Ph.D. Program in Theatre
First Examination Review
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2 December 2015
The first examination: Description and learning goals

The first examination is a general knowledge exam with an emphasis on testing the candidate’s knowledge of theatre history, theory, major periods, and forms of drama and performance. It is an expectation that students will be tested on knowledge of theatre in different times and places, including (but not only) Greek and Roman Theatre, the western theatre tradition, modern theatre and performance in Europe, the Americas, and representative theatres from Asia, Oceania, the Middle-East, and Africa. It has written and oral components comprising three written essays and a two-hour oral (see details below).

The first examination is taken after the student has completed thirty course credits of work in the Program and before the completion of forty-five credits. It is a hurdle requirement for entry to the second stage of candidature (fields study). In preparation for the exam, students typically read extensively in theatre histories, read dramatic literature from wide-ranging times and places, and become cognizant of recent trends in theatre studies. In additional to private study, students draw on their coursework studies (including core courses) and have the option of attending mock oral exams. Samples of recent exams may be reviewed in the Program Office.

The aims and objectives of the first examination are:

The questions will overlap theory, history, and structure. The purpose of the written component is to test: a) students’ ability to organize knowledge; b) their preparation for advanced thinking; and c) their ability to choose illustrative examples.

Grading and evaluation

The handbook states that the first examination questions will be written and graded by the three members of the Standing Examination Committee; it will consist of written and oral components, as follows:

(1) The essays are to be answered in four hours and may be written on computers but with no access to the internet or other sources. There will be no choice of questions. Primary sources (plays, theory) should be cited, and if a student knows relevant secondary materials, they should be cited, but are not required.

(2) A 90-minute comprehensive oral examination for each student, beginning from the essays and moving out into the field of theatre generally. This examination will be conducted by the Standing Examination Committee and will be scheduled as soon as convenient after the written examinations (within two weeks, if the calendar permits).

The handbook states that the first examination assessment will consist of:

After the oral, the student will be excused for ten minutes, while the Standing Examination Committee confers. The student will then be invited to a twenty-minute diagnostic meeting, during which his or her strengths and weaknesses, as demonstrated by course work to date and by the exam, will be addressed. The results of the examination will be announced to the student at this meeting: high pass/pass/fail.

Both parts of the procedure must be judged passing for the student to pass the examination, and failing either part requires repetition of the entire exam. A student who fails must repeat the exam...
at the next sitting. Two failures of the First Examination will result in termination from the program. Termination decisions can be appealed.


Data Review: First examination participation and results for academic years 2014-2015

The data shows that 26 exams were completed in the academic years 2014-15. A total of 23 students took the exam for the first or second time; five students were awarded high passes, 15 students were awarded passes, and 6 students failed. Of the fails 3 students successfully re-sat the exam, 1 student will re-sit the exam, and 1 student decided to leave the program. One student failed the exam for a second time and faced termination of candidature. The student appealed, and the appeal ruled in favor of the student, who nonetheless left the program.

Percentage of students in bands 2014-15

High pass: 21.7%; Pass first time 52.1%; Pass second time 13.0%, yet to re-sit exam 4.3%, withdrew from program 4.3%, fail second time-required to withdraw 4.3%.

The first exam has enjoyed an excellent completion rate: 73.8% of students passed on their first attempt, and a total of 86.8% of students passed the exam in the period including those sitting for a second time (with an additional 4.3% of students who will re-sit the exam).
Student evaluation of first examination

Student evaluation of the first examination was conducted in the form of an on-line “survey monkey.” Students who have completed the exam and who are currently enrolled in the program were invited by email to complete the survey, which was anonymous and elective. The survey questions were developed in consultation with faculty and the elected Curriculum Committee doctoral-student representative and comprised the following:

Questions:

1. When did you undertake take the first exam (semester and year)?
2. How long after entering the program did you sit the first exam?
3. Did the program provide you with enough information about the first exam?
4. Did you attend any briefing sessions and/or mock exams?
5. Did you know how to prepare for the exam?
6. Do you have any comments about your experience of undertaking the first exam?
7. Do you have any comments about the place of the first exam in your doctoral studies?
8. Do you have any comments about how the first exam process could be improved?

Findings of Survey: student experience of the preparation for and completion of first examination

Number of respondents: 19

Responses to question one: year of exam?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Exam</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>Prior to 2013</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to question two: how long after entering program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time After Program</th>
<th>1 year &lt; 2</th>
<th>2 years &lt; 3</th>
<th>After 3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

57.8% of respondents complete the first exam in their first 2 years of candidature, 36.8% in the year following (most reported taking the exam early in their third year).

Responses to question three: Did the program provide you with enough information about the first exam?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Provided</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>Before 2013</th>
<th>Year of Exam not identified</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear answer yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total: clear yes: 13; qualified yes: 4; Not enough information/didn't find information helpful: 2.

Comments sample (many answered with simple ‘yes’, ‘no’):

“Maybe? It is hard to answer that question. On the one hand, I passed, so apparently yes. On the other hand, the degree to which preparation is ‘ad hoc’ is very anxiety inducing. … It is a big hurdle, and rightly so. It helps us to be prepared to take the available jobs as ‘generalists’ and, in my opinion, sets our training apart from any other Theatre Ph.D. program I am aware of. But particularly for those of us who don't come from traditional theatre backgrounds, I think there could be somewhat more structured preparation.” (January 2015)

“I don't know how it's possible to provide enough information about the exam when the program refuses to create a reading list to delimit what is fair game during the oral. As the exam currently is--covering all theatre history and theory from all countries for all time--there's no way the program can even come close to preparing students for the questions that might come up in the exam room. Students' best bet is to take as many mock orals with other students as possible and then hope for the best on exam day.” (Fall 2014)

“Yes, the program absolutely provides more than enough information.” (January 2015)

“Both yes and no. I wish there would have been some recommended texts from the program as a means to begin my studies.” (Fall 2012)

“The shape of the exam was clear to me, but I received most of my information from other students.” (Year of exam not identified)

“I think that in some sense this exam is so much a reflection of a student’s own learning process that at a certain point the program can’t tell you anything else to prepare you. But yes, I feel that I had a good sense of what the exam was going to be and what I was expected to do.” (Fall 2013)

“I found the program to provide a ton of information about the exam. There were official discussions about the format of the exam and past exams, and fellow students were always available and willing to discuss study strategies, personal experiences, and help in general.” (Fall 2015)

“I think the program provides us with more logistics of the exam than the actual information that we need. I got the most helpful information from the accounts of people who had already taken it.” (Fall 2015)

“The faculty often suggested that I speak to colleagues in the program who had passed their exams, and, in many ways, my colleagues were the most useful resource at my disposal. I found that my coursework had been extremely useful, as well.” (Fall 2012)

Responses to question four: Did you attend any briefing sessions and/or mock exams?

All respondents attended briefing sessions and many also attended mock orals.
Responses to question five: Did you know how to prepare for the exam?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012/Year of exam not identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear answer yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Yes: 10; Qualified yes 8; No 1.

Answers to this question were mainly in the affirmative. Three responses mentioned the importance of peer advice from people who had completed the exam previously. Six affirmative answers included comments on the need to read widely across history and genre to prepare. The no answer also included the comment no, expect to read widely. The qualified yes answers can be summarized as being comments on the difficulty of not knowing how widely to focus the study or in how much detail. One answer commented on the difficulty of this but also said that they could see the value of the general preparation after the exam.

Responses to question six: Do you have any comments about your experience of undertaking the first exam?

Many of responses to this question talk about the difficulty and challenge of the first exam. Some comment on the amount of work required. While some responses are positive in recounting their experience of the exam, many also include negative assessments. Some responses are critical of the exam saying that it is stressful, subjective, trauma inducing, and anxiety inducing. Overall responses to the exam are mixed, but there are strong opinions. Comments that the exam is a difficult but ultimately an affirming rite of passage are tempered by the many comments about stress.

Comments sample:

“the exam is extremely subjective”

“daunting, … too often presented as something we should be afraid of”

“It was fine but a lot of smart people I know failed and were traumatized.”

“I loved studying for the exam. But in the weeks leading up to it, I started to feel oppressed by my anxiety.”

“I enjoyed studying for the first exam.”

“huge amount of work and emotional turmoil to prepare for. The exam itself only uses the smallest proportion of that.”

“The first exam was the most grueling testing situation I've ever undergone. With that said, it serves as good tool in understanding your own learning process”
“some kind of cultural shift in the experience from previous exams (less historical and textual facts and more theorizing)"

“I left feeling more defeated after passing my first exam on my first attempt than I have ever felt when taking any other exam in my life.”

“My exam went relatively smoothly; however, I don't think it is hyperbolic to say that the social and academic environment surrounding the exam was toxic.”

“encouraged me to seek out and utilize the amazing network of individuals in this program.”

“Passing the first exam is a significant accomplishment, but it doesn't always feel like it at the time. … I have seen a big reduction in the negative feelings about the first exam--both before and after the fact--over the time that I have been in the program.”

“have mixed feelings about the first exam. Positive in that it does give you the chance to broaden your horizons and draw a big picture of the theatre history as it purports to do - but negative in that it requires the students to pour their time and energy for the first two years into the exam that they don't have enough time to figure out what they want to do afterward.”

“Although I of course found the exam stressful, it was overall a positive experience … (talk about the exam being) intimidating should be discouraged or at least countered in some way.”

“I found it incredibly helpful. It forced me to use my knowledge actively, perhaps for the first time ever. It prepared me well for my teaching. But, on the other hand, teaching would have conversely been the best preparation!”

“no standardized matrix for evaluating student performance.”

Responses to question seven: Do you have any comments about the place of the first exam in your doctoral studies?

The responses to this question are broadly in three areas:

1. the value of the exam in covering the range of theatre studies as preparation for teaching;
2. that the exam is helpful in thinking about possible topics for future specialization in fields and dissertation work; and
3. questions about balance and taking focus away from the course work offerings.

A number of responses also spoke about the timing of the first exam, either making course work more focused on the exam or the decline in interest or motivation in course work after the completion of the exam.

Overall people saw the value of the first exam in gaining a broad training in theatre studies. People were also keen to assert the importance of course work and not to see the exam as being the overarching factor of early candidature.

Responses to question eight: Do you have any comments about how the first exam process could be improved?
The responses to this question speak to articulating a clearer exam structure and assessment process. The summary of suggestions includes:

- Clarification of expectations in respect of range and scope of the exam
- Greater transparency of assessment, articulate rubrics for each grade: high pass, pass, fail.
- Include written feedback for students who fail.
- One request for a comprehensive exam reading list.
- Clearer relationship between exam and course work.
- Clear procedures for the writtens: unified arrival time and breaks.
- Possibility of extending time of writtens or untimed exam to better enable non-native English speakers.
- Explore possibility of having student representation on examinations committee.
First examination: Evaluation and recommendations

1. Data Review: First examination participation and results for academic years 2014-2015

The data shows that 26 exams were completed in the academic years 2014-15. A total of 23 students took the exam for the first or second time; five students were awarded high passes, 15 students were awarded pass, and 6 students failed. Of the fails, 3 students successfully re-sat the exam, and 1 student is due to re-sit the exam. 1 student left the program, having decided to pursue a different academic path. 1 student failed the exam for a second time and faced termination of candidature. The student appealed and the appeal ruled in favor of the student, who nonetheless left the program.

Percentage of students in bands 2014-15: High pass: 21.7%; Pass first time 52.1%; Pass second time 13.0%, yet to re-sit exam 4.3%, withdrawn from program 4.3%, fail second time 4.3%.

The high pass rate of 73.8 % on the first exam first attempt and 91.4% on first and second attempt combined is an excellent pass rate overall. This high success rate seems to be at variance with the high levels of anxiety reported in relation to the first exam in the student survey. On the other hand, it suggests that students are being well prepared for the examination and are also doing their own preparation in an appropriate way.

See recommendation 1, below.

2. Student evaluation of first examination

There student evaluation is a productive exercise that is welcomed by the student body. The evaluation enjoyed good participation from the student body. Students were able to give perspectives on the exam and make suggestions for ways that the exam can be improved. The outcomes of the survey demonstrate differing perspectives on the exam. Even so, the answers showed a number of common responses and trends:

• There is broad support for the first examination in principle and a good understanding of its pedagogic aims.
• The great majority of students take the first exam in their first two years of candidature. This is also the preferred time frame for timely completion.
• The great majority of students (89%) were satisfied with the information provided about preparing for the exam. Many responses mentioned the value of advice they received from their senior peers. There is an informal network of students who have passed the first exam offering advice to sitting students. This is an important aspect of the student experience and part of an enriched cohort environment. One possibly detrimental factor is when wrong advice or negative experiences of the exam can be passed on to other students. The results show that this is extremely rare, however, and we could better acknowledge the network of senior students helping new examinees. See recommendation 2, below.
• The information sessions about the exam and mock orals are well attended and seen to be of value.
• The great majority of students (95%) thought they knew how to prepare for the exam. Once again, peer advice was mentioned as an important factor in the exam preparation.
• More than half the responses had critical and negative comments about the experience of the first exam. Students were not critical of the difficulty so much as reporting high levels of stress and
anxiety about what to prepare. This factor is the most important outcome of the survey to address. See recommendations 3-7.

- Responders identified the oral exam as a particular source of stress: the factors here were the perception of a lack of transparency of the assessment criteria, inconsistent lines of questioning with some examinees given questions directly on their writtens and others asked about other things and a perception of their being the lack of feedback in some cases. See recommendations 3-7.

- Comments that the exam is a difficult but ultimately an affirming rite of passage are tempered by the many comments about stress.

- Responders saw the value of the first exam in their doctoral studies, especially in gaining a broad training in theatre studies. People were also keen to assert the importance of course work and not to see the exam as being the overarching factor of early candidature.

- Responders made helpful and practical suggestions towards improving the first examination.

Recommendations

1. Data on high pass/pass/fail rates for the first exam should be periodically collected and percentile results communicated to the students through their Curriculum and Exam Committee student representative.

2. There should be a better acknowledgement of the network of senior students helping new examinees. This is working well, and if we formalize this aspect of the exam preparation too much, we risk losing the student-activated and student-centered process. The recommendation is to mention student mentoring in exam preparation information and to give an informal overview role to the student representative. Potential negative attitudes are mitigated by the clear achievements of students as seen in recommendation one. The student representative can be available to students to give advice about mentorship.

3. Rubrics should be articulated for each grade: high pass, pass, fail (see Appendix 1: Rubrics of grades for examination).

4. Procedures for the writtens should be clarified in order to have a unified arrival time and scheduled breaks. All students will take a 30-minute break after the first 2 hours of the exam and will leave their desk for that time.

5. Expectations in respect of range and scope of the exam should be clarified (see Appendix 2: Examination best practice guidelines).

6. Written feedback for students who fail the first examination should be included.

7. Via the student representative, clear distinctions should be made between student submissions and/or activism about questions of curriculum and exam policy and the practice of student mentoring for sitting the exam. Ensure that mentoring is a positive experience.

Peter Eckersall

2 December 2015.
Appendix 1: Rubrics of grades for examinations (2 November 2015)

HIGH PASS

Work graded as a High Pass is excellent in every respect. Written and oral components of the exam will both reflect superior analysis, comprehensive research, sophisticated theoretical, historical and/or methodological understanding, and a high standard of presentation. The student demonstrates an outstanding grasp of key areas in the field of theatre studies in representative historical eras and in the present day and is cognizant of histories and practices of theatre in global and comparative contexts.

PASS

Work graded as a Pass is good in many respects. Written and oral component of the exam might have distinct strengths and weaknesses, and students can amend their written exam with more up-to-date information in the oral. Both aspects of the exam show competence in analysis, research, theoretical, and/or methodological understanding and a good standard of presentation. Students demonstrate a good grasp of key areas in the field of theatre studies in representative historical eras and in the present day. They demonstrate knowledge of histories and practices of theatre in global and comparative contexts.

FAIL

Work graded as a Fail does not yet demonstrate a required level of basic general knowledge of theatre studies. The written and/or oral components do not yet show the level of competence in analysis, research, theoretical, and/or methodological understanding required for the PhD. The student does not yet demonstrate an adequate knowledge of key areas in the field of theatre studies in representative historical eras and in the present day. The student does not yet demonstrate knowledge of histories and practices of theatre in global and comparative contexts.
Appendix 2: Examination best practice guidelines

Supplemental to and drawing on the program handbook

The first examination is a general knowledge exam with an emphasis on testing the candidate’s knowledge of theatre history, theory, major periods and forms of drama and performance. It is an expectation that students will be tested on knowledge of theatre in different times and places, including (but not only) Greek and Roman Theatre, the western theatre tradition, modern theatre and performance in Europe, the Americas, and representative theatres from Asia, Oceania, the Mid-East and Africa. It has written and oral components comprising three written essays and a two-hour oral.

Passing the first exam is an acknowledgement that a student is ready to undertake independent and original research that culminates in their dissertation work. It will always be a significant hurdle in the PhD experience and therefore will be a demanding experience for the student. It is both designed to test student capabilities and as a diagnostic tool in preparing students for candidature. At the same time, the exam aims to be pedagogically enriching and with a clear structure, forms of questioning and assessment.

The following guidelines inform the planning and procedures of the examination:

- The first examination is taken after the student has completed thirty course credits of work in the Program and before the completion of forty-five credits. Students are encouraged to plan to take the first examination in timely manner as delays extend their candidature.
- In preparation for the exam, students typically read extensively in theatre histories, read of dramatic literature from wide-ranging times and places, and become cognizant of recent trends in theatre studies. In additional to private study, students draw on their coursework studies (including core courses) and have the option of attending mock oral exams. Samples of recent exams may be reviewed in the Program Office.
- The first examination is overseen by a rotating Standing Examination Committee consisting of three faculty members with one as the nominated chair. The first examination consists of questions that will be written and graded by the three members of the Standing Examination Committee.
- Questions are broadly focused on theatre and performance studies and designed to be a test of general knowledge in the field. Questions might ask for a definition of key terms and/or methods and will also ask for discussion of key examples of theatre and performance drawing on a diversity of times and places.

The exam will consist of written and oral components, as follows:

(1) The essays are to be answered in four hours and may be written on computers. There will be no choice of questions. Primary sources (plays, theory) should be cited, and if a student knows relevant secondary materials, they should be cited, but are not required. The questions will be designed to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge of theatre history and practice with reference to different eras and places. It will enable them to demonstrate their understanding of aspect of the theory and practice of theatre and performance studies.

(2) A 90-minute comprehensive oral examination for each student, beginning from the essays and moving out into the field of theatre generally. This examination will be conducted by the Standing Examination Committee and will be scheduled as soon as convenient after the writtens (within two weeks, if the calendar permits).

Between the written and the oral components of the examination students are able to correct any mistakes and qualify their statements. They may bring new examples of work they consider more
relevant to the question into the oral exam. Each questioner in the exam will begin by asking the student to detail any such amendments.

The line of questioning in the oral exam will be guided by the issues, themes, and examples raised for discussion in the written paper. Students can expect to be asked about key terms, the content, and context of works mentioned and their connection to co-related themes, issues, and examples. Students can expect to be asked about theatre and/or performance in transnational, comparative and/or global contexts and to apply appropriate scholarly reading practices to their analysis.

Students choose the order in which they wish to answer each question. The author of the question will in each instance take the lead on questioning. Other members of the committee will be given an opportunity to add further questions towards the end of the allocated time.

Students might be asked to extend, elaborate, and/or reconsider their answer to a given question, but the line of questioning will be determined by the scope of the question itself.

**Assessment**

After the oral, the student will be excused for ten minutes, while the Standing Examination Committee confers. The student will then be invited to a twenty-minute diagnostic meeting, during which the individual’s strengths and weaknesses, as demonstrated by course work to date and by the exam, will be addressed. The results of the examination will be announced to the student at this meeting: high pass/pass/fail. Students can refer to the [rubrics of grades for examinations document](#).

Both parts of the procedure must be judged passing for the student to pass the examination, and failing either part requires repetition of the entire exam. A student who fails must repeat the exam at the next sitting.

A student who fails the first exam will be given written feedback in addition to verbal feedback at the examination meeting.

Two failures of the First Examination will result in termination from the program. Termination decisions can be appealed.
Ph.D. Program in Theatre: Professional Development Assessment Report

Statement of Professional Development Goals
Program Objectives: The program aims to provide students with a mastery of primary research methods and to prepare students to teach in research universities.

To achieve these goals, the Theatre Program pursues two broad objectives. First, graduates are expected to make a substantial and original contribution to theatre studies in the form of critical essays and a book-length dissertation; and to prepare such work for publication and public presentation. Second, graduates are expected to demonstrate familiarity with academic and professional organizations and structures; and to position themselves as contributing members of their professional community of scholars.

Structure
The Theatre Program integrates professionalization opportunities into all facets of the curriculum. In many of the core classes and seminars, students are encouraged to formulate their project proposals in the form of a conference abstract and to write papers intended for conference presentation and journal publication. In these classes, students present their work on conference-style panels and receive feedback from their professors and peers.

In 2009 we created a Professionalization Committee, which organizes a year-long professional development series, including career-building workshops, a mock-interview marathon, roundtable discussions featuring program alumni, and guest speakers. These events, scheduled on Thursday afternoons (when no other program classes are offered), are geared to students at all levels and are now integral to the functioning of the program. The Theatre Program Placement Officer holds regular office hours each week during the fall and spring semesters to meet with students individually about all topics related to professionalization.

Assessment and Findings
Faculty/Student Interaction at Meetings of Professional Organizations: A number of our faculty and students often attend conferences together. As a result, faculty members are able to offer feedback on paper and panel presentations and provide guidance for making professional and scholarly connections. Once during each semester students share their research and/or conference experiences with their peers and faculty members at program-sponsored roundtable discussions. Many of our program alumni attend the same conferences, so the program organizes a no-host social hour at most major conferences so our faculty, students, and alumni can meet one another.

Mock-Interview Participation: Each fall we host a day-long marathon of mock interviews. Level-three students are advised to take part in preparation for the job market. If space in the schedule allows, students who had previously participated may do so again in a following year. Participating students respond to a current job posting approved by the mock-interview committee and submit a cover letter, cv, statement of teaching philosophy, and two sample syllabi. Three Theatre faculty members interview each student in a thirty-minute role-playing discussion, and the emphasis is on scholarship, teaching, and college contributions. The interviews are, depending on the student’s preference, open to other students, and the day culminates in an open forum in which interviewers, interviewees, and audience members discuss
the process and best practices. The participants meet individually with the faculty members for
detailed feedback on their professional documents and their interview performance. The
comments from interviewees have been highly favorable, and several students have said that the
opportunity is invaluable in preparing for the “real thing.” As interview observers have become
interview participants, we have noticed a great deal of improvement in the quality of
performance over the years. We are concerned, though, that the response to our invitation to
participate among third-level students is not as strong as we would like. We intend to find ways
to increase the number for the next round.

Professional Development Events: Each year the Professionalization Committee (made up of the
Executive Officer, Deputy Executive Officer, Program Placement Officer, and an elected student
representative) hosts fifteen to twenty events related to program advancement and professional
development. This year, for instance, workshops have focused on creating and refining a cv,
developing a teaching portfolio, and implementing technology and digital media in the theatre
classroom; and we have offered roundtable discussions on publishing in academic journals,
presenting at conferences, and working with archival materials. In addition to the feedback
regularly solicited and received by our student representative to assess the effectiveness of the
offerings, we conducted an anonymous online survey about the Professionalization Series. We
gathered data on the number of events students attended, the usefulness of particular professional
development workshops, and suggestions for possible future topics. The results of the survey are
encouraging. Students are generally satisfied with the number of events offered each semester,
and are pleased with the offerings. There was some consensus from the respondents that more
events focused on pedagogy and additional guest speakers in the field would be welcome.

Job Placement: In spring 2012 we completed a five-year analysis of alumni placement. Our 2004
external review of the program indicated that, at the time of the study, of the twenty students
graduating between 2000 and 2004, only eight (40%) held tenure-track positions and of the
fifteen graduates between 1996 and 1999, only five (33%) held tenure-track positions.

Of the 33 students who graduated between 2007 and 2012, 20 (61%) had fulltime academic
posts: 14 were tenure-earning, tenured or its equivalent; 2 held multiyear postdoctoral
fellowships (at Princeton and Tulane), 2 held multiyear academic posts, and 2 held multiyear
academic administrative positions. 10 graduates (30%, seven of whom graduated in the past two
years) were engaged in untenured teaching, one graduate was engaged in another related
profession (as a theatre director in her native Lisbon), and two graduates had not supplied us
with information regarding their current professions despite repeated requests.

Proposed Changes
The Professionalization Committee meets two times a year and is in regular contact via e-mail.
We monitor student feedback and requests for additions and/or changes to the calendar of events.
As trends in professionalization emerge, we will adjust our plans accordingly.

Next Steps
Our primary focus is on documenting the effects of our professional development efforts. To that
end we are developing a research plan to gather and evaluate job placement data with an eye
toward establishing a three-year window for gauging placement success.