

Program Suspension Proposal: Bachelor of Arts in Theatre

The University of Maine undertook a review of its degree programs in the 2009-2010 academic year. President Kennedy charged the Academic Program Prioritization Working Group (APPWG) with evaluating and prioritizing all UMaine academic programs, stating that “the goal of this process will be strong support of our highest priority degree programs funded by a reduction in those ranked as our lowest priorities” (President’s Charge to APPWG). In its final report, APPWG recommended suspension of the Theatre major and exploration of alternative models of focused instruction in this area. President Kennedy accepted this recommendation.

Five-Year Summary of Program Enrollments

The BA program in Theatre is housed within the Theatre/Dance Division of the School of Performing Arts. There are four faculty members assigned to the Theatre program. Adjunct faculty members sometimes teach courses in the Theatre curriculum.

A summary of the Theatre majors and degrees awarded over the past five years is included in the following table. Number of majors is based upon fall head counts.

Academic Year	Majors	Degrees
2005-2006	45	13
2006-2007	45	4
2007-2008	48	5
2008-2009	65	12
2009-2010	47	9

Rationale

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences determined that a decrease of 25 FTE faculty lines by the end of FY 2014 will be necessary to meet budget reduction targets. The plan includes a reduction in the size of the Theatre Division by one faculty line. It does not appear that the BA program in Theatre, as currently configured, can be offered with one less faculty member. A faculty hire in Theatre would come at the cost of a much-needed faculty hire in another program. The goal of the APPWG review was to prioritize academic programs and the reality is there are degree programs in CLAS that are higher priority and have significant needs for faculty. Theatre emerged from the APPWG review as a relatively low priority program.

Suspension of the Theatre BA degree program is proposed so that the Theatre faculty can evaluate its major requirements and determine whether a quality program can be offered with three full-time faculty members.

Faculty Assignment During Suspension Period

There will be no change in the assignment of faculty in Theatre during the suspension period.

Impact of Program Suspension on Current Students

Current students will not be impacted during the program suspension period.

Timetable

Suspension of the Theatre BA program will commence in January, 2011. No new students will be admitted to the program while it is under suspension. The program will be considered for reinstatement or elimination by December 31, 2011. During the suspension period, the program will have the opportunity to modify its curriculum, propose new courses and course eliminations associated with the revised curriculum, and request appropriate institutional approvals for the proposed modifications.

Meetings/Discussions Regarding Proposed Suspension

The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Chair of the Theatre Division have met several times to discuss the proposed suspension. The Chair has informed the Dean that the Theatre faculty has developed a plan to modify the requirements for the BA in Theatre so that there will be 30 student credit hours required, reduced from the current 42. Two new courses are being developed for the modified curriculum. In addition, the faculty is proposing to change the Theatre minor from 21 to 15 required student credit hours.