of inquiry and highlights the strengths, challenges, and recommendations.

Inclusive Polytechnic Identity	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular and co-curricular alignment with polytechnic identity. Includes several courses in core curriculum, as well as at least one course in 4 of 5 options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TH1700A, TH3700A, TH2440A, TH4440A, TH4620, DAN3400, TH4250S all in the core curriculum – regular student engagement with the inclusive polytechnic identity of Cal Poly Pomona ○ Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, American College Dance Association Conference, Southern California Shakespeare festival, CSU Summer Arts • Intentional inclusivity through vision statement and program overview; engagement with other groups on campus brings diverse populations together. • PolyX course and production season embody polytechnic experience with students involved in all aspects of production.
	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of COVID-19 pandemic and remote instruction on ASI-recognized student club -- Actors Collaborating with Technicians (ACT) -- has led to lower engagement with club by students. • Limited means to formalize student contribution and “learn-by-doing” when involved in faculty’s own professional work. May impact accessibility of all students if cost of participation (fuel, lost work hours) cannot be offset.
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to offer and engage with student learning via practical experience in all aspects of theatre and dance – courses and involvement with festivals, conferences, etc. • Consider seeking an increase in the amount requested through the Instructional Related Activities budget as a tier 1 program (https://www.cpp.edu/cppira/index.shtml) • Explore support mechanisms to involve students further in faculty creative activities/professional work. Potential avenues include using senior project or independent study here, or applying for faculty support through the RSCA program and including the \$5000 student supplements.

Assessment	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program has 5 student learning outcomes aligned with 3 program learning outcomes -- a reasonable number of SLOs -- recently developed during semester conversion process. • Thoughtful and deliberate consideration of artifacts collected; significance of range of capstone projects when assessing SLO1 • Department members are committed to meaningful assessment.
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	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty bandwidth/capacity to sustainably collect artifacts, analyze data, and implement closing-the-loop strategies is limited due to small department size and low tenure density. Past assessment has been supported via funding to bring lecturers into the assessment process.
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue conversation within department regarding the structure and potential revision of SLOs currently focusing on skill development (pg. 36 of self-study). Consider the balance of equity-minded teaching approaches (contract-based grading) with workforce readiness (competency-based grading). Pursue opportunities for support in assessment such as the Summer Assessment Mini-Grant; may wish to focus on seeking out methods for establishing repeatable and sustainable protocols for assessment (OAPR). Consider collecting information from graduating students (exit survey).

GI 2025	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since 2010 (last program review), program has improved retention both at CPP and within department. No meaningful gap in graduation rates for URM students vs non-URM students or Pell recipients vs non-Pell recipients (caveat: small number of students make it difficult to draw conclusions) Offers individual mentorship and advising to all students Intentional scheduling of courses to facilitate timely graduation Department maintains an active relationship with College advisors, encourages students to seek additional advising from college advisors for areas outside of major coursework.
	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data interpretation can be tricky due to small cohort size – a difference of just a couple students can result in apparently large gaps Lack of appropriate learning space limits when and where courses can be offered. This directly impacts the program’s ability to retain students when courses cannot be offered as needed due to lack of appropriate space, or the courses cannot be active learning. Difficulties encountered with outdated/incomplete student information from Registrar’s office (DPR; transfer credit reports, petitions)
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theatre needs physical spaces that are appropriate for learning the tools of theatre where their courses do not disrupt classes in adjacent spaces. Student advising time commitment for faculty could be lessened by having College/University advisors familiar with the program to offer students tailored recommendations. One possibility would be a department-specific liaison.

Technology	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Theatre and New Dance uses the CPP template in Cascade CMS, which is mobile-friendly. Relevant information about the program regarding options and opportunities for hands-on learning is presented on the main page for prospective students. A phone number is offered on the main page.
	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data gaps that result from small cohort size to protect student identity; information regarding careers of alumni Delay in updating software and technology such that the updates can be “lapped” where a new version is available before the previous update is rolled out Equipment available for learning is hard to maintain due to lack of replacement parts (example: lighting in theatre studio)
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a department email contact that can be monitored by multiple parties – currently there is no contact information on the department homepage other than for the publicist/box office. A shared mailbox (theatre@cpp.edu, for example) could be monitored by chair, ASC, and/or other faculty. Consider creating/adding an easily accessible section on the website for prospective students with more detailed information about the available sub-plans within Theatre and New Dance.

Infrastructural/Organizational	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department actively and intentionally adapt and make changes in response to changes at the College and University levels, resulting in an inclusive polytechnic degree program that remains aligned with those strategic visions
	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mission of the department aligns well with the University and College; the Department should continue to engage with opportunities as appropriate.

Summary

The B.A. in Theatre and New Dance currently has 133 students majoring in five sub-plans supported by 6 T/TT faculty. This represents a near doubling of students majoring in Theatre, while T/TT faculty growth has not kept pace. There is a particular need for T/TT faculty to support the New Dance option. An additional area that Theatre and New Dance is in essential need is identifying and developing appropriate spaces for classes that allow students to engage in active learning – the lack of spaces where other classes are not disrupted has led to scheduling issues and has impacted student retention. The faculty of Theatre and New Dance are dedicated to supporting their students as the students master the creative and academic components of theatre and dance, as well as student growth as individuals and members of

society. Faculty are also commended for seeking out sustainable approaches to meaningful assessment, as well as the improvement in graduation rates since the last review. It is our goal that these recommendations can support Theatre and New Dance as they move forward and we look forward to seeing the Department's growth and advancement in the future.

Sincerely,

Reviewer 1: Kathryn McCulloch Signature/Date:  _____ 05/04/2022

Reviewer 2: Julie Shen Signature/Date:  _____ 05/04/2022