

# UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Department

## Strategic Plan

(Revised and adopted May 2006)

### **Mission Statement**

The Theatre Arts Department at the University of Wisconsin – Parkside endeavors to provide students with the tools necessary to function as developing artists and self-realized individuals, combining theatrical training with a strong liberal arts curriculum. A comprehensive combination of classroom training, company engagement, and realized production work allows for a well-rounded collegiate learning experience with an emphasis on collaboration and creative process. We see to develop and present enriching theatrical experiences which have relevance and value for the diverse communities that we serve, providing cultural enrichment and a means of better understanding and appreciating human societies and the world.

### **Program Goals and Objectives**

**The Theatre Arts Department at the University of Wisconsin – Parkside strives to:**

- A. Serve as an artistic, educational, and cultural forum that utilizes the theatrical arts as a means of exploring, considering, and discussing various diverse aspects of our culture, society, and world;
- B. Offer students a comprehensive liberal arts degree in theatre arts, in addition to providing practical theatre training concentrations in the areas of acting, design and technology, management and direction, theatre education, and music theatre, further preparing students to be successful in their professional, civic, and personal lives;
- C. Further Develop a collaborative “company-based” training system that provides a reasonable number of exceptional theatre students the best possible training for careers in the professional theatre;
- D. Utilize and integrate new technology, methodologies, and techniques creatively and effectively into theatre courses, programs, and productions.
- E. Actively utilize professionally trained staff members, guest artists, and partnerships with regional professional theatres and artists to further expand and enhance our educational programming and production opportunities;
- F. Attract and retain a diverse population of students, staff, faculty, and audiences as we present theatrical programming and presentations that reflect the full diversity of our community and world (*see “Departmental Diversity Initiative” below.*);
- G. Enhance our students’ and community’s understanding and appreciation of the multifaceted, diverse theatrical art form by developing and presenting a broad range of accessible, high-quality academic and artistic opportunities;
- H. Remain viable, productive, and healthy through the effective and reasonable management of our human and financial resources and facilities.

## **Our Diversity Initiative**

The UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Department's commitment to diversity is reflected in a curriculum that prepares students from both genders and all racial, ethnic, national, religious, and other marginalized groups to live in a pluralistic society. The department fully embraces the University's multicultural mission and vision, and strives to provide academic and production opportunities that reflect the full diversity of ideas and individuals that exist in our greater community and culture. We endeavor to create a diverse department of students and staff, allowing us to better reflect the demographics of our community in the theatrical works which we produce. We are committed to providing equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all aspects of our academic and production programming. Except in plays where race or gender is an issue, casting is decided on the basis of ability.

## **Strategies & Measurable Outcomes**

**Objective A: Serve as an artistic, educational, and cultural forum that utilizes the theatrical arts as a means of exploring, considering, and discussing various diverse aspects of our culture, society, and world.**

### **Strategies:**

- Provide students with a broad range of relevant courses in all aspects of the theatrical art form
- Provide students with access to general education, liberal arts courses (including theatre appreciation, theatre history, and multicultural theatre) that further enhance their awareness and appreciation of theatre
- Provide diverse, public performance opportunities of theatrical works from a broad range of cultures, styles and historical periods that reflect the spectrum of human experience
- Provide staged readings and discussions of the most significant new theatrical works that directly address pertinent contemporary issues and subjects

### **Measurable Outcomes (students will):**

- Enroll in desirable, effective theatre courses which meet their interests and expectations.
- Attend theatrical productions, to be monitored through our ticket sales records.
- Evaluate and assess the value and relevance of the academic and production offerings through course evaluation and critiques of live theatre experiences.
- Engage in post show discussions addressing various artistic, educational, and cultural aspects of each production, allowing further integration of the theatrical event or activity.

**Objective B: Offer students a comprehensive liberal arts degree in theatre arts, in addition to providing practical theatre training concentrations in the areas of acting, design and technology, management and direction, theatre education, and music theatre, further preparing students to be successful in their professional, civic, and personal lives;**

### **Strategies:**

- Offer a full range of practical, foundational courses that make up the "theatre core" required of all majors, including theatre history, dramatic literature, acting, directing, design, and technical production.
- Offer upper division courses in the areas of acting, direction and management, design and technology, theatre education, and musical theatre which further allow students to concentrate on specific areas of skill and interest.
- Integrate classroom, laboratory, and production experiences and opportunities to create a cohesive, comprehensive theatre training program that prepares students for professional careers and/or graduate school.

- Integrate professional theatre productions and presentations by professional guest artists into the curriculum so that students may better understand and appreciate the opportunities that exist in our region.

**Measurable Outcomes (Students will):**

- Complete and submit for review documentation of their academic and artistic progress in the department via a portfolio review system.
- Actively participate in the annual academic and talent review system established by the department, with copies of all written assessments placed in the student's personal file and portfolio.
- Successfully complete the senior seminar course, a capstone course which allows students to synthesize and apply their learning experiences in the program prior to graduation.
- Complete a thorough assessment of the program's effectiveness by completing a program exit survey and/or interview.
- Successfully enter the professional theatre world, a related career, or graduate school after graduation from the program.

**Objective C: Enhance our students' and community's understanding and appreciation of the multifaceted, diverse theatrical art form by developing and presenting a broad range of accessible, high-quality academic and artistic opportunities;**

**Strategies:**

- Continue to develop and offer a broad range of general education courses (in addition to theatre appreciation and theatre history) which focus on the diversity of contemporary theatre
- Plan and present diverse seasons of relevant theatrical works (both classical and contemporary) that can both educate and entertain the audiences that we serve.
- Select and perform theatrical productions which continue to stretch our artistic abilities, talents, skills, and approaches in a healthy, viable manner.
- Continue to offer affordable theatrical presentations that are accessible and attractive to the diverse community that we serve.
- Continue to market the programs many theatrical offerings (academic and production) so that we increase participation and attendance at these events.
- Continue to actively participate in professional outside reviews as a part of our involvement in the Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival.

**Measurable Outcomes (Students will):**

- Evaluate and assess the value and relevance of the academic and production offerings through course evaluation and critiques of live theatre experiences.
- Engage in post show discussions addressing various artistic, educational, and cultural aspects of each production, allowing further integration of the theatrical event or activity.
- Engage in post-production evaluations and assessments of the success and outcomes of each production experience.
- Attend theatrical productions on a more regular basis.
- Attend response sessions presented by representatives of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

**Objective D: Attract and retain a diverse population of students, staff, faculty, and audiences as we present theatrical programming and presentations that reflect the full diversity of our community and world.**

**Strategies**

- Actively and aggressively recruit a diversity of students and staff by making them more aware of the many opportunities that exist here for them at UW-Parkside and in the Theatre Arts Department.
- Develop meaningful educational opportunities and support systems for diverse students and staff.
- Continue to raise funding for Theatre Talent Scholarships, necessary for recruiting and retaining the finest students.
- Offer diverse theatrical works that focus on issues of multiculturalism that can better attract a broader spectrum of audiences to our production.
- Strive to become the leading university theatre program in the state and region which embraces multicultural theater as a major component of its mission and work.

**Measurable Outcomes (Students will):**

- Apply for admission to the program and schedule and complete program entry interviews/auditions.
- Perceive UW-Parkside and the Theatre Arts Department as organizations which embrace diversity and provide programming which is interesting, valuable, and pertinent to the diverse populations we serve.
- Benefit from the financial support that we are able to provide the finest students in the program who meet all academic and production expectations.
- Be able to better understand and respond to multicultural theatre and issues of diversity.

**Objective E: Further develop a collaborative “company-based” training system that provides a reasonable number of exceptional theatre students the best possible training for careers in the professional theatre;**

**Strategies:**

- Continue to audition and interview all students seeking admission to the Theatre Arts Department “company,” striving to balance the number of male and female performers, designers, technicians, and generalists.
- Continue to maintain high academic and artistic standards for all majors in the program, as outlined by our programs “Academic Policy,” “Active Engagement,” and “Quality Assurance Statements. (See handbook on website)
- Continue to hold annual academic reviews (January) and talent reviews (May) with all majors to better access their development and contributions to the department and production company.

**Measurable Outcomes (Students will):**

- Actively engage in the “company” by participating in all aspects of the collaborative educational and artistic process – taking responsibility for the jobs and projects they are assigned.
- Follow and achieve the academic and production engagement expectations as outlined in these policies or will be considered for removal from the program.
- Actively meet with their theatre faculty and staff to engage in the process of evaluating and assessing their academic and artistic progress, abilities, and goals.

**Objective F: Utilize and integrate new technology, methodologies, and techniques creatively and effectively into theatre courses, programs, and productions.**

**Strategies:**

- Incorporate the latest technology in all classes, including general education courses.
- Teach computer design and production software and applications in all design and technical production courses.
- Utilize contemporary media in the creation and presentation of theatrical productions whenever possible and/or beneficial.

**Measurable Outcomes (Students will):**

- Actively and successfully utilize computers and other theatre technologies to accomplish academic and artistic projects and tasks.
- Utilize technology in the creation of theatrical productions whenever possible.
- Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of computer software necessary in the theatre business.

**Objective G: Actively utilize professionally trained staff members, guest artists, and partnerships with regional professional theatres and artists to further expand and enhance our educational programming and production opportunities;****Strategies:**

- Continue to include live professional theatre productions and trips to major theatrical centers (Milwaukee, Chicago, New York City, and London) as an integrated and essential component of our curriculum.
- Continue to work with professional theatres in the region (including the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre and the Fireside Theatre) that have already provided invaluable educational opportunities and experiences for our students and staff.
- Continue to develop a close, collaborative relationship with these professional theatres, further expanding the kinds of internship, apprenticeship, and employment opportunities that these connections may present for our students and staff.
- Continue to bring in guest presenters from the Chicago and Milwaukee communities to provide students who regular access to working professionals who have excelled in their craft and career.

**Measurable Outcomes (Students will):**

- Attend and access theatrical performances from a variety of vantage points in the art.
- Actively engage with theatre professionals through guest lectures, internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing experiences.
- Make significant and meaningful connections with theatre professionals in their areas of interest.
- Explore various professional theatre and graduate school opportunities that are available to them.

**Objective H: remain viable, productive, and healthy through the effective and reasonable management of our human and financial resources and facilities.****Strategies:**

- Continue to closely develop and monitor academic and production budgets which are realistic, manageable, and balanced.
- Continue to seek university, corporate, and individual support and sponsorship of our programming via the S.T.A.G.E. Club benevolent society.
- Continue to raise funding for Theatre Talent Scholarships, essential in recruiting and retaining the finest quality theatre majors in the program.

**Measurable Outcomes (Students will):**

- Engage in the budgeting process as company members, taking responsibility for the budgets that are theirs to manage.
- Better realize the importance and valuable of budgets and fiscal responsibility.
- Realize the benefits of additional funding for production programming through enhanced production opportunities.
- Complete the program with the financial support of the university and various outside donors who help to make their education possible.