

TO: Barbara D'Ambrosia, Chair of Committee on Academic Policies

FROM: Mary Beadle, Chair, Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts

Karen L. Gygli, Associate Professor, Dept. of CO and Theatre Arts

RE: Revised rationale narrative for a Theatre Arts Minor within the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts

January 18, 2013

Narrative for creation of the Theatre Arts Minor within the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts

A. Justification: As part of our ongoing program review, the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts has voted to create a Theatre Arts Minor. Although the Communication minor program as currently configured includes the possibility of focusing on theatre through the student's choice of electives, the department sees the desirability of offering a minor focused in theatre to offer to non-majors using the current faculty, facilities and courses already offered on a frequent rotation. (Those in the theatre minor who decide to major in CO will be encouraged to pursue the theatre track within the major). The proposed Minor in Theatre Arts can be seen as part of the Jesuit tradition in terms of educating the whole person. The study of theatre uses analytical skills, critical thinking, writing and both scholarly and creative presentation. The performing arts also have reflected and challenged societal values throughout history. Ideas about theatre reflect ideas about the place of humanity within the universe. We believe that through the study of theatre, human society and culture can also be evaluated and understood in a holistic way. In addition, a theatre minor is a means of making the arts offerings in the performing arts more visible at JCU. It allows students who do not major in CO to create a program to fit with another major during their college program. This would give visibility to theatre as being an area of specialization for students in English, Elementary and Secondary Education, Modern and Classical Language and Cultures, Boler School programs and other majors at JCU. While respecting JCU's tradition as a liberal arts university, a theatre minor would allow students to name theatre as a specialization area.

B. Prevalence of program at similar institutions: Various Cleveland-area universities, and several Jesuit universities nationally, have theatre minors, including Cleveland State University, Baldwin-Wallace College, Loyola University New Orleans, Fordham University and Xavier University. Indeed, theatre minor programs are very common at small liberal arts colleges, as well as within larger performing arts majors. Please see attached copies for more detail on these programs.

To quote from the website of Loyola University New Orleans:

The Jesuit tradition in theatre goes back to the very beginning of the order's educational activities. In the Jesuit school theatre, "the attempt was made for the first time to use the stage, not as the Humanists had used it, mainly for the sake of teaching Latin, but as a formative influence on the student's entire personality."¹ At the same time, no element of the

dramatic arts was left unexplored, so that the spoken word, while retaining its importance, took its place alongside of mime, music, and spectacle. It is not surprising, therefore, that a number of leading dramatists began the development of their art through contact with the Jesuit stage—Molière, Corneille, and Voltaire in France; Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, and Tirso de Molina in Spain.

C. Purpose of the Program: A theatre minor at John Carroll, similar to the minors at these other institutions, is designed to help students majoring in another area combine theatre as a specialization area where such a relationship would allow the student to get academic credit for work in an area that nurtures his/her management and creativity, and would also make the student attractive to prospective employers. For example, a student majoring in marketing might want a theatre minor in order to get a job in arts management and non-profit organizations. Education majors might want to work with students in performing arts programs, but also might want to bring theatre into the classroom as a teaching method. Beyond the practical question of employment, however, is the idea that studying and participating in theatre educates the whole person and serves as both a vehicle toward critical analysis of the humanities and as a valuable human endeavor to study in and of itself. (Any student who wished to major in CO and pursue a theatre specialization would be encouraged to follow the proposed theatre track of the major, also already approved by the department.)

II. The Minor in Theatre Arts would consist of 21 credit hours. All of these courses are in the current bulletin and are already offered in a regular rotation. We have also indicated core designations that these courses have fulfilled in the past and that we would hope to continue in the future. Those students in the minor who then decide to major within the CO department may count up to nine credit hours of the minor toward their completion of the major requirements when the same courses count for both. The same is true for students in the theatre minor who then decide to pursue a general CO minor.

- Required courses (6 hours):
 - CO 280 Introduction to the Theatre (EN 203, 222 or CL 250 can be substituted with permission by the chair of the CO dept.) (II)
 - CO 285 Acting for the Stage (II)
- Two of the following courses (6 credit hours):
 - CO 295 Screenwriting
 - CO 395 Playwriting (W)
 - CO 314 Theatre Production
- One of the following (3 credit hours):
 - CO 365 Design for the Stage
 - CO 375 Directing for the Stage
 - CO 384 Lighting for the Stage
 - CO 399 Special Topics in Theatre
- One of the following courses (3 credit hours):
 - CO 343 International Theatre (R)
 - CO 345 Topics in North American Theatre and Performance (D)
 - CO 470 Theatre History and Criticism (S)
- One of the following courses (3 credit hours):

- CO 475 Little Theatre Workshop
- CO 476 Little Theatre Workshop in Design and Management

In this way, the students must balance courses in which they study theatre as an academic discipline with courses that encourage informed and critical practice of theatre. Attached, please find descriptions of theatre minors from Hiram College, Xavier University, Cleveland State University, Fordham University and Baldwin-Wallace College. John Carroll's proposed Theatre Arts Minor would be consistent with these programs in terms of the types of courses required, a number of electives and courses of practice included within the minor and the number of credit hours required: 18-21, or 7-8 courses.

Currently, and in this proposed minor, two fundamental courses—CO 280 Introduction to the Theatre, and CO 285 Acting for the Stage—are required as prerequisites for most of the courses which follow. If the student has taken certain drama courses in English or Classical Languages, they can use that course to substitute for Introduction to Theatre. Students are asked to take a course in stage or screen writing, or a backstage crew. The introduction to theatre, the acting course and the stage production courses are all prerequisites to course in directing or design. We ask also that they take a course on special advanced topics in theatre history and theory, for which CO 280 is a prerequisite, and in an international or American theatre topic, which can be taken at any time in the program. And finally, the student earning a minor in theatre must complete an advanced creative project, either in an acting role or directing capacity, or as a designer on a production.

III. Organization and Administration of the Theatre Arts Minor: The Theatre Arts Minor would be housed in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts. The chair of the department, in consultation with the theatre faculty, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Provost, would run the program.

The theatre program already has a production budget within the CO major. There would be no additional new expenses in terms of materials or facilities for the minor.

The minor would need no new hires; the two full-time faculty members in theatre, plus adjunct faculty already employed by the department, would be able to carry on instructing students and advising students in projects and production work.

Currently, the theatre program uses two spaces on campus: Kulas Auditorium for faculty-directed productions twice a year and Marinello Little Theatre in the Lombardo Student Center for student-directed and faculty productions, classes and visiting artists, plus office and classroom spaces already available on campus.

We hope to focus the existing Communication Minor into a Theatre Minor using existing courses, faculty, budget and facilities. Non-majors would have a formal and a more focused minor program for the theatre studies they already pursue.

IV. We are hoping to offer the Theatre Arts Minor to students in the Fall of 2013. The minor is being proposed now as part of an overall program assessment being undertaken by the Tim Russert department. Since July, 2011, our department has been reevaluating and revising assessment procedures for the major and minor. We are adding and naming areas of focus within our major. So the definition of what has always been an area of specialization within our program is in keeping with our overall move toward redefining and clarifying areas within our major. However, the minor is geared toward non-majors; we understand concerns across the university about being able to major and minor within one program. This minor is meant for non-majors; majors within the CO department will receive a CO major with a specialization in theatre arts. Since the department is currently creating an assessment plan as a whole, the minor will need to be considered as part of that. Therefore, we recognize the need for a Theatre Minor assessment plan, but are still constructing it at this time in the context of the entire department and its major programs.

At the present time, we can relate the theatre minor to the desired learning outcomes for the CO department, approved by the department in December of 2011, which are as follows:

“A graduate of the [CO] department has the knowledge and ability to:

- Create messages in a variety of media and arenas, critically and creatively;
- Present and/or advocate ideas ethically and effectively for a variety of audiences;
- Evaluate messages using critical and ethical analysis;
- Analyze how audiences receive, interpret and react to messages.”

In the theatre classes, students create, analyze and evaluate artistic work and the themes and messages therein critically. In each of the performance classes, there are avenues for peer review as well as grading. Directing and design projects create messages using a variety of media, and are also evaluated as to how the final project incorporated the various parts into an artistic whole. The ethics of creative work in terms of collaboration and respect for the different areas of theatre work are emphasized. Finally, in the theatre history and theory courses, audience reception of theatre events according to culture and historical context are studied in depth. We will continue to create assessment methods for this minor as the rest of the department does the same with their own tracks and programs within the major.

We will list the Theatre Arts Minor in our next bulletin if approved and also will use the University web page to market the program to students. We will also create a brochure within the already existing CO department budget to distribute to prospective students. Since the Tim Russert Department already has a good and active relationship with the Office of Admissions, we will make any pertinent materials available to incoming students and continue to publicize the program with the numerous students interested in such a program who want interviews with the theatre faculty. In addition, having a

Theatre Arts Minor will give students interested in such a program a new way to search and find John Carroll on Google.

Dr. Mary Beadle has had numerous meetings with Dr. Jeanne Colleran, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, concerning the formation of the Theatre Arts minor. Both Dr. Beadle and Dr. Colleran have written letters in support of the Theatre Arts Minor. Recently, the Vice President for Admissions urged the faculty to think of programs that will attract prospective students. We believe that this program will do so. Creating a theatre minor can attract new students to our theatre courses and programs, and can also help make our graduates attractive to employers. Finally, it will encourage students to value the performing arts as one path toward a liberal arts education.

Based on the number of students who commit to theatre productions and who enroll in the entire series of theatre courses throughout their program, we project a minimum of 10 to 15 students per academic year will choose to minor in this program.

List of Attachments:

- Proposed theatre minor list of classes, approved by the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts
- Dr. Mary Beadle, Chair of the Russert Department, letter of support for proposed theatre minor.
- Dr. Jeanne Colleran, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, letter of support for the proposed theatre minor.
- Other theatre minors descriptions, copied from the websites of other local and/or Jesuit colleges and universities: Baldwin-Wallace University, Cleveland State University, Hiram College, Wheeling Jesuit University and Xavier University.
- Links to theatre minor pages:

<http://www.xavier.edu/music/Theatre-Minor.cfm>

<http://www.bw.edu/coursecatalog/degree/require/scth/>

<http://www.hiram.edu/majors-and-minors/theatre/curriculum>

http://www.wju.edu/academics/catalogs/under10_11/undergrad10_11a.pdf#page=66

<http://www.csuohio.edu/undergradcatalog/class/degrees/dra.htm#Minor>