Undergraduate Program Review
Theatre Arts
2001-2002

I. Strengths:

1. Strength of the faculty - “a dedicated and involved faculty with the ability to get students involved in productions”

2. A viable, active program

3. The report was well organized and well written

II. Recommendations:

1. Increasing faculty

2. Increasing resources

1-Year Follow-Up:

1. **Dedicated workers for box office publicity:** The department will hire a student worker whose specific responsibility will be to work with Theatre faculty to advertise and sell tickets for productions. They will be tasked to work in media not heretofore employed in advertising theatre productions. While painting signs was a tactic in the past, we need to work to use Internet and web resources that our target audience (students) more readily employs. Graphic art, clip art, and dedicated electronic mailings to friends of the Theatre Program are to be featured as we attempt to increase revenue by increasing audience size. Although not directly linked to new hires, the scheduling will be adjusted to increase audience size. This past show season we experimented with more weekend matinees and found greater box office success. We will place more workers, as well as more ingenuity, to the task of getting greater box office returns.

2. **The National Association of Schools of Theatre Program Criteria:** We are proud that the Texas Educational Theatre Association accredits our Theatre Program. However, that organization does not publish standards for faculty/student ratios or faculty size for production schedules. We need to use that information to demonstrate what our faculty size should be. There are theatre programs in the area that offer half the productions we do with twice the faculty. We need to ascertain what the proper standards for staffing are and use them in requesting more faculty. The National Association of Schools of Theatre will give us that guidance. Proper staffing levels will become even more important in the future as talks continue on the planned School/College of Visual and
Performing Arts. Dr. Paul Hageman of the Music Department explained his plan to us. The merger of Music, Art, and Theatre would be exciting but unless and until Theatre has a viable compliment of needed faculty any proposed merger would put the Theatre operation in danger of being swallowed up by the larger components of the new organizational entity. In addition, Dr. Hageman, Deacon and I agree that the proposed College of Visual and Performing Arts needs to have, in place, a strong and effective faculty so as to demonstrate the credibility necessary of any new operation. We will use professional standards to judge the appropriate number of theatre faculty.

3. **A More Strategic Use of IEPs to Enhance Program Growth:** When I was first introduced to the IEPs I was told that it was a giant wish list and only the most urgent of needs could be met. While the training of department chairs may need work, I have since come to recognize that IEPs are the department’s long-term growth vehicle. We will use our IEPs to demonstrate the need for new faculty in a manner that is clear and acceptable to upper administration. In the past our theatre faculty, especially Dr. Deacon, would work tirelessly to keep the program working and growing. He did, and does, so many professional actions without pay that they are considered routine. He teaches at the Texas A&M System Summer Theatre Collaborative without pay. He should have released time for many of the activities he does without hesitation. Others before him had the release; he does it for the love of the program and his students. We cannot continue to treat these things in that manner. I intend to gather the FTE equivalencies of the theatre faculty over the past five years and use those statistics to show the need for additional hires in the area. Again, we will use TAMUK standards to show the appropriate size of our faculty.

4. In sum, we intend to address the need for faculty and program resources with creative problem solving and current standards. We will demonstrate the need for faculty growth, not simply demand it. The “viable and active program” we currently enjoy needs to be sustained into the future and we intend to do all in our power to convince others of the same point.