MEMORANDUM

TO: Bonnie Thornton Dill  
Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

FROM: Elizabeth Beise  
Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to Modify the Bachelor of Arts in Theatre (PCC Log No. 15049)

At its meeting on March 4, 2016, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula and Courses approved the proposal to modify the Bachelor of Arts in Theatre. A copy of the proposal is attached.

The change is effective Fall 2016. Please ensure that the change is fully described in the Undergraduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials, including the undergraduate program’s four-year plan (contact Lisa Kiely at lkiely@umd.edu for more information).

MDC/
Enclosure

cc: Andrew Harris, Chair, Senate PCC Committee  
Barbara Gill, Office of Enrollment Management  
Reka Montfort, University Senate  
Erin Taylor, Division of Information Technology  
Pam Phillips, Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment  
Anne Turkos, University Archives  
Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar  
Cynthia Stevens, Office of Undergraduate Studies  
Alene Moyer, College of Arts and Humanities  
Leigh Wilson Smiley, School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies
TDPS proposes to modify a portion of the BA in Theatre curriculum for Theatre History/Theory requirements. Currently, students are required to take: 9 credits of Theatre History/Theory (6 credits must be at the 400 level, 3 credits at any level).

Without any change to the current History-Theory requirement we can return to the one year history survey that was a requirement for all students until about 8 years ago. We have found that students do not receive adequate theatre history education with the current structure.

Please see attached for details.
Curriculum Proposal Change for BA in Theatre
Theatre History/Theory Course Requirements
School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies
February 4, 2016

TDPS proposes to modify a portion of the BA in Theatre curriculum for Theatre History/Theory requirements.

Currently, students are required to complete:
- THET223 – Text and Context in Western Theatre,
- 9 credits of Theatre History/Theory (6 credits at the 400 level, 3 credits at any level)

We propose students will be required to complete:
- THET223 – Text and Context in Western Theatre
- THET390 – Theatre History I
- THET391 – Theatre History II
- One 400-level Theatre History/Theory course

Rationale:
We have found that students do not receive adequate theatre history education with the current structure, forcing faculty to teach a complete foundation of Theatre History in THET223.

The 400-level history/theory courses range in topics, including African American Theatre History, Dramaturgy, History of Shakespeare, Post 9/11 Theatre, to name a few. These courses require a more complete foundation of theatre history than achieved by only taking THET223.

Advising:
The change does not alter the number of credits students must complete for their major and will not delay their graduation. The change will allow students better preparation for upper-level Theatre coursework in performance, design, and history/theory. Most current majors have already completed the required courses in History/Theory. Advising will be flexible for current majors that have not finished this requirement to ensure that they will be able to finish their degree in a timely manner. Freshman and new majors beginning in Fall 2016 will fulfill the new requirements put forth in this proposal. In addition, this change will not change teaching requirements or add burden to the faculty and School because we will offer THET390 and THET391 in place of additional THET 400-level History/Theory courses currently offered.
Overview of Current Major and Proposed Changes:
(Please see attached for a complete menu of courses)

**Current Curriculum BA Theatre**

- 55 Credits total
- 28 credits must be 300/400-level

**Foundation Course Requirements**

- TDPS201 – Fundamentals of Production (3 credits)
- THET116 – Fundamentals of Design (3 credits)
- THET222 – Foundations of Acting and Performance (3 credits)
- THET223 – Text and Context (3 credits)
- TDPS479 – Production Practicum (4 x 1 credit each) (4 credits total)

**18 credits chosen from a menu of courses for Performance, Design/Production, and Theatre History/Theory**

- 1 Performance Area course (3 credits)
- 2 Design/Production courses (1 course must be at 300/400 level (6 credits)
- 21 credits of Theatre Supporting course work (12 must be THET/TDPS, 15 must be 300/400-level)

**3 History/Theory courses (2 courses must be at 400 level) (9 credits)**

- Current History/Theory course options:
  - THET250 American Musical Theatre & Pop Culture
  - THET290 American Theatre 1750-1890
  - THET291 American Theatre 1890 to Present
  - THET293 Black Theatre & Performance I
  - THET294 Black Theatre & Performance II
  - THET388 Special Topics in Performance Studies
  - THET408/608 Special Topics: Theory & Performance Studies
  - THET488 Special Topics in History of Theatre to 1800
  - THET489 Special Topics in History of Theatre After 1800
  - THET498-698 Special Topics in Theatre History

**Proposed Curriculum BA Theatre**

- 55 Credits total
- 28 credits must be 300/400-level

**Foundation Course Requirements**

- TDPS201 – Fundamentals of Production (3 credits)
- THET116 – Fundamentals of Design (3 credits)
- THET222 – Foundations of Acting and Performance (3 credits)
- THET223 – Text and Context (3 credits)
- TDPS479 – Production Practicum (4 x 1 credit each) (4 credits total)

**18 credits chosen from a menu of courses for Performance, Design/Production, and Theatre History/Theory**

- 1 Performance Area course (3 credits)
- 2 Design/Production courses (1 course must be at 300/400 level (6 credits)
- 21 credits of Theatre Supporting course work (12 must be THET/TDPS, 15 must be 300/400-level)

**3 History/Theory courses (THET390, THET391, one 400-level course) (9 credits)**

- Proposed History/Theory course options:
  - THET390 History of Theatre I
  - THET391 History of Theatre II
  - Choose one from:
    - THET408 Special Topics: Theory & Performance Studies
    - THET488 Special Topics in History of Theatre to 1800
    - THET489 Special Topics in History of Theatre After 1800
    - THET498-698 Special Topics in Theatre History
Specific Course Adjustments Submitted for Approval:

1. THET490 History of Theatre I (3 credits)
   Prerequisite: Permission of ARHU-School of Theatre, Dance & Performance Studies. The history of Western theatre from its origins in classical antiquity through the mid-seventeenth century with emphasis on plays and playwrights, architecture and decor, acting and costuming, and significant personalities. Extensive use of graphic materials, play readings, and production projects.

   Proposed change – 300-level number, update description to include non-Western theatre
   THET390 History of Theatre I (3 credits)
   The history of Western theatre from its origins in classical antiquity through the mid-seventeenth century with emphasis on plays and playwrights, architecture and decor, acting and costuming, and significant personalities. Includes explorations of interrelationships between Western theatre and the theatre of other cultures.

   Justification:
   This class has not been taught for many years. We intend to offer it again starting in the Fall of 2016. We have moved it from the 400-level to the 300-level because the class content is important for students to have in other classes they take as theatre majors. The new description also opens out the content to include the influence of other cultures on Western theatre and the influence of Western theatre on the theatre of other cultures without diluting the content into a world theatre class.

2. THET491 Theatre History II (3 credits)
   Prerequisite: Permission of ARHU-School of Theatre, Dance & Performance Studies. The history of Western theatre from the late seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century, with emphasis on plays and playwrights, architecture and decor, acting and costuming, and significant personalities. Extensive use of graphic materials, play readings and production projects.

   Proposed change – 300-level number, remove prerequisites, update description.
   THET391 Theatre History II (3 credits)
   The history of Western theatre from the mid seventeenth century to the early twentieth century, with emphasis on plays and playwrights, architecture and decor, acting and costuming, and significant personalities. Includes explorations of interrelationships between Western theatre and the theatre of other cultures.

   Justification:
   This class has not been taught for many years. We intend to offer it again starting in the Spring of 2017. We have moved it from the 400-level to the 300-level because the class content is important for students to have in other classes they take as theatre majors. The new description also opens out the content to include the influence of other cultures on Western theatre and the influence of Western theatre on the theatre of other cultures without diluting the content into a world theatre class.
**Impact and Resources:**
As previously stated, the change does not alter the number of credits students must complete for their major and will not delay their graduation. Nor will the adjustment impact our departmental resources as faculty will be teaching these courses in place of additional THET 400-level history courses currently taught. Advanced PhD graduate students will also be able to assist and teach THET390 and THET391.

The new requirements of THET390 and THET391 will replace the option of taking one of several 200-level electives or THET388 Special Topics in Performance Studies or a 400-level special topics elective. THET388 and the 200-level electives (THET250, THET290, THET291, THET293, and THET294) as well as 400-level electives will continue to be offered regularly as general education classes for non-Theatre majors and to fulfill Theatre Supporting requirements for Theatre majors.

The current academic plan for THET History/Theory courses:

THET History Theory (200/300/400-level) – Fall semester Year 2
THET History Theory 400-level – Spring semester Year 3
THET History Theory 400-level – Fall Semester Year 4

New academic plan for completing THET History/Theory courses:

THET390 – Theatre History I – Fall semester Year 2
THET391 – Theatre History II – Spring semester Year 2
THET History/Theory 400-level – Year 3 or Year 4

THET390 will be offered every Fall semester, THET391 will be offered every Spring semester. We will also offer at least one 400-level Theatre History course every semester. Students are required to meet with an academic advisor every semester to go over remaining requirements, to plan for the current semester and to plan ahead.

Students are able choose from a menu of options to fulfill Theatre major requirements. This gives students flexibility to choose classes that best fit into their schedule, allowing students to double major and choose classes that best meet their professional goals. The major will remain flexible with the proposed changes. The new Theatre classes will be offered every semester allowing for predictability for schedule planning.

Current students will have an option to either fulfill History/Theory requirements for the current catalog year or will be allowed to pursue the proposed requirements.