**Academic Programs Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**September 12th, 2023**

**Voting members present**: Jennifer Donahue, Melissa Goldsmith, Allison Lee, Dana Lema, Shujuan Li, Michael McKisson, Ross Nemeth, Lisa Rezende, Jennifer Schnellmann, Paul Wagner.

**Non-voting members present**: Melanie C. Madden, Holly Nelson, Ray Smith, Brant Pope, Daniella M Tascarella, Bill Simmons, Deanna Fitzgerald, Nicole Kontak, Bryanna Andrade.

**Voting members absent**: Moe Momayez.

1. Liza Rezende called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm with a quorum of 10 voting members.
2. Approval of April 11th, 2023, Meeting Minutes
   1. Allison Lee motioned to approve minutes. Melissa Goldsmith seconded. Motion carried with 7 yeas, 0 nays, 1 abstention.
3. New Action Items
   1. **New Certificate: Human Rights Practice (SBS)**

Presented by Ray Smith and Bill Simmons

The programs started about five years ago with a master’s in human Rights Practice, with an emphasis on the practice component, along with a certificate on the graduate level. Since that time, there have been several additional certificates added one on gender-based violence, one on human rights and documentary and media, and one on human rights and technology. The first graduate students graduated in Spring 2019, and since that time, 116 students have graduated from the program mentioned. Roughly 15% of graduate students graduated via the certificate program. Undergraduate undertakings are more recent, it officially started in Spring 2022, and up to this fall, it is up to 19 majors and 17 minors. There has been a significant amount of growth, with this previous spring semester with 11 majors and 8 minors. A major consists of 36 credits, the minor with 18 credits, and there is room for a 12-credit certificate. There is a diverse array of students taking classes, and it would help those students who are taking on a heavy load and may not have time to do a minor or double major but may have time to do a certificate.

**Q:** For students who would want to do bioethics, and they take their geneds, are there other courses that they would need to take that they wouldn’t normally take, or would it lead them straight to the certificate in terms of prerequisites?

**A:** We ask them to do six credits of core. They would be doing additional coursework, and we are open to productive cross-listings. There are a few cross-listed courses that we developed in conjunction with other programs and other departments. A lot of our course work is problem based, and for instance a student who is interested in bioethics, they would enjoy the program because it is something of their interest. In regard to the electives, there is a rotating list of our top-level courses that are co convened with our master’s level and some of them even have rights across context, which can be different countries, groups. Also, cutting-edge advances, which is a course that involves the use of forensic technology to advance human rights. To add more to the description, curriculum and faculty are very flexible to students’ interests, not only with these courses that are rotating topics within a title, but also within the course itself. The faculty is willing to work with the advising team to get students courses where they can do things related to their majors or career.

**Q:** There is a 400 courses community engagement, do students have to do an internship with emerge or somewhere local?

**A:** Yes, those courses can really help students on how to work with community organizations, and help them learn upon experience, and listen to community member’s needs.

Allison Lee motioned to approve. Dana Lema seconded. Motion carried with 10 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain. Motion carried unanimously.

* 1. **Modification: Theater Arts B.A. (Fine Arts)**

Presented by Brant Pope, Deanna Fitzgerald, and Daniella M Tascarella.

This is not a training program, but it gives students an introduction to three areas that are called potential career directions. One is live theater performance, another is devised work, and the third area is screened work. This not only represents the entire school, but an introduction to almost any possible direction that students would want to go, which could either be more training, or directly into that specific area of work in the world.

**Q:** Can you explain how students who are currently majoring in theater are transitioned and protected?

**A:** We are committed to both fulfilling the existing BA, which was theater centric, and also offering them an opportunity if they are interested to transfer into this new BA. We understand our obligations to all matriculating students that they have that choice. Also, the theater program is not going away, so all of the curriculum that was there for those original BA students is still available, it has just been expanded.

**Q:** There is a change in learning outcomes, have you been working with UCATT on how programs assessment are going to change along those lines?

**A:** Not yet, but we will, and we must.

**Q:** With the course number reductions and requirements, how will it impact students on being able to train them for all the three areas?

**A:** Number of division requirements were actually rather excessive for the previous BA, and it had not been altered for quite some time, and as the program was being reassessed, we imagined that it didn’t need to have quite so many requirements. In terms of the three areas, remember this is a BA, not a BFA. This is not a training program; this is a program that introduces them in a very vital way to three potential areas of making that they can pursue in more depth or can directly enter the field. This allows flexibility to students who might not be interested in acting or performing, and just want to get an introduction into technology, or into writing, or the credit or theory and criticism, but are not required to take all three, and there is room for everyone.

Paul Wagner motioned to approve. Dana Lema seconded. Motion carried with 8 yeas, 0 nays, 1 abstention.

* 1. **Disestablish: Theater Production B.F.A. (Fine Arts)**

Presented by Brant Pope, Deanna Fitzgerald, and Daniella M Tascarella.

**Q:** I have heard from students who are in the BFA program that their professors are already looking for other jobs and are planning to leave early. Is there a plan to deal with that kind of situation?

**A:** The core faculty has not moved away, but we are realizing that it is a possibility, and yes, we have a replacement faculty for any combination of people who would leave in the music theater BFA.

**Q:** In the letter to the Vice Provost and Curricular Affairs, you had mentioned that there was a steady erosion of acting jobs in live theater. Are there statistics for that?

**A:** Last year, according to SAG statistics, SAG is a screen, actors, guild, 90% of all income for actors came from film television and media. This is a change in the field, and it is well documented. Live theater will never go away, it is an important foundational part of the training of actors as well as a BA program, but in terms of theater centric programs as a legitimate career focused it is not ethical. One must use it foundationally or combine it with more practical ways of making a life as a performer. We understand it is important, but it has to be a part of what the program does, and it cannot define what a program does anymore.

**Q:** With the disestablishment, are you going to be moving some of the better qualities of that via musical theater into what you are changing the major into or are some of those extra things like the really good productions and training just going away?

**A:** The intention was to adapt these BFA programs, the reason we couldn’t do it in the way that we wanted to be because they were both subplans, except for the musical theater, musical theater is a separate thing. But the acting and design tech were subplans of theater production, which meant that they were automatically had to be new program proposals. So, we have to go down a different road. Musical theater will still do musical theater production, but we just won’t have a degree in musical theater. The next thing for us to propose is a BFA in actor training that has a live theater base but is primarily focused on film television and media where the world is going for young people, and the program will still bring actors along with the people in the BA program to do live theater and will do three live theater productions a year in our newly renovated Moroni Theater. We are going to maximize that by not abandoning live theater but making it part of the training program that we are going to propose, and not one that defines it.

**Q:** There are some classes that only BFA students have access to at the moment. Is that going to be incorporated into the rest of the open major to make it more accessible to students?

**A:** Our commitment to the three years of the BFA acting music theater is secure, and we are going to give them everything that they were promised, but those classes are exclusive to those BFA by the contract in the agreement we brought them in, those classes are our focus, and entirely for those students in the BFA acting music theater program.

**Q**: With the new BFA, will there be similar classes to some of those more exclusive that are currently in the BFA Musical Theater, is it going to be transferred into something similar into the new BFA?

**A**: Since this has not been proposed, it has not been laid out yet, but yes it would be a structure BFA acting program. Unlike the BA, which would be very large, the BFA would be more exclusive, it would be nationally, we would audition nationally, and it would have the actor trainor structure similar to the program we have now, but music theater would not be part of it, because that is a separate culture, separate kind of training program, separate career path.

The committee is still having trouble understanding why the need to disestablish the musical theater program, and some questions were left unclear.

Paul Wagner motioned to approve. Jennifer Schnellmann seconded. Motion carried with 7 yeas, 0 nays, 2 abstentions.

* 1. **Disestablish: Musical Theater B.F.A. (Fine Arts)**

See previous item (III.c) for details.

Paul Wagner motioned to approve. Blank seconded. Motion resulted in 6 yeas, 2 nays, 1 abstention.

* 1. **Disestablish: Certificate in Military Families (CAST)**

Presented by Nicole Kontak.

We find that both undergraduate and graduate students have had military families certificates for several years now, and we find that students are interested in the course. We are still offering those courses as part of the human services major, but they just weren’t really completers of the stand-alone certificates.

Paul Wagner motioned to approve. Melissa Goldsmith seconded. Motion carried with 10 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Liza Rezende adjourned the meeting at 4:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Bryanna Andrade