Statement of Professional Development and Ethics Learning 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. The program further aims to instill in students professional ethics. Students should develop the ability to adopt and demonstrate commitment to the standards for conducting ethical research and the proper documentation of sources.

To achieve these goals, the Theatre Program pursues three broad objectives. First, graduates are expected to make a substantial and original contribution to theatre and performance 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. Third, graduates are expected to complete Graduate Center training in the responsible conduct of research as well as participate in program-sponsored events.

Description of Training Provided to Students
The Theatre Program integrates professionalization and ethics training opportunities into all facets of the curriculum. In the majority of our 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 addition, two core courses provide specific focus on issues related directly to professional development and ethics: the first-year Theatre Research and Bibliography core course covers questions of plagiarism and documentation, and students visit area theatre archives; and in the level-two Advanced Theatre Research core course, professional ethical behavior and practices are curricular components.

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 and professional ethics.

This year our program’s Executive Officer, in conjunction with other Humanities Executive Officers, met with the Human Research Protection Program Manager to review guidelines for the ethical conduct of research in areas specific to the humanities. We recently held a professionalization event to present these guidelines and field questions from the students. Our students are expected to have completed the Responsible Conduct of Research training, as directed in
CUNY’s RCR Training Plan. The Program recommends that all students discuss their research plans with their individual advisors before embarking on their research and that both student and advisor give careful consideration to the established guidelines.

Students receive additional training through other program activities. Individual students serve as elected members to all the program committees, and the experience helps prepare them for future professional academic settings. First-year students gain additional experience in professional development and ethics through their work as managing and assistant editors of the three Martin E. Segal Theatre Center journals and as assistants to the book review editor for *Theatre Survey* (the flagship journal of the American Society for Theatre Research). All four journals involve Theatre Program faculty editorship. Some students also take advantage of the Graduate Center’s Digital Initiatives, receiving fellowships, taking courses, creating digital humanities projects, and liaising with other Digital Fellows, and bring their expertise back to the program to share with other members of our community.

**Description of Assessment Data 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 a year 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, and 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. Participating students respond to a current job posting by submitting application materials. Three Theatre faculty members interview each student in a thirty-minute role-playing discussion, and the interviews are, depending on the student’s preference, open to other student observers. Afterwards, 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.

**Other Professional Development Events:** Each year the Professionalization Committee (made up of the Executive Officer and/or Deputy Executive Officer, Program Placement Officer, and an elected student representative) hosts twelve to fourteen events related to program advancement and professional development. This year, for instance, workshops have focused on program milestones; application materials for conferences, grants, and jobs; and classroom pedagogy and preparation for teaching. We have also offered roundtable discussions on publishing in academic journals, presenting at conferences, and working with archival materials. Every year we solicit feedback from students to assess the effectiveness of the offerings and adjust our calendar accordingly. Students are generally satisfied with the number and content of events offered each semester.
Professional Contributions and Job Placement:
Our students are active in various professional organizations, not only attending but also organizing and chairing sessions and serving in elected positions. They also organize their own conferences at the Graduate Center or in partnership with other area theatre and performance studies programs. At 66 percent, our placement record for students in tenure-earning, multiyear, and postdoctoral appointments remains well ahead of the national average. Program activities prepare students for other professional appointments, such as educational administrators and consultants, archive and museum professionals, and theatre professionals. Graduates are active in professional organizations, and many have achieved prominence in the field (as prominent journal editors, national conference organizers, and professors at leading institutions in the US and abroad).

Proposed Changes
The Professionalization Committee meets at least 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
We continue documenting the effects of our professional development and professional ethics efforts. 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. We remain pleased with the strong sense of community across all three levels in our program, the students’ willingness to share resources, and the continued collaborative and supportive environment of our program. We will continue to nurture this spirit of professional and ethical camaraderie that carries over into our alumni networks and professional encounters.