

An Examination of the Drama Program Austin Community College

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of Austin Community College's Drama Program, playing its part in seeking to support the overall goals of Austin Community College, is to provide students with the opportunity to achieve an Associate of Arts Degree, which is compatible with and comparable to the first two years of Drama education at other universities and colleges. It also seeks to prepare students for industry jobs through real experiences on and behind the stage, and to establish competency in voice and diction, movement, improvisation, scene work, audition techniques, production work, stage craft, and theater history. DRAM 1310, Introduction to Theater, and DRAM 2366, Film Appreciation, are both part of the CORE Curriculum Requirement choices and fulfill support roles for other degree programs and general education.

Vision Summary

The Drama Department at ACC envisions a theater program that embraces and offers creative opportunities to students, theatre artists and audiences from our community. Theater, in addition to the other arts, helps us in deciphering the on-going mystery of how and why we're here, providing solace, insight, laughter, and bottom line, entertainment in a communal setting. It is, by nature, an art from which requires a high level of commitment for success from audiences and artists alike, and we seek to create an atmosphere in which students can learn and gain experience in a creative and committed collaboration with others. Because human nature dictates a fascination with human behavior, theater is the optimum venue for self-expression and self-exploration, and within our program, students can create new characters as they learn to identify, accentuate, and draw from their own characteristics in order to fulfill their roles.

Because the ACC Drama faculty are strongly committed to continuing a long tradition of theatrical training, because we have two viable theater facilities, and because we are located in a city rich with theatrical and film opportunities, expansion is essential and possible. In order to attract potential students, high quality performers and production personnel must continue to be drawn from the community. These people add validity to the program and provide hands-on learning experiences for the students and a mentor-friendly atmosphere. New classes also have to be added to meet the growing needs of students and to enrich their focus. For example, available classes should be expanded to include Shakespeare and Acting for TV and Film. To further reach a variety of students, next year we hope to include more Continuing Education students, and offer an online Intro to Theatre class.

Furthermore, the Drama Program foresees a need to improve its facilities. For example, the prop and scenery workshop is so small that most items of scenery cannot fit inside. Also, because of the cramped space, the equipment and fumes provide a hazardous environment for students. If an emergency arose, students could not wash their hands,

face, or eyes quickly since there is no sink in the workroom. As a result of this lack of space, many times scenery and props end up being built on the Mainstage Theater which can often conflict with other school events. With the increase in required lab hours, which necessitates more students spending more time working on scenery, props, and lights, a larger space is definitely needed. There are possible solutions to the problem. Simply gaining access to the classroom next door to the shop – perhaps even knocking down the adjoining wall, even creating a door between, could provide much needed space. Perhaps locating other areas around the Rio Grande Campus for Drama Program use might be possible, too. This renovation would not only be beneficial to the Drama Program, but to visiting productions as well. Complaints over a lack of space for costume changes and storage of scenic elements would also be addressed by this change.

Furthermore, the equipment needs to be updated. While the light board in the Mainstage has thankfully been replaced, the one in the Gallery Theater needs to be replaced as well. In addition, because of the number of rentals and equipment pickups necessary for production, the Drama Program needs a van, and the one we've used for years was vandalized and finally quit running in the fall of 02. Transportation issues will continue to plague productions until this need is addressed.

In return for these investments, it is our belief that the Drama Program will draw more students and more qualified mentors. In addition, renting out the theater space when it is not in use can alleviate some of the fiscal concerns. An article in the Austin American Statesman titled, All the Schools Have a Stage: Performing Arts Centers Showcase Students and Pros, by Pamela Le Blanc (November 2000) suggests that the large performance arenas being built by public schools attract numerous touring shows and rentals. If ACC improved its facilities, it could capitalize on the growing need for downtown performance space, instead of losing business to high schools.

An excerpt from the article explains some of the benefits.

Teachers like it because it gives technical theater students a chance to put their skills to use and make up to \$7 an hour working after school events. Managers of Austin performance venues like it because it gives them a chance to reach even more audience members through a second location. "There's a real space crunch in terms of venues available," said Paul Beutel, executive director of the Paramount Theatre on Congress Avenue in Austin. And as Dean Baker, manager of Round Rock's Performing Arts Center says, "People are realizing the value of having students in close proximity to professionals."

While the Rio Grande Campus has been able to rent out both theaters in the past, further renovations would only serve to entice more people to take advantage of the facilities. So, the investment would not only serve our students, it would serve the community as well.

Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

Team Members

Shelby Brammer

Eric Abbott

Guy Roberts

Department Chair

Adjunct Faculty

Full Time Faculty and Artistic

Director of the Austin

Shakespeare Festival

W.T. Bryant

Former Student,

Production Specialist and

Adjunct Faculty

David Yeakle

Adjunct Faculty and Artistic

Director of Tongue and

Groove Theater Company

Dorothy Barnett

Faculty, Creative Writing

Nancy Jokovich

Facilitator

Strengths

- *Faculty*

The faculty in the Drama Program is of the highest caliber. They are dedicated to the students, school, and local community. Many are active members of the local theater community, including ASF and T&G. The full-time faculty are members of Screen Actors Guild and Actor's Equity Association, and all of the adjunct faculty possess MFAs or MAs. They are creative, committed and professional. In addition, they can attract and utilize the design, performance, and general production support needed in this highly specialized field.

- *Productions*

Each year the Drama Program produces a minimum of three, high quality theatre productions. Often, though not always, the faculty brings in outside professional or more experienced talent for students to work with and learn from. While students always have top priority for cast and crew positions, the high quality of the productions often attracts community talent, and we try to integrate community members with our students where possible, giving all the opportunity to practice their craft and gain experience from auditions, rehearsals and performances.

- *Community*

The Drama Program's policy of being inclusive, rather than exclusive, has helped build strong community ties with other theater programs, houses, and individual artists, such as Austin Circle of Theatres, Acclaim Talent Agency, St. Edwards, the University of Texas, and the B. Iden Payne Awards. This relationship with the other schools and with the theatre community helps foster growth and potential access to student benefits outside the classroom.

- *Students*
Because the theater community utilizes cast and crew of all abilities and backgrounds, the Drama Program attracts a diverse group of students ranging across all ethnicities, ages, and genders. This makes for a rich and vibrant talent pool.
- *Facilities*
Even though our facilities need improvement, renovation, and upgrading, they are still an asset to the program. Most of the equipment is in proper working order. The facilities include the Black Box Gallery Theater and the Mainstage Proscenium Theater. These theaters provide good performance sites in a city with limited theater space.
- *Curriculum*
The curriculum includes Acting I and II, Voice and Diction, Stage Movement, Intro to Costume, Intro to Theatre and various technical theatre courses. The class sizes and lab time provide for a learning rich environment that accentuates the quality of the classes. The performance oriented courses combined with the technical theatre classes provide a diversity of instruction for the students.
- *Administrative Support*
This program appears to have the support of top school officials and the Dean.

Weaknesses

- *Facilities*
The Drama Program needs a new light board, a sink, and a supply van. Also, there is a need for more space for work, equipment storage, dressing rooms, and classes. With additional funding, the facilities would be more welcoming not only to students and audiences, but to potential renters as well.
- *Funding*
While production funding has remained generally at a level within which we can operate, we fear future cuts in funding will lead to less competitive productions, which ultimately may show up as less community interest, and therefore further cuts in funding. Also, guest/professional artists are paid in most other venues around Austin, and while keeping in mind that we do have limited funds, when possible or necessary, they should be paid at ACC as well if we are to be taken seriously in the creative community. In addition, the recent budget cuts, class cuts, and loss of release time for fulltime faculty and the resultant repercussions for adjuncts has dampened morale and support for the program.
- *Faculty and Staff*
Because we have students working technical lab hours, and because we have potential design students, we need a fulltime design faculty who can instruct,

mentor, and help monitor technical and design students. Right now, we offer no actual design classes, and with a fulltime costume designer or scenic designer we could create a more exciting environment for students with design talent and/or interest. Designing for our productions could also be part of Design Faculty Job Description.

There is also a need for a half-time technical support position (with benefits). Again, we need help supervising untrained students who are working lab hours, and also need assistance with general set construction, light hanging, and other technical work. While we do have a Production Specialist, certain work cannot be done by one trained person, or even by a trained person working with untrained help. It's a matter of both time constraints and safety. Currently, we pay for a Tech. Assistant through hourly wages.

- *Administration*
At times it has seemed that we had difficulty communicating with payroll, accounts payable, and other administrative areas of the college exactly what it is we do here in the Drama Program, the level of commitment and time it takes which goes beyond stated contact hours, the fact that we need to get artists and vendors paid on time, etc. We realize not everyone is familiar with the process of theatrical production, and we continue to try to make our needs known in a productive way.

Opportunities

- *Collaborations*
Keeping with the idea that hands on training is the most valuable education, internships should be pursued with T&G, ASF, and other theater companies. One way to enhance the quality and number of productions put on each year is to continue co-productions with other theaters. Through these partnerships, we can continue to create costume, prop, and scenery exchanges; build mentorship opportunities; provide professional technical support; enhance the quality of performances; raise audience involvement; and provide job opportunities for students.
- *Casting Opportunities*
There are a number of avenues for the students to pursue acting jobs in Austin including Acclaim Talent Agency, Austin Shakespeare Festival, Tongue & Groove, the Texas Production Hotline, Austin Circle of Theatres, and many, many other theatre groups. The staff continues to foster professional relationships with industry contacts. Also, film and television, both independent and studio productions, continue to be produced in and around Austin, providing more job opportunities for Drama Program students. Austin Circle of Theaters provides a newsletter that lists local theater auditions and technical needs. The Texas Production Hotline lists local films in need of actors and technical support.

- *Faculty Development*
There are numerous conferences, workshops, classes, and production opportunities for faculty professional development. Most of our faculty are involved with outside theatre organizations and are constantly practicing their art in venues all over town, being well respected in the Austin Theatre Community.
- *Community Support*
Because of the nature of the productions and student demographic, the program could seek out the right sort of grants for further development.
- *Outside Organizations*
The Drama Program could boost enrollment by recruiting talented high school students. We could build relationships with USITT, MWTA, MATC, and other theatre organizations while continuing as a member of the Texas Education Theatre Association.

Threats

- *Competition*
Because of their greater funding and newer facilities, some high schools can currently offer higher production quality. There are also other theater venues in Austin, along with many theater groups, other school programs, and private instructors with acting classes that compete with our own. Curriculum needs to be updated so that classes are more easily transferred to other institutions, and reflect current thinking about theatre training.
- *Lack of Internal Support*
There seems to be a general lack of understanding about the Drama Program and the focus of the school appears always to be shifting more towards technology and less toward artistic pursuits and studies. Perceptions remain that the administration suffers with unfocused goals or ambivalence about the smaller programs. While we are encouraged to expand the program and to promise classes to adjuncts in the form of MSTAs, at the same time we suffer with class cuts and loss of release time for fulltime faculty. We also see a lack of investment in our facilities.
- *Outside Perception*
Not enough people in the community are aware of the ACC Drama Program, but with strong classes and productions, we feel those perceptions will continue to change. There may also be a perception that arts education is not a necessity because it is either impractical in terms of being able to make a living, or because some believe that anyone can become an actor or a “star” without studying theatre.

- *Taxes and Economy*
The local and national economies are hurting, and an increase in local taxes to support ACC may not be forthcoming.
- *Global and Local Issues*
With a potential war, terrorist attacks, joblessness and a weakening economy, Drama may not be at the forefront of the community's or potential students' minds.
- *Community*
ACC students in general need to know more about their Drama program. Students and Community at large must be encouraged to update their opinion of the ACC Drama Program – better classes and stronger productions now being offered.
- *Curriculum*
Curriculum needs to be updated. Request changes to omit DRM classes, changing to DRAM classes which are more compatible with Texas Higher Education Coordination Board, making transfer to other institutions easier for students. Curriculum needs to include an Acting for TV and Film class.
- *Students*
Because Theatre requires training, rehearsals, and performances, there is a large time commitment involved. Many students don't seem willing or able to make this commitment.
- *Parking*
There is no free parking around campus and paid parking is limited. The continuous shrinking of parking spaces hurts attendance and punctuality. People are less likely to attend something where they won't be able to park.

Summary Analysis of the Core Indicators of Effectiveness

Need:

Does the Program address a verifiable need for the students, community, and/or society?

Community Need

There is a strong community need for the ACC Drama Program. This can be seen in the sheer number of theater houses and productions in and around town. Local productions are offered in small, independent theaters and in larger venues, such as the Paramount and State Theatres. All of these productions need actors and technical staff that can be trained in Austin Community College's Drama Program. Also, the major regional

colleges and universities all have flourishing Drama Departments to which our students can transfer, including St. Edwards, The University of Texas, and Southwest University. Along with training and production opportunity, ACC Drama Program also offers students valuable networking opportunities, providing access to outside theatre companies, workshops, and casting information. ACC Drama Program is inclusive and fulfills a need for students who perhaps cannot afford other higher education, or for those who have no prior experience. Finally, because the need for self-expression and the exploration of the human condition is an inherent need, there will always be a need for the Drama Program.

Enrollment Trends

	Combined Sections	Enrollments	Contact Hours
FY 1997	34	539	35,520
FY 1998	33	584	40,592
FY 1999	38	673	47,568
FY 2000	34	568	38,192
FY 2001	29	503	33,632

In 1999, the number of contact hours per student averaged out to about 71. In 2000, the contact hours per person averaged out to about 67 which is only about a 0.5% decrease, despite the fact that the number of classes decreased by 11%. Similarly, in 2001 the average number of hours per student was about 67, even though there was a 15% decrease in the number of classes offered. Although there was a five-class reduction from 2000 to 2001, there were only 65 fewer students.

Graduates

Because so many people take Drama classes for other-than-academic pursuits, the graduation percentage will always be low. Drama offers instruction that can be immediately applied to the local film and theater community, so many people may go directly into program-related jobs without graduation.

Outcomes

There are a large percentage of students who were part of the program who are currently employed, versus those who are not employed.

Additional Higher Education and Not Employed	Employed No Additional Higher Education	Additional Higher Education and Employed	Employed And/OR Additional Higher Education
5.3%	58.4%	28.3%	92.0%

92% of the students from the Drama program were found, and all 92% have either continued their education or are gainfully employed.

Cost:**Within the context of the College's mission, is the cost of the program justified?***Budget Analysis*

The review committee feels that the cost of the program is justified within the context of the college's mission.

The totals below are for the Drama Program for the last two years, according to the FY 2002 Budget.

	FY 2001	FY 2002
F-T Faculty	78,696	94,453
Adjunct Faculty Salaries	14,508	17,508
Prof/Tech Salaries	28,335	29,755
Hourly Salaries	5,549	8,549
Employee Benefits Pool	4,194	4,508
Supplies Pool	5,304	7,304
Operating Costs Pool	10,773	18,773
Duplication	1,100	1,100
Telephone	1,656	1,656
Non-Capitalized <500 Pool	3,150	3,150
Total	153,265	186,756

Based on the most recent data for FY 2001, the data available shows 33,632 contact hours generated by the Drama Program. This means that last year it cost Austin Community College only \$4.56 per contact hour to operate the program. The reimbursement rates from the state of Texas for the Fine and Applied Arts of Visual and Performing Arts has been set at between \$5.00 and \$6.00 per hour. The Drama Program falls significantly below that, making it a cost effective program.

*Comparison of Program Costs***Tuition and Fees by Semester**

ACC	15 hrs in district	\$648
St. Edwards	12-18 hrs	\$6,364
UT at Austin	15 hrs in state	\$2,285 - \$2,602
SWT	14 hrs in state	\$1,700

Program Effectiveness:

Are the teaching, learning, course, program, student, and student support outcomes of this program of the best possible quality?

Student Achievement

Course Completion Rates

The grade distribution data for the three years listed in the handbook, 1999, 2000 and 2001, and the partial year, 2002, fall within a reasonable range of the average grade

distribution data from the college's general student population. The totals from 2000, 2001 and Spring 2002 are illustrated at the end of this section.

The beginning level classes, such as Introduction to Theater, Stagecraft, and Acting I seem to have the highest withdrawal rates. This could be due to the fact that some students may consider Drama to have easier, less academically rigorous classes, and students withdraw when they find out how much work is actually required.

The classes with the lowest attrition rates tend to be those that are higher level and are composed of students who already know about the time and energy commitment required of the program.

The grade distribution indicates that the largest percentage of students receive A's and B's, with a few students failing or making lower (C and D) grades. The low student to teacher ration can account for these high grades. Students requiring extra help can get one-on-one attention during class when the student ratio is set appropriately. The student/teacher ratio is lower than that of area colleges and universities. This attention to personalized instruction creates a higher percentage of student success and satisfaction. Although the individualized instruction does help, the classes are not easy. Students faced with failing or low grades may opt to take advantage of the late drop time instead of working harder or taking the lower grade. This could account for the low percentage of C's, D's and F's.

Grade Distribution for FY 2000, 2001, and Spring 2002 by Semester

	A	B	C	D	F	W	Total
Spring 2000	144	37	12	1	6	53	253
Summer 2000	16	7	4	1	7	6	41
Fall 2000	118	30	9	6	18	26	207
Spring 2001	143	39	18	2	10	43	255
Summer 2001	23	5	1	0	4	4	37
Fall 2001	129	23	11	7	13	34	218
Spring 2002	111	43	11	3	3	48	221
Total	684	184	66	20	61	214	1232
Percentage	55.5%	14.9%	5.4%	1.6%	5.0%	17.3%	

Number of Students Completing the Degree Requirements

While no students completed all of the course requirements to receive a degree in Drama, many did go on to other colleges and universities to further their education. 34% of non-returning students enrolled in other schools.

Student Retention

Course Retention Rates Within the College Norms

The withdrawal rates for the classes are well within the norms for the college as a whole. While the percentage of withdrawals may look high, it is likely that students would rather withdraw than face a failing grade in a non-core class.

In a study conducted for all of Austin Community College, using data from 1997, it was found that men, American Indians, Black, Asian, and Hispanics, had above average rates in all the measured areas: withdrawal, non-transfer grades, and non-mastery. However, the majority of these classes (and all of those that were reported in the study) were not Drama classes, but instead consisted mostly of Math, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics classes. In fact, the department with the highest withdrawal rate was Chemistry, with 38% of its students withdrawing. Drama's withdrawal rate was not significant enough to warrant a mention in the charts regarding the school's 10 least effective departments with the highest withdrawal rates.

Student Outcomes

Transfer of Graduates

In the most recent study, ACC students had a transfer rate 0.7% lower than all others statewide, with 33.9% of its students transferring to other colleges or four-year universities. The Drama Program's transfer rate was 34%, so it was well within the accepted norms for the school.

GPA of Transfer Students at the Transfer Institution

Because the Drama Program doesn't have this information, it must be taken as part of the ACC student community. The information from the Self-Study Notebook indicates that ACC students, in general, fair well in the four-year university setting. In general, 77.7% of ACC transfer students are in "Good Standing" during their first semester at SWT. In their last semester of their first year, this number rises to 78.2%.

As there is no information listed in the Graduate Follow-Up Survey Results, more attention needs to be focused on seeking out feedback. In the future, for the Drama Program, ACC must rely on the transfer universities or students to provide this data, either in survey or anecdotal form.

Access

Course Availability

From the information in the Need section of the report notebook, it appears that the Drama Program could do a better job of making classes more accessible. Students may find that their class is full and may be unable to replace it with a similar course. At least 2 and as many as 6 classes fill up every semester, with the majority of the classes being held at the Rio Grande campus.

Because these classes fill up quickly, it would be beneficial to the students to offer more classes at various times, and a wider variety of classes. One way of including more

students with disabilities is to offer PCM classes. Enlarging the workshop area would also help with accessibility issues.

Intro to Theater, and Playscript and Analysis classes would be the PCM most likely to succeed for the Drama Program. Adding these classes would help alleviate some of the problems students have with matching their work and course schedules.

Below is the time breakdown of classes offered by the Drama Program for the two most recent long semesters.

Fall Semester 2001

Morning Classes	DRAM 1310	1
	DRAM 1330	1
	DRAM 1351	1
	DRAM 1352	1
	DRAM 1723	1
Afternoon Classes	DRAM 1120	2
	DRAM 1310	1
Evening Classes	DRAM 1310	1
	DRAM 1351	3
	DRAM 2336	1
Telecommute		0

Spring 2002

Morning Classes	DRAM 1310	2
	DRAM 1330	1
	DRAM 1351	1
	DRAM 2336	1
Afternoon Classes	DRAM 1120	1
	DRAM 1341	1
	DRAM 1351	3
Evening Classes	DRAM 1310	1
	DRAM 1351	1
	DRAM 1352	1
	DRAM 1683	1
Telecommute		0

While the number of classes offered seem to be pretty well spaced over the course of the day, the types of course are not. Students wishing to fulfill all of the requirements for a degree could not have a consistent schedule throughout their academic career simply because we have not been able to offer all of our courses.

Extent to Which Courses Meet Student Demand

A review of the data in the Access section of the program handbook lists the number of sections taught by location and the number of sections cancelled. This information is listed in the chart below.

Term	NRG	RGC	Cancelled	Full
Fall 1999	4	12	1	6
Spring 2000	4	12	0	3
Summer 2000		3	2	0
Fall 2000	4	7	3	3
Spring 2001	3	13	3	3
Summer 2001		2	0	0
Fall 2001	4	9	1	2
Spring 2002	3	11	4	3

As can be seen, the Drama program has a fairly even number of full and cancelled classes each semester. In fact, the only semesters not providing at least two full classes have been in the summer, when student enrollment is notoriously low.

There is a large discrepancy in the number of classes offered in the Drama program versus other programs. Classes are only offered on two campuses which may hurt enrollment in the program because campus locations may be inconvenient to some students and parking at Rio Grande is limited and difficult.

Marketing of the Program Courses

The Drama Program has joined forces with the other Fine Arts programs at ACC to produce the “Spring Festival of Fine Arts.” This month-long event showcases various aspects of the Fine Arts Departments. Each department hosts a series of events designed to generate interest in and awareness of their program. The Drama Program participates by inviting visitors to its productions.

The festival serves as a month-long advertisement for all of the Fine Arts disciplines.

Access By Various Types of Students

The Program Review Committee feels that the data presented for the college as a whole accurately reflects the Drama Program as well.

Barrier to Students

There are some accessibility issues that need to be addressed by the Drama Program, and, as a result, by ACC. While all campuses have wheelchair accessible ramps and classrooms, the stage area is not as accessible. In addition, students in wheelchairs will find the workshop room too cramped to maneuver in, if they can get in at all. This makes it difficult for students with physical handicaps to take the lab course.

Another key barrier, for mainstream as well as handicapped students, is the lack of parking at the Rio Grande campus. Because the majority of Drama classes are offered at a

campus where parking is limited, students with mobility impairments may have a difficult time finding parking.

Currency of Program/Course Content

The texts are constantly being updated. Speakers and guests working in the theater industry keep students abreast of the latest changes in the industry.

Learning Outcomes Defined for courses and Programs

The Drama Program Handbook offers the objectives for each course in its program.

Course Syllabi

All Drama faculty members must supply a copy of their course syllabus to the Department Chair. These syllabi are reviewed and kept on file for three years after the instructor's departure from the school. A strict policy is in place regarding the acquisition of the syllabi, and faculty members are strongly encouraged to comply.

Assessment of Instructional Resources

The Drama Program is always on the lookout for new materials and methods for instructing its students. Faculty are encouraged to be active members in the theater community and to bring their peers and experiences into the classroom. The library is available for any additional materials students may need.

Appropriateness of Course Prerequisites and Catalog Content Kept Up-to-Date

The Drama Program watches over the prerequisites and their effect on the student preparedness and composition of the classes. Each faculty member has the responsibility to verify that each student in his/her class has met the prerequisites and meets the other requirements for class enrollment. Students who do not have the exact prerequisite classes, but demonstrate a verifiable knowledge of the material can meet with the Department Chair to have the requirements waived on a case-by-case basis. This is up to the discretion of the Department Chair and the instructor whose class the student wants to attend.

Integration of International Perspective into the Curriculum

Drama is a gateway to all cultures and experiences. Through acting, analysis of plays, discussions of motivations for human behavior, students are exposed to other lifestyles, cultures, and eras. Through their work, they can experience a connectedness to other people and places throughout the history of the world.

Alternative Delivery

Distance learning is not yet available for the Drama Program. It is the Department Chair's hope that PCM classes will be offered in the future to make the courses more accessible to all students.

Technology

Technology Assessment

The technology available to students is that which is involved in stage production, including lighting, sound, and video, and often computers are involved in these technologies. Students who need other computer access can find it in the school's technology lab.

Equipment Assessment

The Drama Program relies heavily on its equipment. The age and disrepair of the current equipment makes things difficult. A new light board for the Gallery Theater is the first piece of equipment needed, but there's also a need for a sink in the shop space and a new van for transportation.

Faculty

Faculty Credentials

All faculty within the Drama Program meet the SACS standards and have years of combined experience teaching at the community college level. They are successful in their chosen fields of instruction, with numerous years of production and performance experience spread among fulltime and adjunct faculty, as well.

Number of Faculty Adequate to Teach Courses

Below is listed the number of courses taught by full-time or part-time faculty.

	1998	1999	2000	2001
Full #	7	9	3	11
Full %	25.0%	25.7%	8.8%	44.0%
Part #	21	26	31	14
Part %	75.0%	74.3%	91.2%	56.0%
Total	28	35	34	25

Below is listed the number and percentage of contact hours by full-time and part-time faculty.

	1998	1999	2000	2001
Full #	11,280	12,304	4,320	13,296
Full %	34.9%	28.2%	11.3%	42.5%
Part #	21,056	31,392	33,872	18,016
Part %	65.1%	71.8%	88.7%	57.5%
Total	32,336	43,696	38,192	31,312

Up until 2001, adjunct faculty taught well over half of all classes. Although as of Spring 03, they will teach almost half, we were unable to offer four of our adjuncts, who have been with ACC for many years, any classes this Spring due to a variety of causes -- class cuts, the recent loss of release time for fulltime faculty, and the requirement that a percentage of adjuncts receive MSTA's which in a smaller program can have serious impact on those who do not have such assignments. We have concerns about this -- we

are a small program, but we do not want to have too small a group of people teaching in the program – ideally, our students will be exposed to as many types of artists, perceptions, styles, and ideas as possible from as many sources as possible.

Faculty Professional Development

The Drama Program follows the administrative rules pursuant to faculty development activities. The fulltime faculty members attend conferences, and work to improve and maintain their own professionalism through acting in, directing, writing, and producing their own productions. Adjunct faculty, too have the opportunity to participate in program-building activities and committees and are also active in outside theatre pursuits.

Teaching Effectiveness

Student evaluations of instructors reflect an acceptable level of success. Students offer constructive feedback and the scores fall within the acceptable range, as determined by the Faculty Evaluation Office. These evaluations are used as guidelines for future instruction and measuring sticks of instructional effectiveness.

Students are also given access to guest lecturers and special guest artists from whom they can gain experience.

All faculty are required to turn in their teaching portfolios, as necessitated by the administrative rules and regulations from the Office of Faculty Evaluations.

Diversity

Demographics

Data regarding the demographics of the Drama Program are organized in the chart below.

Semester	Average Age	White	Black/ Non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian	Am Indian/ Alaska Native	Non-res. Alien	Other	Female	Male	Total
Fall 1999	27.1	202	14	53	9	4	3	0	157	128	285
Spring 2000	21.9	191	10	39	10	0	5	0	144	111	255
Summer 2000	24.5	26	1	9	2	1	0	1	23	17	40
Fall 2000	21.9	158	9	32	1	2	3	2	128	79	207
Spring 2001	22.5	180	14	46	7	5	4	3	151	108	259
Summer 2001	22.6	17	6	10	1	0	2	1	25	12	37
Fall 2001	21.6	143	9	48	10	0	5	3	114	104	218
Spring 2002	22.4	161	12	30	12	0	3	3	126	95	221
Total	Average student age: 23.1	1078	75	267	52	12	25	13	868	654	1522
Percent		70.8	4.9	17.5	3.4	0.8	1.6	0.9	57.0	43.0	

Slightly over 70% of all students are white, but there is a good distribution of other ethnicities represented in the classes as well. More effort should be made to make classes accessible to minority students. Also, because women make up nearly 60% of the attendees, men should be more actively recruited. However, within theater, this is generally par for the course.

Student Satisfaction

Satisfaction of Students with Courses

This information was not available for Drama at this time. We have recently put out an informal survey to all Drama Students in which they can voice feedback on this issue.

Institutional Effectiveness Measures:

Discuss current institutional effectiveness measures and outcomes. Recommend modifications in the measures and identify at least three new institutional effectiveness measures that will be used.

The Drama Program's Institutional Effectiveness Measures for the past two years were originally entered into the OIE Assessment Database by our new interim Dean at that time, David Lydic. The Department Chair, Shelby Brammer, had also just been hired, and the assessment plans were new to all. Hence, while our entries were useful, they were not of the type that were built around the sort of outcomes ACC was looking for -- no specific behavior or action demonstrated by students, for example. They included the following:

1. Increased Enrollment -- the number of students enrolled in Drama classes will increase by a minimum of 10%.

Results were that despite budgetary and class cuts, we saw an increase in Drama enrollment of 6%.

2. Use new guest directors for ACC Performances.

Results were that we had three guest directors from 2000-2002.

3. Build Alliances with outside theatre entities, including a co-production with Austin Shakespeare Festival.

Results were that ACC strengthened ties with and/or collaborated with ASF, Austin Circle of Theaters, B. Iden Payne Awards, Actor's Equity Association, the Eudonia Academy, FronteraFest at Hyde Park, Austin Dance Umbrella, Austin Musical Theater, and the State Theater.

Recognizing that new assessment plans are needed, the Drama Program is putting forth the following assessment plans which will be entered into the OIE Assessment Database and go into effect at the start of 2003.

New Assessment Plans for Institutional Effectiveness

Because the purpose of the ACC Drama Program is to prepare students either for further work as transferring undergraduates or for future entry into the world of

entertainment, locally or nationally, professionally or non-professionally, it is important that they have a strong foundation and understanding of the casting/audition process since this is the way they will normally be hired professionally or be invited to join graduate programs around the country. This process requires that an actor locate, analyze, rehearse, and perform a minimum of one memorized monologue which, in two to three minutes, must suggest that performer's intelligence, sensitivity, imagination, technique, physical and vocal attributes, and level of confidence. This can be a difficult and daunting process for an actor, and Acting I and Acting II students at ACC will be assessed on their ability to navigate this process successfully.

Outcome #1 Title: Acting I

Intended Outcome

By the end of each semester, a minimum of 70% of all Acting I students will display confidence and composure in preparing and performing audition material designed to secure employment in the arts community.

Assessment Criteria

Drama students, toward the completion of Acting I, will be required to prepare and perform audition monologues. Assessment criteria will include the following: Was choice of material appropriate? Was monologue memorized, and was text analyzed sufficiently? Was language well articulated and could we hear it? Did actor understand character's objective(s), and has there been an analysis of the character in terms of vocal characteristics, physical mannerisms, emotional and psychological states? Did actor understand the subtext? Did they use clear, distinct well-thought out movement to enhance their performance? Did the actor command our attention and appear confident?

Methodology

Acting I instructors will have required a beginning of the semester "diagnostic" monologue by students which will have been chosen by the student to introduce or reflect who they are, their beliefs, their sensibilities to the class. This will give the instructor the opportunity to quickly spot strengths and weaknesses, vocal and physical qualities, and notes may be kept to chronicle student's progress. When end of semester audition monologues are held, Acting I instructors will provide students with a monologue critique sheet covering the above mentioned criteria, and their progress in general. Instructors will document their student's success and compare data with other Acting I instructors and Department Chair at end of semester. Together, they will determine if learning outcomes for drama students in Acting I classes are at a satisfactory level. While not mandatory, all Acting I students will be invited to take part in end of semester auditions before Drama Faculty and invited guests from the theatre community.

Outcome #2 Title: Acting II

Intended Outcome

By the end of each semester, a minimum of 70% of all Acting II students will display expanding confidence, critical analysis, and composure in preparing and performing audition material designed to secure employment in the arts.

Assessment Criteria

Drama students toward the completion of Acting II will be required, with the help of their acting instructor, to prepare and perform audition monologues before Drama faculty and invited guests from the theatre community, including directors and producers. Assessment criteria will include the following: Was choice of material appropriate? Was monologue memorized, and was text analyzed sufficiently both for meaning and for structure? Was language well articulated and could we hear it? Did actor understand character's objective(s), and has there been an analysis of the character in terms of vocal characteristics, physical mannerisms, emotional and psychological states? Did actor understand the subtext? Did they use clear, distinct well-thought out movement to enhance their performance? Did the actor command our attention, and appear confident? Did they have a professional demeanor?

Methodology

Acting II instructors will have required a beginning of the semester "diagnostic" monologue by students which will have been chosen by the student to introduce or reflect who they are, their beliefs, their sensibilities to the class. This will give the instructor the opportunity to quickly spot strengths and weaknesses, vocal and physical qualities, and notes may be kept to chronicle student's progress.

When end of semester audition monologues are held before drama faculty and invited guests, students will be provided with a monologue critique sheet covering the above criteria, and their progress in general. This critique sheet will include feedback from faculty and guests. Instructors will document their student's success and compare data with other Acting II instructors and Department Chair at end of semester. Together, they will determine if learning outcomes for drama students in Acting II classes are at a satisfactory level.

Outcome #3 Title: Evaluation and Appreciation of Theatrical Performance

Intended Outcome

Because many of our entering students have not had any sort of theatrical training, because some have not ever seen a production of a play, and are not familiar with many of the basic elements of theatrical production, all acting students, along with being required to work technical lab hours on ACC productions, will be assessed in their understanding and appreciation of the process and elements of theatrical production. Before end of each semester, 70% of all acting students will demonstrate in writing their understanding of dramatic structure, character, objectives and obstacles, styles, genres, performance techniques, the work of the playwright, director, performers, and designers as it pertains to a specific performance they attended that semester.

Assessment Criteria:

All acting students will have written a paper discussing at least one theatrical production which they attended that semester. This is a typed 3 - 4 page review stating the title, playwright, theatre where performed, director, discussion of plot and characters as written by playwright, themes, discussion of the director's unified vision or lack of, the actor's performances, the design elements, and strengths and weaknesses of the production. The students must demonstrate an understanding of the collaborative nature of theatre, a critical analysis of the play itself, and an evaluation of the success of the production.

Methodology

All acting instructors will require written reviews of a minimum of one performance attended before end of each semester. Papers will be assessed by individual instructors and compared with other instructor's classes at end of semester to determine if all classes are working consistently, at a similar level, covering all points. Department Chair will document results/feedback from faculty.

Recommendations

Faculty and Staff

Hire a full-time Design Faculty Member to encourage and work with students who have interest and talent in design and technical support work on ACC productions.

Hire a half-time Technical Assistant for the scene shop to help build sets, hang lights, and monitor and train drama students working required technical lab hours.

Facilities and Space Allocation

Invest in new light board for the Gallery Theater.

Invest in new (used) van for purposes of transporting scenic/lighting/prop/sound elements.

Create shop space for tech classes and production building.

Request more control of spaces.

While we are very fortunate to have two theatrical spaces, the ACC Drama Program struggles with facilities that have problems, mainly to do with lack of technical shop space, storage, and aging equipment. We believe they are serious enough problems to impact our ability to expand the program. Without such basic equipment, its difficult to convince students and community members that ACC takes the Drama Program seriously. There are also concerns about student safety, and about general lack of control of theatre spaces -- for theatre lab hours to be worked, for example. On the bright side, the school has just purchased a badly needed new light board for the Mainstage Theater, and the Drama and Dance Programs have just agreed to share the cost of a cyclorama which will provide the space with more design and lighting options.

Equipment and Budget

Equipment and Operating Costs should keep up with inflation so that the program can meet its TETA requirement of a minimum of three fully produced shows a year, and in order to be prepared in case of aging equipment failure.

Technology

Locate interested drama instructor, and find stipend funding or release time to create online Intro to Theater course.

Other

Investigation of Certificate Program

Explore the idea of offering a selection of classes as part of a certificate program in Drama. Look at other programs like the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts for ideas.

Curriculum

Schedule classes that have not been offered due to class cuts to ensure student ability to take all classes necessary for drama degree.

Create new classes including Acting for TV and Film, and Acting III.

Change all DRM classes to DRAM classes as found in the Academic Course Guide Manual of the Texas Higher Educational Coordinating Board to ensure easy transfer of classes to other institutions.

Create short semester acting classes to encourage more intensive commitment from students, and as part of investigation into certificate program.

Action Plans

Faculty and Staff

Hire a full-time Design Faculty Member to encourage interest and talent in design and technical support work on ACC productions, and a half-time Technical Assistant for the scene shop to help build sets, hang lights, and monitor and train drama students.

Year	Action	Target Date	Responsible
1	Submit justifications for these positions.	Fall 03	Dept. Chair and Dean
2	Based on Administration response, create job descriptions and postings, and interview for both positions.	Spring 04	Department Chair
3	Provide orientation to new employees, and conduct	Fall 04	Department Chair

	observations and evaluations.		
4	Compare/evaluate growth of program with these hires to prior data.	Fall 05	Department Chair

Facilities and Space Allocation

Invest in new light board for the Gallery Theater.

Invest in new (used) Van for purposes of transporting scenic/lighting/prop/sound elements.

Create shop space for tech classes and production building.

Year	Action	Target Date	Responsible
1	Submit request for new (used) van.	Spring 03	Department Chair and Dean
2	Review potential space at RGC to be utilized by Drama Program. Submit requests for investment in and remodeling of facilities.	Spring 04	Department Chair, Dean, and Campus Manager.
3	Oversee remodeling of facilities and moving of new and old equipment.	Summer 04	Department Chair, Campus Manager
4	Look for increased enrollment and community and student involvement in both ACC and outside productions. Continue to promote and publicize ACC's new and improved theatre facilities.	Summer 05	Department Chair, Campus Manager

Equipment and Budget

Equipment and Operating Costs should keep up with inflation so that the program can meet its TETA requirement of a minimum of three fully produced shows a year, and in order to be prepared in case of aging equipment failure.

Year	Action	Target Date	Responsible
1	Submit requests for increases during	Fall 03	Department Chair, Dean

	budget development process.		
2, 3, 4	Spend increases wisely in order to maintain high standards of production and classes.	Spring 04, 05, 06	Department Chair

Technology

Locate interested drama instructor, and find stipend funding or release time to create online Intro to Theater course.

Year	Action	Target Date	Responsible
1	Locate interested and available faculty member to create online Intro to Theater class.	Fall 03	Department Chair
2	Offer online Intro to Theater class.	Spring 04	Department Chair and online Faculty Instructor
3	Evaluate enrollment and success of online Intro to Theater class.	Spring 05	Department Chair
4	Based on student enrollment and interest, consider/create other potential drama online course -- Playscript Analysis, for example.	Spring 06	Department Chair

Other

Investigation of Certificate Program

Explore the idea of offering a selection of classes as part of a certificate program in Drama. Look at other programs like the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts for ideas. To determine level of student interest in a certificate program in drama, continue to have all students fill out survey at the top of each semester, indicating their specific needs, purposes for being at the ACC Drama Program.

Year	Action	Target Date	Responsible
1	With input from Drama Faculty, and	Spring 04	Department Chair

	Students, develop proposal for drama certificate program by investigating other similar programs. Submit to Dean.		
2	Depending on response from Administration, begin to implement a collection of drama courses leading to award of certificate.	Fall 04	Department Chair
3,4	Continue to expand certificate program based on success or failure of earlier year. Create ACC Conservatory or ACC Theatre Institute -- an intensive certificate program for performers/directors/designers who are not necessarily interested in taking core curriculum or transfer classes.	Fall 05, 06	Department Chair, Drama faculty

Curriculum

Schedule classes that have not been offered due to class cuts to ensure student ability to take all classes necessary for drama degree.

Create new classes including Acting for TV and Film, and Acting III.

Change all DRM classes to DRAM classes as found in the Academic Course Guide Manual of the Texas Higher Educational Coordinating Board to ensure easy transfer of classes to other institutions.

Create short semester acting classes to encourage more intensive commitment from students, and as part of investigation into certificate program.

Year	Action	Target Date	Responsible
1	Submit changes to Curriculum and	Spring 03	Department Chair, Dean

	<p>Programs Committee, eliminating all DRM prefixes from inventory in favor of DRAM courses established by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Also, request shorter semester Acting classes for Fall 03 and Spring 04.</p>		
2	<p>Reinstate classes that have been cut due to budget woes – Intro to Stage Makeup, for examp. Offer newly created Acting for TV Film and Acting III classes—focus on Shakespeare.</p>	Spring 04	Department Chair Dean, Administration
3	<p>Compare/evaluate enrollment, and depending on outcome, continue to create new courses for ACC Drama Program including a Directing course.</p>	Spring 05	Department Chair
4	<p>Compare/evaluate student enrollment since addition of new classes.</p>	Spring 06	Department Chair

Comments

Work on the Drama Program Review began in earnest this past fall of 02 although our ideas have been evolving over the past two and a half years as we attempted to get a handle on where the program has been and where we want it to go. There is no doubt that we have made great strides in raising the level of classes and productions, and we believe the community is starting to take note.

We intend to keep moving forward in expanding perceptions of and interest in the ACC Drama Program through the quality of our work, our inclusiveness, accessibility, and commitment to theatre and to students. However, there is no doubt that local, national, and international events have changed since fall 02 and continue to evolve rapidly – the economy is hurting, and as evidenced by Chronicle Arts Editor, Robert Faires' recent article titled **“Culture Cash: How the Arts Are Surviving Hard Times and Why Austin Needs Them To,”** funding for arts in general are suffering and the effects are starting to be seen and felt. ACC is in the fortunate position of having two theatrical spaces and a group of faculty who are committed to making things work despite budgetary problems. Unlike other theatres in town, we are able to charge admission by donation, (all money goes to Drama/Dance Scholarship fund) currently making us one of the better deals in Austin for theatre performances.

Also, actor training is in the midst of some re-appraisal. There is currently much discussion among professionals about the true merit of graduate theatre programs and how artists are best trained. As we continue to study and explore current thinking on actor training, we will examine our own classes and consider how best to keep our curriculum and structure current and up to date -- also as part of our investigation into a possible certificate program

We feel that we have chosen Unit Level Effectiveness Measures and made Action Plans and Recommendations that are attainable although it's difficult to say if all can be accomplished – for example, if ACC continues a hiring freeze -- but we'll do our best to accomplish those things within our reach. We do have some concern that our ability to “make things work” in spite of budgetary problems can do us harm. If Administration comes to believe that the Drama Program can struggle for survival indefinitely since that's what we do well, they may cut our funding, our classes, or fail to invest in the facilities. This is a worst case scenario, of course, and we're hoping the Administration will actually come to look on us with some pride and sense of accomplishment, and invest in us accordingly. Bottom line, the Drama Program will continue to do the best work possible, not only because we support this institution but because we are artists who must continually strive to communicate and exchange ideas even when the level of financial support may not be ideal. As Michael Ventura writes in **“States of the Art,” Letters @ 3am:**

In a time like ours, the lonely responsibility of the artist is to proceed no matter what, trusting that someone will listen to, value, and extend what you sacrifice to achieve. The responsibility of the viewer, reader, and listener is as

great: to heed art's call and respond with a commitment comparable to what is required for art's creation; only then is a bond joined between artist and public

that creates history and further extends the definition of “human.” Otherwise, history – and what it means to be a human being – is left to the businessmen and politicians.

Dean’s Comments