



## 2009 Regents Teaching Excellence Award Application

### Application Completed by the UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Department

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Nominated by the UW-Parkside Committee on Teaching and Learning; Dr. Gerald Greenfield, Interim Provost; and Dr. Donald Cress, Dean of Arts and Sciences

Please visit our Theatre Arts Department website at [www.uwp.edu](http://www.uwp.edu) [keyword: theatre] for more information about our program and to see production photos.

## Guiding Educational Philosophies and Goals

### Our Vision:

The UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Department will become and gain recognition as a premier public liberal arts undergraduate theatre program in the state of Wisconsin and upper Midwest. Exceptional academic and artistic educational theatre programming, successful community engagement projects, active partnerships with acclaimed professional theatres, and high levels of graduate satisfaction and success will be the hallmarks of our program.

### Our Educational and Artistic Mission:

The Theatre Arts Department at the University of Wisconsin – Parkside endeavors to provide students with the skills necessary to excel as developing artists and citizens in a contemporary world, combining professional 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 critical thinking, effective communication, engaged collaboration, problem solving, and creative process.

Our commitment to community engagement is expressed through the development and presentation of high quality, accessible theatrical programming which has artistic and educational relevance and value for the diverse communities and audiences whom we serve. Our academic and production programming exists to providing a viable forum for constructive communication and a means of better understanding and appreciating global human societies, diverse cultures, and the rapidly changing world we share.

### Our Core Values and Beliefs:

As a collaborative company of students, faculty, and staff our “touchstone” for teaching and learning is rooted firmly in a number of articulated values and beliefs:

- We believe that artistic expression, creative process, and critical thinking and problem solving can be taught through theatrical production and that the products of our artistic expression are necessary to a vibrant, diverse culture. We believe that the creation of performance experiences requires vision, knowledge, discipline, and that practicing our art is an ideal model of experiential learning in the context of a solid liberal arts education.
- We believe that the history of theatre is a mirror of various cultures and societies throughout the ages. We believe that theatre is always socially and politically relevant because it speaks of the world that made it and speaks to the world that sees it.
- We believe that making and experiencing performance offers opportunities to reflect on what it means to be human and a member of a global society.
- We believe that theatre as an academic field is interdisciplinary, and that as an artistic practice it is collaborative.
- We believe that all who engage with theatre as scholars, artists, and audiences learn to appreciate the coexistence of multiple ways of knowing and the complexities of bringing different perspectives together into productive collaboration which culminates in a performance. The live performance experience unites the artists with their audience, providing an invaluable forum for dialogue, discovery, and assessment related to diverse human stories and cultures.

### Departmental Objectives and Targeted Learning Outcomes:

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

- A. Offer students a comprehensive liberal arts baccalaureate degree (BA) in theatre arts, in addition to providing professional theatre training concentrations in the areas of performance, design and technology, management and direction, theatre education, and arts administration;
- B. Serve as an artistic, educational, and cultural forum which engages and increases campus and community engagement by offering diverse, relevant academic and artistic programs, courses, and theatrical presentations that educate, entertain, and inspire;
- C. Promote the importance of a solid liberal arts education for all students while instilling in them a strong respect for the collaborative theatrical art form, critical thinking skills, creative problem solving, personal responsibility, the value of service and leadership, and a commitment to life-long learning;
- D. Utilize various proactive and multifaceted recruitment, assessment, and peer mentor models and procedures which allow us to further develop and strengthen a collaborative “company-based” training system which provides a reasonable number of exceptional theatre students the best possible training for life and careers after graduation;
- E. Build upon our program’s outstanding local, state, and regional recognition as a program of academic and artistic excellence and distinction as we continue to raise our standards and program quality through active engagement with recognized education and theatre education associations and accreditation agencies.
- F. Utilize and integrate new technology, methodologies, and techniques creatively and effectively into theatre courses and productions as we continue to plan, design, construct, and transition into state-of-the-art theatre production and performance facilities and labs.
- G. Utilize professionally trained faculty and staff members, guest artists, and active partnerships with regional professional theatres and artists to further expand and enhance our educational programming and production opportunities, encouraging students to engage in supervised professional theatre internships and apprenticeships prior to graduation;
- H. Embrace and achieve our diversity initiative (below) by attracting and retaining a diverse population of students, staff, faculty, and audiences as we present academic and artistic programming and performances that reflect the true diversity of our community, state, country, and world;
- I. Continue to develop and promote our theatre education program, recruiting and supporting the training of highly skilled and employable future theatre educator/artists who will communicate the value and importance of the arts to future generations;
- J. Remain viable, productive, and healthy through the effective and reasonable management of our human and financial resources and facilities, striving to balance production budgets while increasing ticket sales and monies received through other funding sources including grants and donations.

## Our Diversity Initiative

UW-Parkside’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 UW-Parkside Theatre Arts 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.

## An Overview of Our Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Most successful academic and artistic organizations and departments have clearly articulated, achievable, and measurable **vision and mission statements and defined learning objectives**. During the past decade, the faculty, staff, and students in the UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Department have worked collaboratively to create mission and goals statements which have indeed become the foundation for all of the educational and artistic work that we do as a company of successful learners, engaged artists, and collaborative company members united by the common goal of academic and artistic excellence. The resulting comprehensive vision/mission and strategic goals documents (which are included elsewhere in this application) have guided our academic and artistic programming and assessment and have provided us with a common “touchstone” for planning and evaluating the work that we do. In all that we do we are guided by our vision: we endeavor to become and gain recognition as a premier public liberal arts undergraduate theatre program in the state of Wisconsin and upper Midwest. Exceptional academic and artistic educational theatre programming,

successful community engagement projects, active partnerships with acclaimed professional theatres, and high levels of graduate satisfaction and success will be the hallmarks of our program.

At the heart of our common vision is the notion that **academic success** and teaching and learning are central to all of the work that we do as students, staff, and faculty. Students must focus, first and foremost, on succeeding and thriving as engaged learners academically. We have established clear academic standards which students must meet in order to be accepted to the program or to continue as a member in the program after they become a department/company member. In order to be accepted into the program prospective students must have a proven history of academic success, as indicated by a minimum ACT score of 20, a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75, and graduate in the upper 50% of their class. Historically, we have demonstrated repeatedly that students who do not meet these basic academic requirements simply can not meet the complex demands of being both a student and a member of our active producing theatre company.

Once they are accepted to the UWP Theatre Arts Department/Company, students must meet all of the requirements of our department's clearly stated "**Policy on Academic and Artistic Expectations.**" (Please see appendix.) Students who do not achieve a minimal cumulative GPA of 2.5 and a theatre course GPA of 2.75 are NOT allowed to work on productions in any capacity until they get their grades above the minimum threshold. In addition, if students are not living up to academic abilities or expectations during the course of the semester for various reasons, we request that they complete and submit to their advisor a weekly progress report that is signed by all of their instructors. If a student fails to show immediate academic improvement in all of their courses, they are considered for immediate removal from all extracurricular production activities. As a result of this "tough" and engaged approach to academic success, GPA's for theatre majors have continued to rise. In the fall of 2008 the average cumulative GPA for our 63 theatre majors was 3.34, as compared to 2.64 five years ago before the policy was put in place. Amazingly, over 53% of our majors have achieved GPA's above 3.25, while 25% are currently listed on the Dean's List (3.5 GPA). Indeed, our students have embraced our approach to academic excellence – and the entire program is thriving academically and artistically as a result.

**Artistic excellence** in the theatrical productions that we produce is also key to our program's continuing success and development. As a learning community and "company" of theatre artists, students and faculty continuously join together in classrooms, production laboratories, and rehearsal halls as we explore the theoretical and practical creative problem solving processes essential in producing the most effective live theatrical presentations for a public audience. Our studies in the classroom and laboratories are directly applied to the engaged problem-solving processes necessary to create a unified, effective theatrical production. In the process of merging classroom theory and key concepts with practical and collaborative production work, the byproduct is a cohesive, vibrant, meaningful live theatre experience which is by, about, and for the community that we serve. In recognition of our efforts, the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival has awarded 78 awards of Outstanding Merit for our productions in the past five years in the areas of performance, design, directing, playwriting, and ensemble excellence.

The creation of **diverse theatre** which reflects our rich multicultural community invites us as artists and students to apply critical thinking and aesthetic sensibilities throughout the process of creating a meaningful artistic product. Each year we produce and present two "classics" from the world theatre canon, including a production of at least one Shakespearean text each year. In our exciting "FreshINK Series" we produce staged readings and post-show discussions of the most celebrated social issue plays written within the last five years. Each year we broaden the diversity of our academic and artistic programming by offering such general education courses as "Multicultural Theatre in America" and "Gender and Sexuality on Stage and Screen." While we have raised the number of students of color enrolled in our program as majors and minors (currently 10%), we have also offered theatrical programs and productions which reach out to the multicultural community that we serve at UW-Parkside and in Southeastern Wisconsin. We are proud of the fact that 35% of the plays that will be produced on our 2009-2010 theater season were written by diverse artists of color and include a range of exceptional roles for African American, Latino American, Native American, and Asian American actors. True to our vision, the academic and artistic offerings that we share with our campus and community are becoming as diverse as those we serve.

As our **Diversity Initiative** states "UW-Parkside's commitment to diversity is reflected in a curriculum that prepares students from all racial, ethnic, national, religious, gender-varied and other marginalized groups to live and communicate effectively in a pluralistic society. The UW-Parkside Theatre Arts 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."

A distinctive component of our mission statement, **company engagement**, is also key to the work that we do. Due to the collaborative nature of the art of live theatre, the Theatre Arts faculty, staff, and students continually engage with each other in the creation of productions utilizing creative problem solving techniques and assessment standards. As we work together to collaboratively solve the "learning challenges" of creating a unified, meaningful, cohesive, aesthetically pleasing final stage product, we are constantly building a learning community. The result is a faculty and student body that is unified and cohesive in focusing the

continued development of our program. As a “company” of artists working together to create the finest educational theatre possible, we are modeling for our students the type of collaborative, team-oriented organization and approach that they will encounter in the professional theatre world – and in the skills needed to serve as effective citizens of the world.

The ultimate indication of our achievement – **graduate success** – is clearly evidenced in the fact that our graduating students are well prepared for the next step of their professional lives, whether that be employment in the profession, internships or apprenticeships at professional theatres, or graduate studies at some of the nation’s finest institutions of higher learning. In recent years, our program has been incredibly successful in retaining and graduating exceptional students who go on to live fulfilling lives as professional theatre artists and educators. We are currently retaining 92% of the students who are admitted to our program as freshmen or transfer students. Our incredibly high graduate placement rate, which is consistently over 90%, is truly exceptional in the competitive world of theatre. Amazingly even in our current economic crisis, which has hit the arts amazingly hard, 100% of our five December 2008 graduates were successful in finding fulltime theatre jobs in their chosen fields of study.

Equally import to us is the fact that almost 30% of our graduates have gone on to pursue **graduate degrees** at some the nation’s finest institutions of higher learning, the majority choosing to become theatre educators for the next generation of theatre students and audience members. This, we believe, is the most important indication and testament to our department’s success. Indeed, we believe that we are a unified learning community that has thrived because we have united academic success, artistic achievement, and community engagement in a practical, visible manner. This has inspired our graduates to value the significance of theatre arts education and to become artist/educators who are determined to make an impact on future populations of students and audience members.

## Examples of Excellence in Departmental Teaching and Learning Programs

### 1. The Theatre Arts Department recognizes and fosters excellence in teaching through the following activities:

***Commitment to the Theatre Education Component of our Program:*** In the past 10 years almost all of Wisconsin’s public and private colleges and universities have dropped their Theatre Education programs. Today, only three accredited teacher education programs in theatre remain in the state of Wisconsin, and we are very proud to be one of those programs. With the recent return to our program of Professor Lisa Kornetsky, a recognized state and national specialist in pedagogy and the study of teaching and learning, we are thrilled to be able to further expand the scope and offerings in our teacher education program. We currently have 6 theater education majors in the program, the highest in our department’s history. We are focusing our efforts on increasing the numbers of theatre education majors in our program and have committed to offering them in the essential theoretical and practical learning experiences that they will need to become great teachers. We are working closely with the UW-Parkside Education Program, local schools in the area, and the professional theater education staff at the Milwaukee Repertory and Milwaukee Chamber Theatres to provide our education majors with access to exceptional, diverse teaching and learning opportunities throughout Southeastern Wisconsin. Our goal is raise the quality and quantity of students in our theater education program so that we can meet the needs of schools throughout the state.

***Faculty Membership and Involvement in Professional Theatre Education Organizations:*** Theatre faculty and staff maintain active memberships in all of the major professional and/or theatre education organizations, including: the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF), the American Alliance of Theatre Educators (AATE), the Association for Theatre in High Education (ATHE), the Alliance for Wisconsin Theatre Education (AWTE), the Wisconsin Council of Theatre Chairs (WCTC), the Actors Equity Association (AEA), the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), The Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD), The Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers (SSDC), the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), and the United States Institute of Theatre Technology (USITT). Participation in the national organizations keeps us directly connected to the professional theatre world and individuals dedicated to enhancing professional and educational theatre across the nation. Professor Yohnk has recently been selected to serve a featured presenter at the joint national AATE and ATHE conventions in New York City in August of 2009, and will be leading an interactive workshop on the subject of playwriting pedagogy and assessment. Our faculty and staff members’ commitment to active participation in these vital state and national associations of theatre educators is a clear indication to our commitment to continually consider, assess, and improve our instructional approaches and techniques.

***Faculty Service on UW-Parkside Committees Related to Teaching, Learning, Advising, and Assessment:*** Our full time faculty members all serve on a variety of elected, appointed, and volunteer committees dedicated to the enhancement of teaching and learning on our campus. Professor Cheatham is the chair of the Advising Committee and also serves on the Arts and Humanities Lecture Series Committee. Professor Kornetsky, in her first year back at UW-Parkside, has already become an active member of the Women’s and Gender Studies Committee, LGBTQA Advisory Board, and has recently been elected to the prestigious University Committee which oversees all academic committees on campus. She also serves as the campus representative to SAGLA (System Advisory Group on the Liberal Arts), and on the campus LEAP Committee. Professor Tucker-Snyder is an active member of

the Women's and Gender Studies Committee and the Personnel Review Committee. Professor Warren has recently completed his 6 year term as a member and chair of the demanding Academic Appeals Committee which reviews all academically at-risk students who are petitioning for continuance or reentry at UW-Parkside. Professor Yohnk is the Chair of the First Year Initiative Committee, a member of the Committee on Academic Planning, a member of the Admissions Committee, and is a member of the newly formed Integrated Marketing Team. Few departments on campus have faculty members who are active members of these diverse committees dedicated to teaching, learning, advising, and assessment.

***Participation in the UW-Parkside Summer Diversity Institute:*** In the summer of 2007 Professors Warren and Yohnk participated in UW-Parkside's intensive two week Diversity Institute. In the summer of 2009, Lisa Kornetsky will do the same. The purpose of this educational teaching and learning experience is to encourage teachers of general education courses (new and old) to study, explore, and apply diversity themes and topics in their courses. In addition, this Diversity Institute allows each participant to explore various resources that are available in the areas of race, class, and gender. While participating in the Diversity Institute, Professor Warren worked on the revision of the department's primary general education course, theatre appreciation. Professor Yohnk focused on the development of the department's newest general education course, Multicultural Theatre in America, focusing specifically on the African, Asian, Latino, and Native American cultures and their use of theatre to express various issues of race, class, and gender. Professor Kornetsky will be focusing her work on the new general education basic acting course, as well as in the continued development of a team-taught course with Professor Yohnk, Gender & Sexuality on Stage and Screen. In this way, more than half of the department's faculty will have the theoretical and practical background to bring this work into all of our courses as much as possible. We believe that this is an important tool for helping all of us to enhance our teaching and create successful learning experiences for all of our students.

***Weekly Department and Production Meetings:*** Each week our entire theatre faculty and staff meets for a 90 minute department meeting (academic programming focus) and two 50 minute production meetings (theatre production programming focus which includes students) related to the shows being created at that time. As a staff of artist/educators we have extensive contact with each other in formal meetings (average 190 minutes/week) and frequently discuss specific pedagogical issues, approaches, and individual student successes and challenges. As artist/educators, we are able to achieve an exceptional level of feedback to our colleagues related to different pedagogical and artistic approaches and methodologies which may work for specific students in the classroom, production laboratory, and/or rehearsal hall. We also hold all-department meetings with the entire company of faculty, staff, and students, allowing us to directly engage in mutual learning opportunities as well as allowing for on-going dialogue related to formulating and clarifying the departmental mission, goals, policies, and academic and artistic opportunities.

***Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Responses and Critiques:*** The members of the Theatre Arts faculty are active respondents for the Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival, attending and critiquing (oral and written) many productions throughout the five-state region every year. In a very real sense, this is an appropriate and essential scholarly and artistic activity, resulting in the publication of written production critiques and assessments. Attending productions at other universities is indeed one of the most significant "research" activities that we can do – and one of the best ways to remain a viable, informed artist/educator. By experiencing the work of our theatre peers at other campuses and discussing their approaches and techniques, we are able to continue learning and growing as teachers and artists in the academic setting.

## **2. The Theatre Arts Department approaches teaching as a public, collaborative activity and makes appropriate connections with faculty, staff, and students in other academic disciplines, including the following:**

***First Year Success Initiative and Department-Based Peer Mentor Program:*** Our department has been very active with the First Year Success Initiative at UW-Parkside during the past five years. Professor Yohnk has served as a member and current chair the First Year Success Task Force since its inception in 2001. The Theatre Arts Department has developed a very active peer mentor program which has served as a model for other department-based programs on campus, and in the fall of 2008 lead our 6 selected peer mentors through a national peer mentor certification program through the Baccus organization. The faculty and students involved in our department-based peer mentor program actively participate in all peer mentor training programs offered at UW-Parkside and at national first year success conferences. Since beginning our department-based peer mentor program six years ago, our retention rate of first year freshmen and transfer students has risen from 58% to 95%.

***Actively Engages in Interdisciplinary Teaching Other Departments on Campus:*** The Theatre Arts Department actively works with the **Art Department** faculty, staff, and students in the Graphics Arts Program to create all marketing and advertising materials for our production season. The Theatre Arts Department actively works with the students and staff of the **Music Department** in the creation of joint musical theatre classes and musical productions. The department supports and maintains the joint musical theatre concentration shared with Music and the Health and Physical Education Department (dance). The Theatre Arts Department works closely with the **Humanities Program** and actively participates in show-related humanities programs/panels that are frequently held in conjunction with our staged productions and address issues of social relevance and the various aspects of the humanities. We work closely with the **Health and Physical Education Department** in offering a variety of dance courses which are

also available to students as general education electives. The Theatre Arts Department staff frequently presents guest lectures in **English, Communications, and History** courses, providing program-related presentations dealing with our current theatrical productions. We also provide study guides to professors in these disciplines who choose to incorporate our theatrical productions into their curriculums. Instructors in these disciplines frequently use theatre arts productions in their curriculums.

***Active Partnerships with Professional Theatres:*** The members of the Theatre Arts faculty and staff continue to work in the professional theatre as actors, directors, designers, producers, and technical assistants. We are proud to call ourselves “artist/educators” and believe that our entire program benefits from the fact that we are actively engaged in our art form at the professional level. We have developed active professional partnerships with such theatres as The Fireside Theatre, The Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, The Milwaukee Shakespeare Theatre, and the Great River Shakespeare Festival. Jamie Cheatham has done extensive fight combat directing at Milwaukee Shakespeare, Illinois Shakespeare, and a variety of other venues across the nation and serves as an education/artist with the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre Education Program. Dean Yohnk also serves as an artist/educator at the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, and Milwaukee Shakespeare Theatre [recently closed] and currently serves as editor for all of their educational study guides.

### **3. The Theatre Arts Department has thoughtfully constructed an effective, assessment-based curricula for academic programs in general education and theatre-degree courses which promote global, civic, and multicultural understanding, as reflected in the following:**

***Program Review and Revision of Our Program’s Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan:*** In the past six months Theatre Arts faculty and staff members have spent a great deal of time focusing reviewing and articulating our program’s vision, mission, core values, learning goals, and assessment procedures. We are currently completing our 5 year program review and have embraced this review as an exciting opportunity for considering and clarifying our teaching and learning plans and strategies – past, present, and future. We have been actively engaged in carefully assessing our academic and artistic successes and challenges, and have conducted a variety of qualitative and quantitative surveys of current students, program graduates, and their professional employers in order to better plan our future. The documents presented at the beginning of this document are the tangible outcome of these intensive program assessment activities. We look forward to completing our program review at the end of this semester and to welcoming internal and external reviewers who will assess the productivity, viability, and success of the collaborative work that we do.

***Development and Implementation of the Departmental Policies and Expectations Document.*** The Theatre Arts Department has developed and enforces a detailed quality assurance document (Departmental Policies and Expectations document is provided in appendix.) which is presented to all majors at the beginning of every academic year. All majors must sign and abide by the expectations and guidelines of the policy if they are to remain as theatre majors. Students who are found to be in violation of the Company Policies and Expectations document must meet with their advisor and/or the entire theatre faculty to develop a plan for immediate improvement, and are placed on probation in the department for one semester. At the end of that semester, the Theatre Arts staff reviews that student’s academic and artistic work and engagement and determines whether or not the student in question may remain a major. Students who are removed from the major are encouraged to stay at UW-Parkside and to reapply for admission to the Theatre Arts Department once they are able to meet the expectations of the Department and policy. In the five years since this document has been put in place, the average GPA for theatre arts majors has risen from 2.85 to 3.42.

***Annual Academic and Talent Reviews.*** The Theatre Arts Department has developed very detailed annual written and oral assessments of each major’s academic, behavioral, and talent progress. In January of each year, each member of the Theatre Arts staff completes a written academic and behavioral assessment on every student in the program. The student is provided written faculty assessments prior to a private meeting with the entire staff, wherein the comments and recommendations are further discussed. In May of every year each major must participate in a “talent assessment” wherein members of the theatre staff and professional theatre practitioners from such prestigious theatres as the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre and Milwaukee Shakespeare evaluate each major’s presentation of talent, skills, and potential in their given area of study. Both oral and written assessments on each student’s talent presentation are given, with recommendations made for future development. Written comments on the academic/attitudinal and talent reviews are collated, shared with each student’s advisor, and kept in the student’s permanent departmental folder. Based on these detailed oral and written assessments of learning outcomes, students are provided with specific recommendations for future success and development.

***Required Sophomore / Senior Seminar Courses:*** Our department has developed comprehensive, team-taught theatre seminar courses at the sophomore and senior levels focusing on three areas: 1. providing students an opportunity to better integrate their learning between their general education courses and those in the major; 2. providing opportunities for reflection about their learning within the major and their area of concentration; and 3. the business of theatre and how they will transition from college to the world of professional work. Taught by Lisa Kornetsky with a great deal of collaboration with the rest of the theatre faculty and staff, these seminars address artistic and educational opportunities in theatre, personal and career goals and expectations, viable career options, resume and portfolio development, job search procedures, auditioning and interviewing techniques, and website development.

The seniors further explore and develop this content in preparation for graduation. As a part of this “capstone experience” each senior also completes a significant academic and/or artistic project which brings together the learning experiences they have had at UW-Parkside and allows them to publicly showcase and/or present their resulting skills and talents for evaluation and assessment. This valuable capstone experience allows the students, faculty, and staff throughout the department to witness, assess, and appreciate the learning outcomes (academic and artistic) of each graduating theatre major – an indication of the overall success of the teaching and learning program. The faculty utilizes the outcomes of these capstone projects to continually assess the effectiveness of our teaching and learning programs and to make revisions as necessary.

***The Department Diversity Initiative in Action:*** As indicated in our vision, mission, core values statement, and programmatic goals, we continue to strive for a richer diversity of students, faculty, and staff in our program and audience members who attend our productions. We believe that we have made great strides in recent years due to our articulation and commitment to our program’s diversity initiative. We are proud of the fact that we have been able to attract more African American, Latino American, and Asian American students to our program. Currently 10% of our majors and minors are declared students of color, a significant increase from 4% just two years ago. We attribute much of this increase in students of color to the inclusion and infusion of multicultural theatre topics in our four primary general education courses. As a result, almost 35% of the students in our theatre general education courses in the fall of 2008 were self-identified students of color. For our 2009-2010 season, we have chosen an exciting set of plays to challenge our audience, both around areas of gender, women’s issues, sexual identity, and race. We continue to be challenged in fully producing plays with a diverse racial and ethnic cast, yet we value the importance of these works for our students and our audiences. In the coming year we have chosen 4 very complex and multicultural plays for our FreshINK staged reading season. This allows us to work on these important pieces which would be difficult for us to currently fully produce. A number of these plays will also give us the opportunity to collaborate with a number of student groups of color as well as the Rainbow Alliance. All members of our department are working collaboratively to address issues of diversity in the classroom and in our production program. We are continually brainstorming ways to diversify our student body and our faculty/staff so that we can create a theatre company that truly reflects the Parkside campus. This, we believe, is a distinctive vision and opportunity which distinguishes our theatre program from all others in the state of Wisconsin.

***4. The Theatre Arts Department creates a positive climate for learning and demonstrates significant impact on student and community-based learning, as reflected in the following activities:***

***Theatrical Production Research, Development, and Presentation:*** Members of the Theatre Arts company (students, faculty, and staff) are very engaged in researching, developing, and presenting 7-8 theatrical productions per academic year. A total of 16 full length productions and over 50 one act productions have been produced and presented to the public by the department in the past 2 years. Each production that we select, produce, and present reflects hundreds of hours of staff/student collaborative research and creative activity. During a typical year, over 500 UWP students – theatre majors and students from other majors enrolled in theatre general education courses – work together to create these productions. As more and more students become involved in the process of creating theatre by applying various problem-solving and team-building techniques, our program continues to thrive. As the quality of our productions continues to improve, we continue to serve a growing audience of students (university and high school), staff, faculty, and community members. In the past 5 years over 50,000 individuals have attended UW-Parkside theatre productions and related educational programming.

***Aggressive Department-Based Recruitment Initiatives:*** During the past 8 years the Theatre Arts Department, under the direction of Professor Yohnk, has developed and implemented an aggressive, multifaceted recruitment plan. The Department has developed a comprehensive, attractive, user-friendly website which has experienced over 1,000,000 “hits” in the past 12 months. We have also developed a variety of printed materials which are sent out to all high school theatre teachers and career counselors in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. These marketing/recruitment tools have had a tremendous impact on spreading our program’s reputation for academic and artistic excellence to a broader market. We have also developed a “Theatre Ambassador” program wherein current theater majors assist the department in recruitment activities, serving as hosts and guides for prospective students and their parents when they visit campus. The Theatre Arts Department faculty and staff also attend the annual Wisconsin High School Theater Festival to present workshops and training sessions on various aspects of the theatrical art, and also staff the UW-Parkside recruitment booth along with student ambassadors. As a result of these varied marketing and recruitment activities, the number of applicants seeking admission into the UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Department has increased by over 300%.

***Transfer Student Connections with UW Colleges:*** Each year we actively recruit students from the UW system’s two year campuses in a variety of ways. We advertise and embrace the fact that we want and desire qualified transfer students in our programs. Currently, approximately 30% of our majors are transfers from two year programs in Wisconsin and Illinois. This effort will continue as we attract more transfer students from other four year theatre programs in the region. During a time when many theater students have transferred from other UW theater program to UW-Parkside, we have not had a single student leave our program to become a theatre major at another school. We believe that this says a great deal about student satisfaction with our academic and artistic programming.

**Development of New General Education Courses:** Historically the UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Department, like most theatre programs in the UW system, offered a single general education course focused on the “Appreciation of Theatre.” Our popular Theatre Appreciation (THEA 110) course, which now has a theatre of diversity focus, typically enrolls between 100-120 general education students each semester. This course is both theoretical and practical in its delivery and requires students to actively participate in the collaborative process of creating our department’s theatrical productions. In the past two years, responding to the needs of the Arts and Humanities component of the University’s general education curriculum, we have developed three new courses including Multicultural Theatre in America (THEA 208), Basic Acting Skills (THEA 124), and Gender and Sexuality on Stage and Screen (THEA 215) has drawn a much larger, more diverse array of students to our academic and artistic programming. These new liberal education courses are attracting a more diverse population of students as we “connect” our curriculum to the educational needs and interests of a changing student body and emerging new programs on campus, including Ethnic Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies, LGBTQA Studies, and Film Studies.

**Theatre Trips to New York City, Stratford (Canada), London, Chicago, and Milwaukee.** As a department we attempt to expose our students and staff to the finest theatre in the English-speaking world by making regular theatre trips to major urban theatrical centers in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. Professor Tucker-Snider serves as our Theatre Outreach Coordinator and plans all of these trips, which include academic classes and instruction before and after the trip. In the past two years we have made 8 professional theatre trips to Milwaukee and Chicago, 2 week long trips to New York City, and one trip to London (winter 2008). These education theatre trips not only allow students to see professional productions but also allow them to meet with theatre professionals living in these urban areas to better understand the challenges and successes that can be found in the theatre “business.” These professional “theatre in the city” experiences expose our students and faculty to exceptional live theatre which can be discussed and analyzed, providing us with a context for evaluating the qualities, expectations, and trends in contemporary live theatre.

**School Matinees and Instructional Opportunities.** Each year we offer reduced-price matinee presentations, free study guides, post-show discussions, and theatre tours to hundreds of high school and college students, teachers, and civic groups in the greater Racine-Kenosha area. Last year over 2,000 area school students and teachers attended UW-Parkside matinees, including two highly successful performances of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. We provided a valuable educational theatre venue and resource for a very diverse community which has very few local performing arts groups. The Theatre Arts Department offers local schools and community theatres access to our costume and properties resources, providing a valuable resource. We also frequently provide advice, guidance, support, and educational materials and insights to local directors and teachers who are involved with theatrical production. We also present educational theatre workshops at the Wisconsin High School Theatre Festival each year.

## Appendix of Supporting Materials

### A. A Brief Profile of Recent Departmental Accomplishments

#### Our professional faculty and staff of artist/educators

- Jamie Cheatham, Associate Professor (MFA, Theatre Pedagogy and Acting, Virginia Commonwealth University)
- Michael Clickner, Staff/Artist (MFA, Design and Technology, Utah State University)
- Keith Harris, Theatre Manager / Adjunct Designer (MFA, Sceneography, The University of Kansas)
- Darice DaMata-Geiger, Artist (50%) (MFA, Design, Ohio University)
- Lisa Kornetsky, Associate Professor (MFA, Directing, University of Massachusetts, Amherst)
- Judith Tucker-Snider, Professor (MFA, Design and Technology, University of Portland)
- James Skelly Warren, Associate Professor (MFA, Design and Technology, Northwestern University)
- Dean Yohnk, Associate Professor, Chair, Artistic Director (Ph.D., Theatre Pedagogy and Directing, Bowling Green State University)

**Degree Offered:** Bachelor of Arts (50 credits needed in the theatre arts “core” classes required of all majors)

#### Specialized BFA-Level Concentrations Available (additional 25-30 credits in chosen focus area):

- Acting / Performance
- Arts Administration
- Design and Technology
- Theatre Management and Direction
- Theatre Education

#### Total Number of Courses Offered within Theatre Discipline and General Education: 57

- The department offers a variety of theatre courses for majors and minors, including 27 courses offered at the 100-200 level and 26 courses offered at the 300-400 level.
- **General education service courses** offered to all UWP students (Approximate 500 students per year are enrolled in our department’s general education courses, including: Theatre Appreciation (THEA 110), Basic Acting Skills (THEA 124, new

course), Multicultural Theatre in American (THEA 208), and Gender and Sexuality on Stage and Screen (THEA 215, *new course*).

**Current number of declared theatre arts majors: 60**

(Note that department enrollment capped at 60 and admission to the major is by audition and interview only. In the 2008 recruitment cycle 68% of applicants who met the minimum ACT of 20, minimum GPA of 2.75, and ranking in upper 50% of high school graduating class were accepted into the department.)

**Current number of declared theatre arts minors: 10**

(The minor is open to all UWP students regardless of major and entry auditions are not required.)

**Average Department GPA: 3.34 cumulative GPA average for theatre majors** (up from 2.84 in 2003); 53% of all theatre majors and minors have achieved cumulative GPA's of 3.25 or higher in the past year.

**Five year retention rate of new freshmen and transfer students:**

- 2008: 95% (nationally certified peer mentors)
- 2007: 92% (expanded departmental peer mentor program in place)
- 2006: 86% (departmental peer mentor program in place)
- 2005: 73 % (new department peer mentor program implemented)
- 2004: 65% (no peer mentor program)

**Five year average placement rate of theatre arts graduates:**

- Employed by professional theatre companies as artists or schools and universities as theatre educators = **26%**
- Engaged in professional theatre internships or apprenticeships as a part of continuing education = **23%**
- Enrolled in theatre graduate programs = **21%** (including prestigious graduate programs at New York University, The California Institute of the Arts, Northwestern University, Ohio University, Bowling Green State University, the University of Washington, The University of Alabama, The University of North Carolina – Greensboro, The University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University)
- Other related employment opportunities utilizing skills and talents gained as theater majors = **31%**

**Total Number of Shows Produced Annually by Department** (all include audience education programs)

- 4-5 fully staged productions (a diverse range of classical and contemporary dramas, comedies, and musicals)
- 4-5 staged readings of new plays (focusing on contemporary social, cultural, ethnic, and ethical issues)
- 10-12 one act plays produced by students in the directing classes (reflecting the diversity of the student directors)
- 1-3 fully staged productions completely created by students in the Drama Club service organization

**Annual Number of Audience Members Served Through Theatre Productions** (Average for past 5 years)

- UW-Parkside Students: 3,530 students (average number of student tickets sold annually)
- UW-Parkside Faculty and Staff: 540 (average number of faculty and staff tickets sold annually)
- UW-Parkside Alumni: 480 (average number of alumni tickets sold annually)
- Community Audience Members: 4,450 (average number of community general admission tickets sold annually)
- High School Matinee Audiences: 1,200 (average number of tickets sold to high school groups annually)
- Estimated Free Admission to FreshINK Staged Readings and Discussions: 1,100 (total annual attendance)

**Audience Education Services Offered for Fully Produced Productions**

- Comprehensive audience study guides for each production (available on website for all interested audience members)
- Detailed playbills for all audience members (containing essential information about play, author, setting)
- Pre-Show discussions with audiences for selected productions (in conjunction with various classes)
- Post-show audience discussions with members of the production company (students, faculty, staff)
- Special presentations and programming for the UWP Adventures in Life Long Learning Program (ALL)
- Guided tours of the backstage production areas available upon request
- School or civic group workshops in various topics in theatre offered upon request

**Production Excellence: Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Recognitions and Awards**

(External peer review awards from respected theatre artist/educators at other Universities in the region since 2003 on file.)

- UWP productions invited to KCACTF Regional Festival: *The Fifth of July, Welcome Home*
- UWP Actors nominated for Irene Ryan Acting Competition: 64
- UWP Actors advancing to semi-finals and finals in regional competition = 5
- Regional Awards of Merit for Design and/or Production (students and faculty) = 59
- Regional Awards of Merit for Directing (faculty) = 6
- Regional Playwriting Competition Finalists (student writers) = 7

- Regional Awards for Ensemble Acting Excellence = 7
- Productions at Other Universities Evaluated by UWP Faculty = 43

## B. Theatre Arts Department/Company Policies & Expectations

*All UW-Parkside Theatre Arts Majors are expected to abide by the following company policies and expectations. Theatre minors, who are also valuable members of the company, are expected to follow these guidelines as directed below.*

- **You are first and foremost a *student* and academic achievement and success is essential and required of all majors. All majors and minors MUST maintain a 2.5 minimum cumulative GPA in order to be assigned to production positions and/or roles.** Students who do not have a grade point of 2.5 at the end of a semester will be placed on academic probation in the department and will not be allowed to work on shows the next semester other than through non-production credit-earning academic theatre classes. Students on academic probation in the department for two consecutive semesters will be reviewed for removal from the program. Students on academic probation or experiencing academic difficulties (receiving a grade of “D” or “F” in a class during the semester) will be asked to complete and submit weekly academic progress reports to their advisor and department chair. Academic problems and solutions will be addressed by the faculty on an individual basis as needed and in consultation with the student.
- **All Theatre company members must actively and regularly participate in departmental theatre productions and projects.** It is expected that you will regularly avail your time, talent, and skills on departmental projects, as needed. Performance and directing majors MUST audition for every faculty directed show (including FreshINK) unless there are direct conflicts with assignments on other departmental productions. All majors with concentrations in technical production, design, and education MUST avail their talents, skills, and time to productions by contacting the Technical Director (or other assigned faculty members) at the beginning of each semester and/or production project. Majors must receive faculty permission if they would like to be excused from a given production for academic, artistic, or personal reason; requests will be considered on an individual basis by the faculty.
- **All Theatre majors are required to successfully complete and submit a Company Participation Record (CPR) every semester. Theatre minors must submit at least 3 semesters of CPR documentation in order to receive a theatre minor.** Each major (and minor) is required to complete and submit to CPR forms to the Department office by the last day of class each semester. Any major who fails to satisfactorily complete and submit the CPR form will be placed on probation in the department for one semester. Students on probation who fail to satisfactorily complete and submit the CPR form in the following semester will be reviewed for removal from the program.
- **All majors are expected to attend the required all-department company meeting on the first Wednesday of every month at noon. Minors are urged to attend these all-department meetings whenever possible.** Important information and valuable educational activities will be included in these meetings. Attendance will be taken and may affect company status.
- **Being a theatre major and company member is a *full time job and commitment.*** Due to the incredible number of hours required to successfully complete academic and production requirements and obligations, students are *urged* to limit outside jobs to 10 hours/week or less. While paying for your education is a necessity, we urge you to budget wisely and earn essential incomes on weekends or during the summer. If you must work more than 10 hours/week, you should discuss this with your advisor and consider becoming a part time student.
- **It is expected that UWP theater company members will make productions at UW-Parkside their first theatrical priority.** While students may become involved in theatrical projects outside of the department, it is expected that these outside activities will NOT interfere with a students academic or production work at UW-Parkside. During the regular academic year, students who wish to become involved with productions outside of the department must discuss the situation with the Department Chair and their academic advisor PRIOR to committing to any role or job on an outside activity.
- **All company members are expected to exhibit positive, professional attitudes in all academic and production settings.** Service, leadership, and a collaborative professional spirit are expectations of all members of the program.
- **All company members are expected to know and abide by the Substance Abuse Prevention Policy.** As a department and company it is our goal to create a safe, healthy creative work environment for all. Violations of our substance abuse prevention policy will not be tolerated and will be reported to the appropriate authorities as required by law and university policy.

- **All majors are required to participate in the annual Academic Reviews in January and annual Talent Reviews in May. Theatre minors may request to participate in these reviews.** Faculty and staff members will provide each major with detailed written and oral assessments and recommendations at each evaluation. Theatre experts from regional professional theatre companies will also assist in the May talent reviews. [See assessment templates in Appendix F.]
- **Majors and minors who do not adhere to the above active participation policies will be asked to meet with departmental faculty and staff to discuss their future in the department.** Students may be removed from the major at the discretion of the theatre faculty as a whole. Re-audition is required for all students who wish to become majors after they have been removed from the program.

## **C. Strategic & Measurable Outcomes Related to Mission and Goals**

**GOAL A: Offer students majoring in theatre arts a comprehensive liberal arts baccalaureate degree (BA), in addition to providing professional theatre training concentrations in the areas of performance, design and technology, management and direction, theatre education, and arts administration:**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Embrace and promote the value of a liberal arts education, encouraging students to take a full range of general education courses throughout their educational experience which will compliment each learner’s particular goals, interests, and skills;
- 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;

**Measurable Outcomes & Assessment (Students will):**

- Complete documentation of their academic and artistic progress in the department and general education courses via formal and informal portfolio review evaluations;
- Participate in the annual academic and talent review system established by the department to proactively review and assess their academic and artistic development, strengths, and challenges;
- Complete the senior seminar course, a capstone course which allows students to identify, synthesize, and apply their learning experiences and skills in general education and theatre courses;
- Complete a thorough assessment of the university’s and department’s effectiveness by completing a program exit survey and/or interview;
- Enter the professional theatre world, a related career, or graduate school after graduation from the program.

**GOAL B: Serve as an artistic, educational, and cultural forum which engages and increases campus and community engagement by offering diverse, relevant academic and artistic programs, courses, and theatrical presentations that educate, entertain, and inspire:**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Provide students and audiences with a broad range of diverse, relevant courses and live theatre production opportunities;
- Provide prospective students and community members with access to general education courses [including Theatre Appreciation (THEA 110), Multicultural Theatre in America (THEA 208), Basic Acting Skills (THEA 124), and Gender and Sexuality on Stage and Screen (THEA 215)] 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;
- Present staged readings and discussions of the most significant new theatrical works that directly address pertinent contemporary issues and subjects.

**Measurable Outcomes & Assessment (Students will):**

- Enroll in desirable, effective theatre courses which meet their interests and expectations;
- Attend and actively discuss a diverse range of theatrical productions, to be monitored through evaluations of oral and written critiques and assessments;
- 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.

**GOAL C: Promote the importance of a solid liberal arts education for all students while instilling in them a strong respect for the collaborative theatrical art form, critical thinking skills, creative problem solving, personal responsibility, the value of service and leadership, and a commitment to life-long learning;**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Continue to support and stress the importance of a broad, comprehensive liberal arts education for all students who are considering a career in theatre or related fields;
- Continue to stress the essential purpose, value, and relevance of theatre as a public cultural event, which can both entertain and educate, inspire and instruct;
- Continue to provide students with continuous academic and artistic projects which we put a focus on value of collaboration, critical thinking, and creative problem solving;
- Provide students with continuous opportunities to engage in service and leadership projects, both within the department and in the greater community we serve;
- Instill in students recognition for the importance of life-long learning, while providing them with essential skills and techniques necessary for such continuous discovery.

**Measurable Outcomes and Assessment (The students will):**

- Utilize and apply skills and knowledge gained in general education courses while engaged in academic and artistic components of the theatre program;
- Work collaboratively in groups to solve various academic, production, and artistic challenges;
- Demonstrate their commitment to service, leadership, and community engagement through the creation and presentation of educational, artistic, and cultural offerings to the audiences we serve;

**GOAL D: Utilize various recruitment, assessment, and peer mentor models and procedures which allow us to further develop and strengthen a collaborative “company-based” training system which provides a reasonable number of exceptional theatre students the best possible training for life and careers after graduation:**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Actively engage in a variety of proven recruitment projects and activities which reach out to educators and prospective students at high schools and two year campuses in our expanded service region;
- 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 develop and update our comprehensive website to include the latest information about the department’s mission, goals, educational and artistic programming, and cultural offerings;
- Continue to develop an effective peer mentor system to assist in the recruitment, retention, and success of new students.
- Continue to maintain high academic and artistic standards for all majors in the program, as outlined in our programs “Academic Policies and Expectations” document (See handbook on website);
- Continue to hold annual academic reviews (January) and talent reviews (May) with all majors to better assess their development and contributions to the department and production company.

**Measurable Outcomes & Assessment (Students will):**

- Assist in the recruitment and integration of new students in the program;
- 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;
- Utilize the departmental website and other electronic communications as a means of remaining informed about departmental projects, opportunities, and policies;
- Meet with their theatre faculty and staff to engage in the process of evaluating and assessing their academic and artistic progress, abilities, and goals;
- Participate in annual academic and artistic reviews/assessments, featuring direct feedback from UWP theatre faculty, staff, and representatives from the professional theater.

**GOAL E: Build upon our program’s outstanding local, state, and regional recognition as a program of academic and artistic excellence and distinction as we continue to raise our standards and program quality through active engagement with recognized education and theatre education associations and accreditation agencies.**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Continue to define, clarify, communicate, and enforce our stated expectations and policies related to academic and artistic excellence and student success;
- Re-apply for the University of Wisconsin Regents' Award for Academic Excellence;
- Continue as regular and active participants in the Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF);
- Continue as regular and active participants in the Alliance for Wisconsin Theatre Education (AWTE), The Alliance for American Theatre Educators (AATE), and the Association for Theater in Higher Education (ATHE);
- Explore possible future accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).

**Measureable Outcomes and Assessment (The company members will):**

- Attend and participate in workshops and competitions offered at conferences of KCACTF, AWTE, ATHE, and USITT;
- Evaluate the educational and artistic outcomes and benefits of involvement in such organizations through discussion and written assessments;
- Begin the initial process of applying for NAST accreditation in the next two years.

**GOAL F: Continue to utilize and integrate new technology, methodologies, and techniques creatively and effectively into theatre courses and productions as we continue to plan, design, construct, and transition into state-of-the-art theatre production and performance facilities and labs.**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Incorporate the latest technology into all academic classes and related production programming;
- Teach computer design and production software and applications in all design and technical production courses;
- Work closely with architects, technology consultants, as we proceed with the design and construction of new theatre labs and performance spaces in the upcoming Communication Arts building project.

**Measurable Outcomes & Assessment (Students will):**

- Utilize computers and other theatre technologies to accomplish academic and artistic projects and tasks;
- Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of computer software necessary in the theatre business;

**GOAL G: Actively utilize professionally trained faculty and staff members, guest artists, and active partnerships with regional professional theatres and artists to further expand and enhance our educational programming and production opportunities, encouraging students to engage in supervised professional theatre internships and apprenticeships prior to graduation;**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Continue to encourage faculty and staff to remain current and actively involved in appropriate professional theatre organizations and their educational and artistic projects;
- 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 Fireside Theatre, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, The Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Great River Shakespeare, and American Players Theatre) that have already provided invaluable educational opportunities and experiences for our students and staff;

**Measurable Outcomes & Assessment (Students will):**

- Attend and access theatrical performances from a variety of vantage points in the art;
- Engage with theatre professionals through guest lectures, internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing experiences prior to graduation;
- Make significant and meaningful connections with theatre professionals in their areas of interest;

**GOAL H: Embrace and achieve our diversity initiative (below) by attracting and retaining a diverse population of students, staff, faculty, and audiences as we present academic and artistic programming and performances that reflect the true diversity of our community, state, country, and world;**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- 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, including the further promotion of popular general education courses which contain strong diversity components and tend to attract multicultural students, including Multicultural Theater in America, Theater Appreciation, and Basic Acting Skills;

- 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):**

- 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 to disadvantaged and multicultural students in the program who meet all academic and production expectations;

**GOAL I: Continue to develop and promote our theatre education program, recruiting and supporting the training of highly skilled and employable future theatre educator/artists who will communicate the value and importance of the arts to future generations:**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

- Continue to work closely with the UWP Education Program, the Department of Public Instruction, and local educational theatres to further develop and enhance our theatre education program;
- To remain active, participating members of various theater education organizations, including AWTE, ATHE, AATE, USITT, and KCACTF, who are dedicated to promoting and supporting excellence in theatre education;
- Actively work with local theatre educators at the high school and community college campuses to better assess the educational theatre needs of our region and to provide opportunities for enhancing and supporting theatre education experiences at all levels;
- Continue to recruit exceptional theatre students who have the passion and desire to become theatre educators, providing them as many campus and community resources for success as possible;
- To continue to work with education programs affiliated with professional theatres in the region to further strengthen connections and opportunities for our theatre education students;

**Measurable Outcomes and Assessment (The department will):**

- Increase the numbers of students enrolled in the theatre education program and the number of students who successfully complete all phases of the program;
- Increase the number of students who become professional theatre educators after graduation;
- Continue to assess the preparedness and success of theatre educators who graduate from our program through a variety of quantitative and qualitative assessment measures.

**GOAL J: Remain viable, productive, and healthy through the effective and reasonable management of our human and financial resources and facilities, striving to balance production budgets while increasing ticket sales and monies received through other funding sources including grants and donations.**

**Implementation Strategies (The program will):**

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

**Measurable Outcomes & Assessment (Students will):**

- Engage in the budgeting process as company members, taking responsibility for the budgets that are theirs to manage;
- Realize the importance and valuable of budgets and fiscal responsibility, as evidenced in weekly production meetings with faculty and staff members;
- Complete the program with the financial support of the university and various outside donors who help to make their education possible.

<b>D. Teaching Evaluation Section from the Department's Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure</b>
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The criteria for departmental recommendations for promotion and tenure are the same as those for yearly Merit Review. Annually we evaluate each faculty and staff member based on their achievement in teaching, creative activity, and service. Provided below is the Teaching section of our Promotion and Tenure Guidelines:

## **I. Teaching (including Advising and Mentoring) (50% of total assignment)**

### **The Theatre Art Department's General Expectations for Teaching**

1. Classroom Performance: The primary expectation of the full-time faculty member in teaching is to demonstrate and maintain mastery of the varied subject matters that pertain to the given courses that the individual is asked to teach, presenting the subject matter effectively, and to offer evaluation of student performance consistent with program expectations.
2. The full-time faculty member will share in advising and career preparation duties within the Theatre Arts major and to be readily available to students, monitoring their progress toward matriculation from the university and for various careers in the theatrical arts after graduation.
3. The full-time faculty member will regularly teach theatre practicum courses in their area of specialization, providing individual students enrolled in these courses related to realized productions with guidance, feedback, and criticism within the context of this collaborative art form.
4. The full-time faculty member is expected to help determine curricular direction and course content of departmental offerings and their effective implementation especially as they pertain to their field of specialty.
5. The full-time faculty member is expected to uphold a safe environment for the students in all classroom, laboratory, and production environments, functioning as a professional role model, mentor, and artist/educator.
6. The full-time faculty member is expected to actively participate in the Theatre Arts Department's extensive student assessment process for each major, including program entry auditions, annual academic reviews, annual talent reviews, professional seminar courses, and other activities related to providing students with detailed feedback and assessment of their academic and artistic progress.

### **The Theatre Arts Department's Modes of Evaluation:**

1. The principle instrument of evaluating teaching effectiveness will be the course and instructor evaluation form (numerical results and written comments) and post-production evaluations and discussions.
2. Indicators of student learning should include syllabi, classroom projects, sample exams, evaluation of practical theatrical productions, and examples of student development and enhancement in the instructor's appropriate areas of specialization.
3. Peer evaluation of the instructor may take place upon the request of the Executive Committee or the probationary faculty member. Peer evaluation may occur in the traditional classroom or in the rehearsal/production setting, as appropriate. To be effective, peer evaluation should be based on more than one visitation and by all members of the Executive Committee.
4. Evaluation of advising shall be based on reported office hours and hours dedicated to advising as defined in the annual merit review, including private and group advising and career preparation activities.
5. The faculty member's active engagement in the department's annual academic and talent reviews as well as program entry audition participation will also be utilized in evaluating the individual's work as an artist/educator/advisor.

## **E. Samples of Assessment Tools Utilized in the Evaluation of Students**

### *Mid-Year Academic and Company Engagement Assessment Spring 2009*

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative GPA = \_\_\_\_\_ (2.5 required)      THEA Course GPA = \_\_\_\_\_ (2.75 required)

Faculty/Staff Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_

**On a scale of 1-10 (10 = very well) how well do you feel you *know* this individual as a:**

- |            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| • Student: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| • Artist:  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| • Person:  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

#### ***Academic Assessment***

*5 = exceptional    4=very good    3= satisfactory    2= deficient    1=inadequate    UN = unknown*

- |   |  |   |   |   |   |           |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|-----------|
| ✓ | Success in Meeting Overall GPA Requirements: | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1         |
| ✓ | Academic Achievement in Theatre Courses:     | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1         |
| ✓ | Perceived Commitment to Academic Success:    | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1      UN |

**Related Comments (Perceived Academic Strengths and Weaknesses):**

**Company Member Engagement Assessment**

✓ Perception of the Student’s Overall Work Ethic	5	4	3	2	1	UN
✓ Perceived Collaborative & Cooperative Spirit	5	4	3	2	1	UN
✓ Service & Dedication to Department Projects	5	4	3	2	1	UN
✓ Evidence of Serving as Student Role Model	5	4	3	2	1	UN

**Related Comments (Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses):**

***Performance Talent Review Assessment 2009***

Student’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCEPT INTO CONCENTRATION AREA? YES or NO

Approved Concentration Area: \_\_\_\_\_

**Talent Review Assessment Factors:** Students are evaluated in each of the areas below based on a ratings system of 1-5, with “5” reflecting exceptional achievement and “1” reflecting deficient work in need of immediate development and improvement.

<u>Resume / Interview</u>		(+)				(-)
○ QUANTITY of artistic work achieved and represented in resume	5	4	3	2	1	
○ QUALITY of artistic work achieved and represented in resume	5	4	3	2	1	
○ Professional appearance and presentation during audition /interview	5	4	3	2	1	
○ Effective oral communication during audition and interview	5	4	3	2	1	

**Perceived Artistic Growth & Goals**

○ Artistic growth and development observed this year	5	4	3	2	1
○ Dedication and commitment to artistic improvement	5	4	3	2	1
○ Clarify of artistic goals and plans for future development	5	4	3	2	1

**Presentation of Talent**

○ Appropriate Selection of Material	5	4	3	2	1
○ Preparation for Talent Presentation	5	4	3	2	1
○ Physicality (body use, control, freeness)	5	4	3	2	1
○ Vocal Attributes (placement, articulation, breath, range)	5	4	3	2	1
○ Believability / Naturalness and Honest in Portrayal of Character	5	4	3	2	1
○ Range / Versatility	5	4	3	2	1

**Suggested aspects of talent to develop**

**F. Letters of Support for Regents Award Nomination Attached**



February 27, 2009

Dear Regents' Teaching Excellence Award Committee Members,

I wholeheartedly endorse the application of the Theatre Arts Department at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside for the 2009 Regents' Teaching Excellence Award.

Although I am new to UW-Parkside, the Theatre Arts Department is clearly one of our greatest academic and creative strengths and it is the program of which community members are most vocal in their praise. The department has distinguished itself through its ambitious agenda and excellent performances, as well as the nationally recognized achievements of its students.

In the department's submission for the award, it spells out the program's goals and objectives. These objectives are not simply empty rhetoric, but they are the daily drivers of all the department's activities and performances.

After conducting rigorous auditions, the Theatre Arts Department annually reaches the maximum number of students it is allowed to accept. More than 8,000 people a year attend the department's performances. A major reason UW-Parkside was named by the Carnegie Foundation as one of the country's sixty-four "Engaged Campuses" is because of the Theatre Arts Department's outreach efforts.

The Theatre Arts Department at UW-Parkside is exemplary in other ways as well. Its excellent mentoring program has increased its student retention rate for graduation. It is also one of our most active departments in terms of recruiting students. Finally, it enhances its productions through department-wide efforts to secure private funding.

In summary, the Theatre Arts Department is truly representative of the best that UW-Parkside has to offer. I am extremely proud to support the department for the Regents' Teaching Excellence Award. It would be hard to imagine a more deserving recipient.

Sincerely,

Lane R. Earns  
Interim Chancellor



25 February 2009

TO: Regents Teaching Excellence Award Selection Committee

FR: Donald A. Cress, Dean  
College of Arts and Sciences

RE: Department of Theatre Arts, UW-Parkside

This is a letter of support on behalf of the Department of Theatre Arts, UW-Parkside, for the UW Regents Teaching Award.

By a great many measures, the Department of Theatre Arts is an outstanding department; it does a great many things extremely well. Like faculty in other departments, the faculty in the Department of Theatre Arts is very much involved in campus-level initiatives and governance committees. As a fine arts department, the quality of its programming is about there for the community to see and judge. However, the fact that the Department is also a theatre company makes the Department especially unique. First, the Department must meet an income target each year. Second, students in the program must function together as a unit; each student must take personal responsibility for the overall excellence of the Department's productions.

The Department is strongly committed to providing high quality instruction for students in the program as well as for students taking general education courses. The Department is equally committed to providing outstanding theatrical productions for the local community. These productions have justly received many awards from regional and national evaluators. In fact, over the past seven years UW-Parkside Theatre Department faculty and majors have received over seventy AAwards of Merit from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival for outstanding work in acting, directing, design, technical production, playwriting, dramatic criticism, and overall production excellence. At the same time, these outstanding productions are an exceptional learning opportunity for our students in both the performance and the technical aspects of a theatre production.

However, I wish to focus my remarks on the fact that the Department of Theatre Arts is an outstanding example of an academic unit that genuinely embodies a culture of assessment. The Department has clear expectations for students in the program and communicates these expectations very effectively. Moreover, it has in place a process of continual assessment of student learning at various stages in the program; in many cases these assessments are done by professional theatre personnel in the Milwaukee and Chicago areas. Finally, the Department routinely uses its assessment findings to make program improvements. One indication of the effectiveness of this assessment program is the fact that the GPA for majors is significantly higher than it was prior to the Department's adoption of this assessment program. Moreover, the retention rate for students accepted during the past two years is 92%.

In order to be accepted into the program students must either be interviewed or audition for entry into the program. Upon admission to the program students are given a quality assurance document. All majors are required to sign and abide by the expectations and guidelines of the document. Moreover, students undergo each January a detailed annual written and oral assessment of their academic, behavioral, and talent progress. Each May there is a talent assessment in which local theatre professionals review and assess each major's presentation. These oral and written assessments are accompanied by recommendations for future development. All of this assessment information is shared with the major being assessed. How then have these assessment findings resulted in program improvements?

1. CURRICULAR REVISION. Based on the presentation of students' talent (monologues, portfolios, resumes, and websites) at the annual talent review, the Department has changed the types and the content of classes in various areas of theatre. For example, the Department added more period acting classes because acting students were weak in this area of preparation according to professional outside

evaluators at the assessment (usually professionals from the Milwaukee Rep, Milwaukee Shakespeare, and Steppenwolf Theatre). This assessment feedback has also led the Department to add more oral presentations of portfolios and more design ideas into the curriculum to help prepare design and technical students for the talent reviews and interviews in the professional world after graduation.

2. **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SHOWS:** The Department has developed very specific academic achievement expectations. It now requires a minimum GPA of 2.5 to work on any theatre production. This single change has significantly increased the students' drive and focus on academic achievement. Since initiating the January academic reviews the average department GPA for theatre majors has risen from 2.64 to 3.34. The academic policies established by the Department (based on the outcomes of academic reviews) have directly enhanced GPA's across the board. Students with GPA's below 2.5 or who are getting D's or F's in classes are not permitted to work on shows, which has been a major incentive for students to maintain high grades.

3. **WEEKLY ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORTS:** The Department has developed a weekly academic progress report document which ALL theatre majors who are in "academic danger" (near 2.5 GPA) must have completed, signed, and turned into their academic advisors at the end of each week. If students do not turn in the weekly academic progress reports to their advisor, they are immediately removed from all production activities and are placed on "probation" in the department. If students remain on "probation" for a second semester they are dropped from the program.

4. **SOPHOMORE/SENIOR SEMINAR DEVELOPMENT:** The Department has significantly altered its required sophomore/senior seminar class so that it includes more specific and valuable content related to the business of theatre, marketing of theatre artists, resumes, auditions, portfolios, websites, and interviewing techniques. This course also now contains a series of audition and/or interview role plays which help to prepare students for the talent reviews and job interviews.

5. **GRADUATE SCHOOL PLACEMENT:** As a result of improved academic and artistic programming, more and more theatre majors are getting accepted into major theater graduate programs across the country. Students have recently been placed in prestigious MFA programs such as NYU, Cal Arts, Ohio University, the University of Washington, the University of Houston, the University of Alabama, the University of Delaware, and Northwestern University. I believe these higher academic expectations, along with prompt feedback, are responsible in large part for the admission of Theatre students into the nation's best graduate programs.

6. **ENGAGEMENT WITH PROFESSIONAL THEATRES:** As a result of having professional artists take part in departmental talent reviews there now exist important connections among students, our program, and the professional theatre world. Many students are actually offered jobs, internships, and apprenticeships by the professional theatre evaluators participating in the talent reviews. This is an exceptional outcome which builds bridges for students between college and the world of professional theatre.

These are all good examples of how the Department closes the assessment loop. Moreover, by involving professional theatre personnel in these assessments, the Department's assessment of student achievement is well coordinated with what professionals in the field expect to see.

As I indicated previously, the Department of Theatre Arts does a great many things extremely well. I have focused on its program of student assessment because it stands out as a major part of a genuine success story.