1. Name / Number of Course / Sequence:
   THEA 2010: Introduction to Theatre for NonMajors

2. SLO(s) being assessed:
   Student will understanding and appreciate the arts and aesthetics as ways of knowing and engaging with the world.

3. Department:
   Theatre

4. Department Representative:
   Chase Bringardner

   AGSC Content Alignment:
   AREA II: Humanities

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5. Assessment Method: [Explain how assessment for the measures associated with this SLO – not grading for the course as a whole was conducted.]
   For SLO11, a rubric has been constructed that identifies key measures and also offers evaluative categories for those measures. I have attached it to this report (under findings) but will also cut and paste it at the bottom of this section.

   For SLO11, each section of THEA 2010 will administer an identical Pre and Post Test to assess student’s progress in relation to the three stated criteria for demonstrating aesthetic appreciation and engagement. A random, anonymous sampling of around 10 tests per course will then be evaluated using the above mentioned rubric at both the
beginning and end of the semester. The Test will be administered through Blackboard at the beginning and end of each semester and will be given a point value to assure student participation. It will consist of three open-ended, short answer questions, each relating to a specific subcategory of the SLO (#1 aesthetic judgment, #2 societal impact/engagement, #3 creative process). The head assessor will then collect print outs of both the pre and post tests from each of the instructors and select 10 random student responses (identified by number only) for both the pre and post test from each course. The head assessor will then complete a rubric for each of the submitted pre/post tests and will then hand of the stack of materials to a second assessor (a rotating faculty member who also teaches the Intro course). Once both have completed their rubrics they will meet with the other Introduction to Theatre teachers to discuss the results and make plan of action for the following year.

Rubric categories include:
- Understanding of creative process (#3)
- Demonstration of knowledge historical context (#2)
- Evidence of artistic criteria or standards (#1)

Introduction to Theatre for NonMajors
THEA 2010/2011
PreTest/Post Test Rubric (complete Rubric attached under findings)

QUESTION #1: Briefly describe the process of a play going from page to stage. What are some of the main elements involved in translating the written play text into the three-dimensional performance?
SLO Targeted: Be able to study, create, or participate in some form of artistic expression as a means of understanding the creative process.

QUESTION #2: Describe the relationship between theatre and society. Use an example of theatre, either historic or modern, where the piece of theatre made some sort of statement or commentary on society. What message did the theatre try to convey? What issues was the performance tackling? How did the performers, designers, etc. go about expressing that message?
SLO Targeted: Understand how various art forms and/or works of art both reflect and inform society at large, historically and/or in the present.

QUESTION #3: Identify an issue that is occurring in contemporary theatre (theatre of the last twenty years). Describe that issue and the various debates surrounding it. What is
at stake in the argument for the future of theatre? Use as many specific details as possible (play titles, people, places, etc).

SLO Targets: Develop and articulate criteria for aesthetic judgment.

6. Findings: [What assessment data did each assessment method produce?]
We received a rather good data set using our above outlined assessment method. In each course we received around 80% participation in the pre/post test which gave us a really strong data set. I will break down our findings by question.

For Question #1:
As expected, most students entering into Introduction to Theatre for NonMajors had some general information about the theatrical process including the presence of actors and a script, but failed to go into much more depth in terms of the various component parts of that process. While they understood the complexities of the process they could not really identify many of the parts. The post-test revealed that while the Intro classes did an excellent job in explicating many elements of the theatrical process (directing, casting, producing and designing to be specific), most Intro students left the class with deficits of knowledge when it came to a few crucial components. Students really neglected both the role of the dramaturg and the issue of theatrical space and/or venue across the Intro classes.

For Question #2:
As expected, while students entering the course could speak to some general vague notions of the relation between theatre and society most could not identify a specific theatrical movement or event and discuss the specific issues circulating around it. The post-test revealed that almost across the board, the Intro class was doing a rather good job of providing students with concrete examples of how theatre and society interplay - whether through Ancient Greek Drama or SPIDERMAN the Musical or American Realism. Most students in the sample group could identify a specific example and describe the message of the movement or piece and how it influenced society. The answers to this question encouraged us that we were successfully accomplishing this goal and the SLO of providing students with knowledge of historical context.

For Question #3:
Many students struggled in the pre-test to identify a issue affecting contemporary theatre. Many (roughly 1/3) responded that they did not know and hoped to learn by the end of the semester. While a few random responses sadly reflected that they did not learn of those issues over the semester, we were really amazed at the level of
response the students gave on this particular question. The majority responded with a very specific, clear issue affecting contemporary theatre (everything from financial concerns, to issues of diversity, to commercialism). These responses hit on the multiple points we identified on the rubric and illustrated to us that the students were taking away a more nuanced, detailed understanding of the state of contemporary theatre than some of us even believed possible. We aim to keep up the good work in this area. We are still striving to better connect these answers to the issue of aesthetic judgment or criteria.

7. How did you or will you use the findings for improvement: [What questions / issues/ concerns did your data raise for the faculty teaching the course? What discussion did the faculty have about the findings? What future actions to improve student attainment of this outcome will the department / program takes as a result of this analysis?]

For the next year, the Intro instructors have chosen to tackle a couple of the issues raised out of the rubric results.

1. We will introduce more material in each Intro course to highlight the importance of the dramaturg in the theatrical process and perhaps even invite the department dramaturg to speak in the Intro classes to better showcase the importance of that work.

2. We will also incorporate more of a discussion of theatrical space so that students understand the importance of space in the theatrical process. This will be accomplished through additional course information and discussion.

3. We will continue as a faculty to have discussions on how to hone aesthetic judgment skills in our students and perhaps figure out a fourth, even more targeted question to add to our rubric to ascertain if students have developed that skill. One idea would be to include a description of a hypothetical "new production" and have student discuss whether they think that would be "good" theatre and why.

We believe that with these changes, we will see better responses in those areas of the pre/post test that gave us the greatest pause.

8. Additional comments: [What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?]

We will continue to hone our rubric and assessment strategy as we move forward, but in general we were quite pleased with the structure and the information we received from it. We will also explore options to try to increase participation - perhaps through requiring the pre/post test as part of a participation grade, etc.
9. Core Curriculum General Education Committee Comments:

This is a very strong report-- the Department has clearly thoughtfully reflected upon the data it gathered and made plans for how to use that data to improve teaching in the course.