

3. Type of Program:

Undergraduate Certificate

Associate

Baccalaureate x

Master's

Doctorate

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate

4. Type of Action:

x

Discontinue

Implementation Semester:

Implementation Year:

Page number of attached summary where effects on other programs are discussed: N/A

6. Specialized accreditation or other external program

certification needed or anticipated. List all that apply O5,,6a51

None

See pp. 9-10 and pp. 12-13 in the attached.

8. Teachout Plan (attached) TBD

Submitted by:

Chancellor/Provost

Date:

Consensus support of AC

Not supported by AC

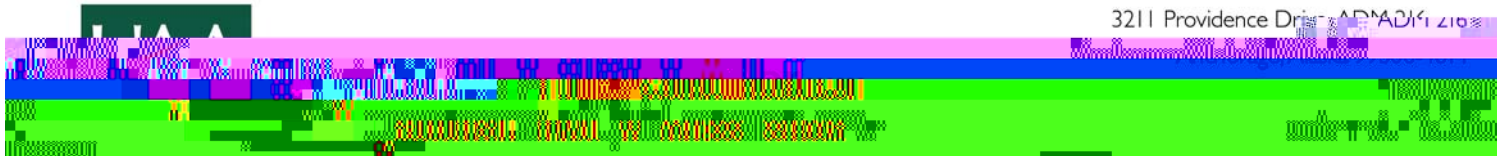
Recommend approval by VPASR

Date:

Recommend disapproval by VPASR

Date:

Revised: 11/11/2019



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Date: March 2, 2020

To: Cathy Sandeen, Chancellor

From: John Stabile, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Cc: John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
 Brian Cook, Associate Professor, Chair, Department of Theatre & Dance  
 Colleen Metzger, Associate Professor, Department of Theatre & Dance  
 Susan Kelina, Vice Provost for International Programs  
 Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings: Theatre BA

I have reviewed the findings of the program review and recommend the deletion of the Expedited Program Review Team's findings regarding the Theatre BA program.

**Recommendations**

My recommendation is to accept the decision and recommendations of the dean and request to delete the program after admissions have been suspended. The program is not to be re-evaluated until the program is ready to be reinstated. Students interested in this field will have access to the Film and Performance Arts program at UAA.

**Decision**

Recommend Deletion

Date: Feb. 28, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

Cc: John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

From:

Dr. Brian Cook, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Theatre and Dance;  
Prof. Colleen Metzger, Associate Professor, Department of Theatre and Dance

The most significant consequence is that eliminating this program removes the opportunity for students to create art and tell stories via performance. The dean mentions the low percentage of students who matriculate in with a theatre major, and therefore implies that theatre education is not valuable enough to preserve. However, this metric is far from being a useful number in assessing a program's value. A significant number of UAA students change their major more than once, and a lot of students enter college not knowing at all what they want to study. Those who may be considering theatre also have their heads filled by people telling them that theatre is a bad choice because they'll never get a job. Students entering UAA are all seeking a program that matches who they are and what they want to pursue; that is the essence of selecting a major. For some students, that takes time, and even when they find their passion for theatre, they're not able to major because their parents won't let them or because they're afraid to. We've told our majors numerous times how brave they are to pursue a theatre degree when so many people are telling them lies about the benefits of theatre education.

In our program review document, we outlined very clearly how the belief that a theatre major leads to joblessness is false. There are many jobs in theatre, both within the state and Outside. However, the joblessness belief is self-reinforcing, and so students do not select theatre as a major initially. When they come into contact with our program, and realize the potential for a life-long career, they chose to major in theatre. Our expedited program review listed career options in and out of state, specifically listing all the companies across the state producing work each year. Every one of those theatre companies have UAA theatre alumni at their heart. We are sure you have read many letters of support for our program from them. Without the UAA theatre program to filter professional theater practitioners into local theatre companies, you are not only cutting the only place to study theatre in the state, but may be in turn responsible for the death of other theatre companies in the state.

If this program is deleted, the possibility exists for a time where there will be not enough people with theatre experience in the state to adequately produce theatre, requiring the importation of specialists from outside the state who will only stay here temporarily. With quality theatre education and more theatre students produced in the state, the more they would seek opportunities to create their own companies and hire other UAA grads in Alaska. Anchorage is a large city; it certainly can support a fully-professional theatre that produces only in Anchorage. Our students have the skills and abilities to create such a theatre. More theatre in Alaska means that high school students have experiences with theatre and will be committed to studying it in their home state.

Beyond keeping the arts in Alaska alive, the theater department also helps keep students alive. Theatre is renowned for its therapeutic effects (we in fact listed many scientifically-based facts about the healing power of theatre in our EPR), and many students study theatre because they not only enjoy it, but it helps keep them mentally healthy. In a state where so many people suffer from depression, suicidal impulses, and seasonal affective disorder, participating in and viewing theatre is scientifically proven to bolster a positive attitude. Further, when the deletion was announced two current students announced that "this program has saved my life." We have had numerous students across the years that would say the same thing. Suffering from crippling depression, ADHD or other mental health issues, only their work in theatre was able to help them cope. The loss of theatre as an art form in Anchorage is concerning, the loss of future students because they don't have access to a theatre community is heartbreaking.

### **Future Partnerships and Program Growth**

We mentioned in our EPR that we had been in talks with the Alaska School Activities Association about creating a high school theatre competition as part of the











Submission date: Originally, 1/31/2020; revision, 2/07/2020

Program/s in this review: Theatre BA \_\_\_\_\_

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): n/a \_\_\_\_\_

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage \_\_\_\_\_

Members of the program review committee:

**Brian Cook, Associate Professor and Department Chair, UAA**  
**Colleen Metzger, Associate Professor, UAA**

1. Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role (700 words or less)

**The Department of Theatre and Dance provides a progressive and supportive training ground**





The final place we can expand credit hours is to capture more credit hours from our production program. The vast majority of the teaching each of our faculty do is actually in production, but as those are not taught classes, we have made some headway with our latest curriculum revision, and when it takes effect next year, we will see what sort of impact it has.

**SCH/FTEF and Enrollment/Full Time Equivalent Faculty (FTEF) and FTES/FTEF**

Our SCH/FTEF ratio has declined over the past seven years; the spike in Dance for AY 2018 is likely due to the departure of our dance term instructor. We should see a similar spike in theatre for AY2020, because we lost two faculty prior to the start of the fall semester. We currently have five faculty with one specializing in dance. The dance minor also employs adjuncts for the various types of dance they offer. With the implementation of our program revision in Fall 2020, our curriculum should be more accessible and easier to navigate for students considering our BA. That, plus additional engagement with high schools for recruitment, should shift the trend. The impact of the loss of faculty will also improve these numbers.



reduce our costs so that by AY2020 60 to 65% of instructional costs were covered by fees and tuition, so that has been our target. In the past two years the department has reduced from eight faculty to five bringing us significantly closer to this target number without our having to sacrifice a lot of student credit hours as we are still teaching the courses that were bringing in the most tuition revenue. The changes that we have made regarding GER classes and streamlining our theatre curriculum will continue to help raise our numbers. We also receive recurring extramural support for our productions from the Atwood Foundation each year since 2015, and specific grant support for individual projects has been received from Alaska State Council for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, Rasmuson Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Alaska

### 3. Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success (1500 words or less)

The BA in Theatre at UAA is a high-quality department with high-quality faculty. Our acting professor is currently starring in a play with Perseverance Theatre; a play our costume designer managed just closed on Broadway; our scenic professor was lured away by the famed Chicago Fly House; our theatre history professor just co-edited and wrote an introduction on political theatre for *Theatre History Studies*; our dance professor has a forthcoming book documenting extensive fieldwork in West Africa and Cuba; and our lighting professor recently lit a professional production of *Sister Act* in Phoenix. UAA is not running a fluffy, theoretical theatre program. We are producing the best theatre work in the entire state (not kidding). The students are learning theatre from nationally respected, working theatre artists who keep their finger on the pulse of what is new and cutting edge in the theatre industry.

We are constantly aiming to improve the education we provide. We just submitted an overhaul of our entire curriculum, which will be instituted in Fall 2020. As requested by the Dean and Provost we removed our three concentrations, which will result in a single-track, more efficient program where students still can shape their course of study by selecting different elective options at the lower- and upper

Theatre History, and eventually Dance Appreciation (currently in development). However, the kinesthetic and collaborative nature of theatre production makes certain classes nearly impossible to teach via distance ó the fine detail of drawing, the collective nature of creating an acting scene or directing a show ó many of our classes are too hands-on to translate digitally.

### **Assessment**

Under our old Assessment model, we focused on how the student perspective changed during their time at UAA, but the new model focuses on more tangible evidence of the student experience in the Theatre Department. Our new assessment plan includes multiple checkpoints along the way, examining artifacts such as acting scenes from Introduction to Acting and technical output in

experience, and the capstone class Resume and Portfolio ensures that students leave UAA armed with all the tools to get hired as well as the experience.

### **Student Support**

The theatre department is extraordinary because of how much time we spend with our students. During tech week we often spend twelve hours a day with them, and we see them daily in the technical shops and at rehearsal for hours on end. Much of this time is not formal class time; therefore, we get to know them on a much deeper level than students in a typical lecture course. Beyond traditional academic advising we become advisors and mentors on a much deeper level. A significant proportion of our students are part of the panoply of the LGBTQIA+ community or have learning difficult

4. Program Duplication / Distinctiveness (300 words or less)

There are no duplicate programs in the state; UAA offers the only BA in Theatre and the only dance teaching the few theatre classes they had been. UAF has a theatre concentration within the Film and Performing Arts major, but they do not offer a full complement of theatre courses, especially in design or technical theatre.

Alaska, in spite of its small population, supports a staggering number of theatres. We constantly theatres, there are union touring companies that take shows around the globe and 75 LORT (union) theatres nationwide, which are far outnumbered by the non-union theater houses across the country. There are always jobs in the theatre pedagogical experiencesó actors take design and technical courses and technicians take acting classes ó mean they graduate with skills in multiple areas making them immensely hireable.

Theatre students can also take jobs in film or television. Theatre students can also

