To: Dr. Constance Relihan, College of Liberal Arts Curriculum Committee
From: Dan LaRocque, AU Theatre Chair
Re: Theatre Curriculum Revision Overview

August 20, 2009

The proposed Auburn University Theatre curriculum revision is designed to address:

1). Accreditation concerns raised during the 2009 National Association of Schools of Theatre re-accreditation visit primarily in regard to meeting NAST curricular standards for the recently approved (2007) Music Theatre B.F.A. degree track.

2). Concerns raised by department faculty about the focus and overall effectiveness of the current theatre curriculum. Based on information gleaned from recent department assessment exercises in addition to input from NAST visitors during the 2009 re-accreditation visit, the proposed curriculum seeks to establish the B.A. degree as a stronger, more fully developed degree program, and to strengthen curricular emphasis on theatre history, literature and criticism as an important foundation in all of our degree tracks. In doing so, it is our intention to combine a contextual foundation in the best tradition of a liberal arts education with best practices in a pre-professional conservatory approach to the training of actors, music theatre performers, designers, dancers, technicians, and theatre management professionals.

The department has added faculty and staff positions in music theatre (voice and dance) and theatre history/literature/criticism (with a secondary specialty in music theatre) to staff and support the new courses in this proposal. The department has also added staff positions in the scenic and costume studio to help address the expected increase in production work that the revised curriculum will generate.
Curriculum Revision Overview

The proposed Auburn University Theatre curriculum revision is designed to address concerns raised by a recent re-accreditation visit from the National Association of Schools of Theatre in regard to meeting NAST curricular standards, concerns raised by department faculty about the strength and emphasis on theatre history, literature and criticism as an important foundation in all of our degree tracks, and to bring the curriculum up to date with best educational and training practices in B.A. and B.F.A. Theatre degree programs.

While the department understands that AU Bulletin descriptions are dictated (and completely fleshed out) by what Banner can glean from each curriculum revision form, a less detailed list of course descriptions for the proposed new curriculum appears below as we envision it to provide a broad context for the CLA and university curriculum committees.

Proposed Auburn University Theatre Curriculum Course Descriptions

All Theatre Majors who do not earn a grade of “C” or higher in Theatre (THEA) courses must repeat the course. Additional course prerequisites and lecture/lab/studio breakdowns appear elsewhere in the curriculum submission or in the university bulletin for courses the department does not wish to significantly revise.

THEA 1010 INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE FOR MAJORS I (3) Overview of all areas of theatrical collaboration intended specifically for the incoming theatre major - introduces theatre majors to academic skills they will need to pursue the theatre major at Auburn University.

THEA 1110 INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE FOR MAJORS II (3) Introduction to a variety of perspectives regarding theatrical practices, theories, and texts. Focus on productive working relationships and collaborative skills necessary for a successful life in the theatre. Course culminates in the creation of a new performance piece.

THEA 1910 PRODUCTION PRACTICUM I (1) Experience in the design/technical and management areas of production.

THEA 2010 INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE (3) Fine Arts Core. Appreciation of theatre arts including stage, television, and film. Development of sensitive and critical sophistication as articulate, discriminating theatregoers. Play and film viewing, play reading, critiques, and term projects.

THEA 2017 HONORS INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATRE (3) Fine Arts Core. Appreciation of theatre arts. Development of sensitivity and critical skills as theatregoers. Play attendance, reading, critiques, and term projects.

THEA 2080 PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES FOR THE CAMERA (3) Theory and practice of specialized performance techniques for television and film.

THEA 2110 VOICE AND MOVEMENT FUNDAMENTALS (2) Coreq. THEA 2111 Exploration and study of fundamental issues in vocal production, articulation and movement. Introduction to vocal anatomy, breathing/relaxation/alignment techniques, and integrated vocal and movement exercises applied in a variety of texts.
THEA 2111 VOICE AND MOVEMENT FUNDAMENTALS LAB (1) Coreq. THEA 2110
Exploration and application of vocal and physical skills designed to enhance vocal production, physical flexibility, and integrated execution of vocal and physical performance skills.

THEA 2120 ACTING I (3) Introduction to basic acting techniques, literature, and performance through improvisation, contemporary scene study and attendance at theatre performances.

THEA 2310 THEATRE TECHNOLOGY I (3) Coreq. THEA 2311 A comprehensive introduction to the study of technical theatre; theoretical and practical applications of equipment, materials, and techniques used in technical theatre.

THEA 2311 THEATRE TECHNOLOGY I LAB (1) Coreq. THEA 2310 A comprehensive introduction to applied work in technical theatre; practical applications of equipment, materials, and techniques used in technical theatre.

THEA 2400 DESIGN AESTHETICS (3) An exploration of the fundamental elements and principles of design, pictorial composition, and design theory, and their relationships and potential for application in scenic, costume, and lighting design.

THEA 2610 COSTUME CONSTRUCTION (3) Fundamentals of machine sewing techniques, pattern drafting and draping, fabric dyes, and craftwork as they relate to theatrical costuming.

THEA 2650 STAGE MAKEUP (3) Theories and techniques of stage makeup, practical design and execution of basic makeup techniques, special effects, and character makeups.

THEA 2810 THEATRE PRODUCTION I (3-6) Intensive study of theatre arts through participation in the AU Summer Repertory Company, focusing mainly on technical work and design.

THEA 2820 SUMMER REPERTORY THEATRE COMPANY I (3-6) A concentrated workshop experience in all aspects of theatre production through participation in rehearsal and performance.

THEA 2840 BEGINNING DANCE TECHNIQUES (3) Beginning level dance technique and theory, focusing on dance as an art form, including a survey of dance in different cultural and historical contexts. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours.

THEA 2841 DANCE LAB I—BALLET (1) Studio introduction to ballet technique.

THEA 2910 PRODUCTION PRACTICUM II (1) Experience in the design/technical and management areas of production.

THEA 2940 APPLIED THEATRE I: ACTING (1) Pr. Casting in AU Theatre productions. Freshman or sophomore standing. Intensive applied work for students cast in AU Theatre productions.

THEA 3110 VOICE FOR THE ACTOR II (3) Continuing study of vocal production and articulation techniques in texts of increasing complexity.

THEA 3120 ACTING II (3) Exploration of internal and external acting theory and techniques in modern and classical scene study.
THEA 3140 MUSIC THEATRE ACTING (3) Pr. Admission into the Music Theatre degree program (THMU) Exploration of acting techniques and performance through music theatre scene and song study, analysis, and history of music theatre repertoire culminating in public performance.

THEA 3150 BFA PERFORMANCE STUDIO I (4) Pr. Admission into the Bachelor of Fine Arts Performance program. Intensive study and practice integrating advanced contemporary scene study, audition technique, and the Fitzmaurice Voicework system.

THEA 3160 BFA PERFORMANCE STUDIO II (4) Pr. THEA 3150, admission into the Bachelor of Fine Arts Performance program. Intensive study and practice integrating Shakespeare and scene study of poetic texts with continuing work in the Fitzmaurice Voicework system.

THEA 3190 SINGING PRACTICUM (1) Pr. Acceptance into BFA Performance program. Instruction in the primary principles of healthy vocal production, efficient breathing, projection, diction, and interpretation.

THEA 3200 STAGE MANAGEMENT (3) Examination of the role and responsibilities of the stage manager in the producing organization: management, organization, auditions, rehearsal, and production procedures.

THEA 3320 THEATRE TECHNOLOGY II (3) Theoretical and practical applications of equipment and techniques in technical theatre. Topics include light, sound mechanics, theatre rigging, equipment, special effects, and computer applications.

THEA 3330 SCENE PAINTING (3) Studio oriented course introducing the principles, techniques, and media of the scenic artist.

THEA 3350 TECHNICAL DIRECTION/PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT (3) Exploration of the roles and responsibilities of the Technical Director and the Production Manager in the coordination and execution of technical elements for theatre productions.

THEA 3400 RENDERING FOR THE THEATRE (3) Traditional drawing and rendering techniques and medias that help the designer to communicate scenic, costume, and lighting designs.

THEA 3410 SCENE DESIGN I (3) Discussion, research, and execution of theory and practices of designing scenery for the stage. Emphasis on traditional style and methods of design and presentation for the proscenium theatre.

THEA 3420 PROPERTY DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (3) History, design, organization, application of materials, and techniques used in the design and construction of properties for the theatre, film, and television.

THEA 3450 DRAFTING FOR THE THEATRE I (3) A comprehensive study of the techniques and methods used in the graphic representation of stage scenery, equipment, and properties design.

THEA 3510 LIGHTING DESIGN (3) Studio course that explores the theory, research, and practice of stage lighting, practical illumination, and effects lighting.
THEA 3520 SOUND DESIGN (3) A course to develop an in-depth understanding of the equipment and techniques used in sound design, as both a design and technical medium.

THEA 3610 ADVANCED COSTUME CONSTRUCTION (3) Historical pattern making and draping, millinery skills, and craft techniques, and their practical applications in theatre costuming.

THEA 3620 COSTUME TECHNIQUES (3) Exploration of costume techniques including tailoring, embellishment, costume accessories, costume techniques for dance, fabric manipulation and textile techniques.

THEA 3640 COSTUME DESIGN (3) Costume design and rendering as it relates to historical and original design for the theatre. Exploration of design for television, commercials, and rock stars.

THEA 3700 THEATRE HISTORY, THEORY AND CRITICISM I--TEXT (3) An examination of the history and literature of the theatre from prehistory to the present with an emphasis on text as a broad category for understanding a variety of issues and topics relevant to contemporary theatre practice. Areas of exploration include such topics as genre studies, text-based theatrical movements, and script analysis techniques for theatre practitioners.

THEA 3710 THEATRE HISTORY, THEORY AND CRITICISM II--BODY (3) An examination of the history, literature, and theory of the theatre from prehistory to the present with an emphasis on the human body as a broad category for understanding a variety of issues and topics relevant to contemporary theatre practice. Areas of exploration include such topics as historical and theoretical perceptions of the social status of the actor, the actor's body as a medium of representation, and theatrical representation, and theatrical representations of gender and ethnicity.

THEA 3720 THEATRE HISTORY, THEORY AND CRITICISM III--SPACE (3) An examination of the history, literature, and theory of the theatre from prehistory to the present with an emphasis on theatrical space as a broad category for understanding a variety of issues and topics relevant to contemporary theatre practice. Areas of exploration include ritual landscapes as they pertain to the origin of drama, the development of the western playhouse, the avant-garde re-conceptualization of theatre space, and the development of such spatially oriented American institutions such as Broadway and regional theatre.

THEA 3730 MUSIC THEATRE HISTORY (3) Exploration of music theatre literature, performances, historical, analytical and critical trends from the early 20th century to the present day. Areas of exploration include music theatre as a work of art with unique conventions of aesthetics and form; as an entertainment media that was shaped by its historical and cultural context; and as a viable performance form for the 21st century.

THEA 3740 COSTUME HISTORY (3) History of Western costume and its uses in the theatre from ancient times to the present.
THEA 3840 INTERMEDIATE DANCE TECHNIQUES I (3) Intermediate level dance technique and theory, with an emphasis on performance qualities including work on alignment, strength, flexibility, rhythm, musicality, and dynamics, as well as the study of select contemporary choreographers. Intermediate I and II need not be taken in sequence. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours.

THEA 3841 DANCE LAB II—JAZZ (1) Exploration of jazz technique.

THEA 3850 INTERMEDIATE DANCE TECHNIQUES II (3) Further exploration into intermediate level dance technique and theory, with emphasis on aesthetics and contemporary topics in dance. Intermediate I and II need not be taken in sequence. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours.

THEA 3860 MOVEMENT FOR THE ACTOR (3) Introduction to the basic concepts of movement as it relates to the actor. Students will find integrative ways of connecting the body to text and space.

THEA 3910 PRODUCTION PRACTICUM III (1) Experience in the design/technical and management areas of production. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 2 credit hours.

THEA 3940 APPLIED THEATRE II: ACTING (1) Pr. Casting in AU Theatre productions. Junior or senior standing. Intensive applied work for students cast in AU Theatre productions.

THEA 3950 DIRECTING SEMINAR (3) Pr. Junior standing or above, or department approval. Study of fundamental skills and collaborative processes needed to direct a piece of live theatre, including blocking, script analysis, research methods, approaches to casting, and rehearsal techniques.

THEA 3960 DRAMATURGY SEMINAR (3) Study of fundamental skills and collaborative processes needed to dramaturge a piece of live theatre including both production and new play dramaturgy, critical analysis, research, presentations, and performance.

THEA 4150 BFA PERFORMANCE STUDIO III (4) Pr., THEA 3160 Professional preparation with particular focus on individual rehearsal and performance techniques covering a broad spectrum of periods and styles geared toward graduate acting program placement and professional employment.

THEA 4160 BFA PERFORMANCE STUDIO IV (4) Pr., THEA 4150 Special problems and topics in performance. Intensive work integrating and applying acting, voice, and movement techniques in an ensemble capstone recital of work in adjudicated public performance.

THEA 4420 SCENE DESIGN II (3) Advanced course in theory and practice of scenic and lighting design for theatre. Emphasis on experimental and non-traditional staging in a variety of spaces.
THEA 4450 DRAFTING FOR THE THEATRE II (3) A comprehensive study of computer and digital techniques used in the graphic representation of stage scenery, equipment, and properties design.

THEA 4650 ADVANCED STAGE MAKEUP (3) Comprehensive study of specialized makeup: film, television, mask making, prosthesis, facial hair design, and wig making.

THEA 4750 PLAYWRITING (3) Cover the principles of play construction, assignment of playwriting exercises, and the completion of a one-act play.

THEA 4810 THEATRE PRODUCTION II (3-6) A concentrated workshop experience in all aspects of theatre production through participation in rehearsal and performance.

THEA 4820 SUMMER REPERTORY THEATRE COMPANY II (3-6) Intensive and concentrated study of production skills and techniques and studio/laboratory experiences.

THEA 4840 ADVANCED DANCE TECHNIQUES (3) Intensive study of advanced dance techniques in theory and practice. Course often serves as a training and preparation for public performance.

THEA 4841 DANCE LAB III—TAP (1) Introduction to traditional tap dance. Technical concepts, rhythm combinations, and improvisations designed to test and develop skills at the appropriate level.

THEA 4910 PRODUCTION PRACTICUM IV (1) Pr. Admission into the BFA Design/Tech (THDT) or Management (THMN) program and two semesters of THEA 3190 or department approval. Leadership experience in the design/technical and management areas of production. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 3 credit hours.

THEA 4920 PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIP (1-8) Internship with professional or community theatre in the student’s field of specialization. Each 10-hour workweek equals one hour of credit. ADDITIONAL PREREQUISITES: Departmental approval. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 8 credit hours.

THEA 4930 DIRECTED STUDIES (1-3) Directed readings, creative and tutorial projects of interest to the advanced student. ADDITIONAL PREREQUISITES: Departmental approval. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours.

THEA 4940 THEATRE SPECIAL PROJECTS (3) Pr. Department approval. Selected projects related to realizing a theatrical production in public performance.

THEA 4950 THEATRE LITERATURE AND THEORY SEMINAR (3) Thorough examination of dramatic literature and theory from a narrow perspective (such as genre, style, era, etc.) designed to give students extensive knowledge in one area of theatre.

THEA 4967 HONORS SPECIAL PROBLEMS (1-3) Subject areas to be determined between student and Theatre instructor. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours.

THEA 4980 SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECT (3) Capstone course to aid senior theatre majors in their transition to the professional world and/or graduate studies.

THEA 4997 HONORS THESIS (1-6) Final projects of varying natures and in the theatre program. Course may be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours.
To: College of Liberal Arts and University Curriculum Committees  
From: Dan LaRocque, Chair—Auburn University Theatre  
Re: lab designations included in the proposed theatre curriculum  
October 18, 2009  

Committee Members:  

Theatre has used the THEA 2841, 3841 and 4841 lab designations for our proposed dance labs even though they are not connected to other courses, As stand-alone labs in ballet, jazz, and tap technique, they constitute critical skills acquisition courses in dance. While they are strictly practical lab classes, rather than our more traditional lecture/studio or lecture/lab offerings, they are important courses for the department to offer to meet national accreditation standards in dance for our music degree track.  

Theatre has used the THEA 2111 and THEA 2311 designation for lab components of its THEA 2110 and THEA 2310 courses in the traditional manner.