

Brothers, Sheila C

From: Schroeder, Margaret <m.mohr@uky.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 11:19 AM
To: Brothers, Sheila C; Hippisley, Andrew R
Subject: MA in TA suspension
Attachments: ma RATIONALE .pdf; Suspension of MA in TA.pdf

Proposed Suspension of a Program: MA in Theatre

This is a recommendation that the University Senate approve the suspension of the Master of Arts: Theatre, in the Department of Theatre within the College of Fine Arts.

Please find the updated rationale attached.

Best-

Margaret

Margaret J. Mohr-Schroeder, PhD | Associate Professor of Mathematics Education | [STEM PLUS Program Co-Chair](#)
| [Department of STEM Education](#) | [University of Kentucky](#) | www.margaretmohrschroeder.com



SUSPENSION/DELETION OF A PROGRAM

1. General Information

College:	College of Fine Arts	Department:	Theatre
Major Name:	Theatre	Degree Title:	Master of Arts
Formal Option(s), if any:	_____	Specialty Field w/in Formal Options, if any:	_____
CIP Code:	50.0501	Today's Date:	4/5/13
Requested Effective Date:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semester following approval. OR <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Date ¹ : _____		
Contact Person in the Dept:	Nancy Jones	Phone:	73297
		Email:	Nancy.Jones@uky.edu

2. Suspension/Deletion Information

Nature of action:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suspension <input type="checkbox"/> Deletion	
Rationale for suspension/deletion:	<p>The Department of Theatre was recently accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre. The external evaluators' site visit and subsequent report by the commission expressed concerns about our M.A. degree program and cited apprehensions about a variety of issues including competencies being met and reduction in faculty. They furthermore questioned whether the mission statement of the MA was being met, especially in regard to production and performance. Without additional resources being allocated to the MA program, the commission and evaluators questioned the ability for the M.A. program to receive full accreditation. Because a faculty line that was primarily devoted to the graduate program as well as 4 out of 5 Teaching Assistanships were lost in the last two budget cuts, the faculty in the Department of Theatre see no way in the near future to uphold or enhance standards set by our accreditors for the MA program and have voted to suspend admissions into the program while we restructure and stabilize our B.A. program.</p>	
What provisions are being made for students already in the program?	<p>There are three students who still need to complete their MA theses. These students have committees in place and plans to finish their theses by Fall 2013. We will wait to drop courses until current students have completed their course work.</p>	
Will another degree program replace the one suspended/deleted?	Not at this time.	
Will courses connected with the program be dropped?	Yes* <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
*If Yes, forms for dropping a course(s) must be attached.		

¹ Suspensions/deletions are made effective for the semester following approval. No suspension/deletion will be made effective unless all approvals, up through and including Board of Trustees approval, are received.

SUSPENSION/DELETION OF A PROGRAM

Signature Routing Log

General Information:

Proposal Name: Suspension of M.A. Degree Program

Proposal Contact Person Name: Nancy Jones Phone: 73297 Email: Nancy.Jones@uky.edu

INSTRUCTIONS:

Identify the groups or individuals reviewing the proposal; note the date of approval; offer a contact person for each entry; and obtain signature of person authorized to report approval.

Internal College Approvals and Course Cross-listing Approvals:

Reviewing Group	Date Approved	Contact Person (name/phone/email)	Signature
Dept. of Theatre	4/2013	N. Jones / 73297 / Nancy.Jones@uky.edu	
<i>CFA</i>	<i>4/19/13</i>	<i>G. MASCHIO / 7-824 / G.maschio</i>	
		/ /	
		/ /	
		/ /	

External-to-College Approvals:

Council	Date Approved	Signature	Approval of Revision ²
Undergraduate Council			
Graduate Council		Dr. Brian A. Jackson	
Health Care Colleges Council			
Senate Council Approval		University Senate Approval	

Digitally signed by Dr. Brian A. Jackson
DN: cn=Dr. Brian A. Jackson, o=University of Kentucky, ou=Graduate School, email, c=US
Date: 2013.05.17 16:20:05 -04'00'

Comments:

² Councils use this space to indicate approval of revisions made subsequent to that council's approval, if deemed necessary by the revising council.

M.A. DEGREE

Department of Theatre and Dance

This document will help to explain the rationale for the Department of Theatre and Dance's decision to suspend its M.A. Degree program.

In 2012 the Department of Theatre received accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Theatre. The external evaluators' site visit and subsequent report by the commission expressed concerns about our M.A. degree program and cited apprehensions about a variety of issues including competencies being met and a reduction in key faculty positions within the M.A. program. They also questioned whether or not we were achieving the goals laid out in the mission of the program. The faculty wholeheartedly agreed with their assessment, and admitted that the program's challenges had been evident for many years. The challenges for and within the M.A. degree program were multidimensional.

Resources

Diminishing resources played a major role as one component of its difficulties, as during ten years of multiple budget cuts, two key faculty positions were eliminated. Both lines/positions were lost upon each faculty member's retirement. Not insignificantly, both faculty members held the PhD, as opposed to the MFA, which is the practice-based terminal degree typical to our discipline and predominant in our department. The M.A. program had historically only been taught and supervised by our PhD faculty, and the curriculum was theory and history (as opposed to practice) based.

Recruitment of High Caliber Students

Without the presence of a terminal degree such as the PhD or MFA in our program, the department was never able to recruit the brightest or best students. In 2001-2002 the department attempted to launch a PhD program that never came to fruition. The faculty discovered at the 11th hour that it would be necessary to hire two additional faculty members with the PhD in order to be compliant with the CPE and get final approval at the Provost level, and there were simply no resources to support those hires. In truth, even if the resources were in place, the faculty was not in favor of two additional hires that would primarily support the graduate program. We typically had between 2 and 4 graduate students per year, selected from a very limited pool of candidates.

Mission and Goals

The M.A. curriculum was not in alignment with the research and creative activity profiles of the majority of our faculty, which resulted in graduate students education being limited to two faculty members in the area of theory and history. The accreditation report led to a strategic decision grounded in the belief that our department's limited resources (both budgetary and personnel) needed to be focused on our undergraduate program, which needed the bulk of our attention. The accreditation evaluators from NAST discussed the tenuous position that the undergraduate program was in and warned the faculty that our attention needed to be placed on it in order to bolster and redefine the program, improve retention and recruitment, in order to be compliant with NAST standards and practices.

Result

Over the past two years we have made great strides in our undergraduate program. We have nearly doubled our undergraduate majors (from 56 to 95 in four years); we have more than doubled our student credit hour production; and most importantly the quality of our undergraduate education has increased so that our students are more consistently employed professionally upon graduation. We created and implemented a Dance Minor, which now has nearly sixty students participating from a wide variety of programs across the university. We also implemented an interdisciplinary certificate: the Musical Theatre Certificate, which has had a tremendous impact on recruitment, retention, and graduation rates. Lastly, to reflect the growth of these new programs, our departmental changed its name to the Department of Theatre and Dance was approved in Spring 2014.

Plan

We have two M.A. degree-seeking students, who must still complete their Comprehensive Exam, though they have completed their course work. These students are working with their Advisor to complete the exam by June 2015.

Thus, at this time the faculty of the Department of Theatre and Dance seeks to suspend the M.A. degree program, until a time arises in which we can envision a graduate program that is in alignment with our mission and vision for the future, does not debilitate our undergraduate program, and can be supported and staffed by the majority of our faculty.

Department of Theatre and Dance Faculty

Nancy Jones, Chair, MFA (Directing), Associate Professor

Herman Farrell, MFA (Playwriting) Associate Professor

Nelson Fields, MFA (Costume Design) Associate Professor

Tony Hardin, MFA (Scene and Light Design) Associate Professor

Russell Henderson, MFA, (Acting & Voice) Associate Professor

John Holloway, MFA (Lighting Design) Professor

Christina Ritter, PhD (Introduction to Theatre) Lecturer

Zachary Stribling, MFA (Technical Director) Lecturer

Tracy Ward, MFA (Costume Director) Lecturer

And – Geraldine Maschio, ½ time in the Dept. of Theatre/Dance, ½ time in Arts Administration, PhD, (Theatre History) Associate Professor