

PROGRAM PLANNING SUMMARY

PROGRAM DESIGNATION:

Institution:	Coastal Carolina University
Academic Unit Involved:	Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts
Name of Proposed Program:	<i>Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre</i>
Proposed date of implementation:	Fall 2009
New Program or Modification:	New Program
Number of Credit Hours:	120

JUSTIFICATION OF NEED

The Department of Theatre at Coastal Carolina University currently offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre with concentrations in Acting/Directing and Design and Technology. The proposed Bachelor of Fine Arts degree will replace the current B.A. Acting/Directing concentration. The proposed Bachelor of Fine Arts will have four new degrees: Design and Technology, Musical Theatre, Acting, and Physical Theatre. The B.A. in Theatre will remain as a general theatre option, without concentrations, for those students seeking a less rigorous approach to theatre training. Directing will be removed as a concentration altogether. Directing is the culmination of all theatrical skills and should only be embarked upon by students at the graduate level. These changes seek to transform Coastal Carolina University as a premier comprehensive undergraduate professional theatre training institution.

According to current guidelines established by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) the current B.A. program more closely fits the standards set for a B.F.A. program in Musical Theatre. At the urging of the accreditation body, we seek to change the structure of the current course offerings presenting a more rigorous and professionally oriented B.F.A. degree program.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre will incorporate the classes already offered in the Bachelor of Arts program. We do not anticipate eliminating any current class offerings, concentrating rather on additional credits that focus on developing the skills and professionalism of students to prepare them for careers in the theatre and related fields or for advanced study in graduate or conservatory programs. The program will attract students who are willing to commit to structured, intensive, studio-based training and are searching for a degree that prepares them to function in the professional entertainment world as actor-singers.

The program defines the term "musical theatre" in a way that embraces the richness and diversity of this challenging interdisciplinary art form, which includes musical comedy, the musical play, new and alternative music theatre, "Broadway opera," cabaret and revue. Students receive technique training in acting complemented by training in vocal technique, musicianship, dance, and the study of the repertoire of the musical theatre in print and recordings, as well as in rehearsal and performance.

The goal of the program is to cultivate practitioners for live theatre entertainment. This is achieved by developing a practical knowledge and competence that include sensitivity to technique, artistry, and style, as well as an insight into the role of the theatre arts. The highly focused and demanding training is enhanced by appropriate courses in the liberal arts. These are of particular importance to the theatre artist, who is charged with commenting on the human condition. The effectiveness of that commentary is dependent upon a sincere commitment to excellence in liberal arts.

Employer demand is difficult to quantify because employer demand data for theatre-related occupations are not disaggregated from more general categories of occupations. However, data that are available are consistent with the suggestion that career opportunities and employer demand exist for graduates with training in theatre. Statistics published by the Occupational Information Network indicates need for Actors shows growth both nationally and in South Carolina.

Theatre graduates prepare for occupations as actors, singers, and managers. Music, television, and teaching offer additional avenues of application for studies in theatre. Coastal Carolina University further notes that previous graduates in theatre have gone on to a wide variety of careers outside of theatre.

Nationwide the *Directory of Theatre Training Programs 11th edition 2007-2009* lists 54 Bachelor of Fine Arts programs; however it should be noted that this is not a comprehensive directory and fails to list several programs at private institutions. In states similar in size to South Carolina by population (26th) several Bachelor of Fine Arts programs exist. In Colorado (24th) three programs exist, in Kentucky (25th) three programs exist and in Oklahoma (27th) two programs currently exist.

Student demand for the program is strong. Enrollment in existing Theatre Arts programs at Coastal Carolina University have grown substantially this decade. In 1997 the Department of Theatre had 47 majors; in fall of 2007 72 majors were enrolled showing a 53% increase. Expected enrollment for fall 2008 shows a 65% increase over the 2007 incoming class. The Bachelor of Arts degree in Musical Theatre had 2 majors in 1999 and 36 in fall 2007 indicating a consistent growth through the program and in the field of Musical Theatre.

ANTICIPATED PROGRAM DEMAND AND PRODUCTIVITY

Coastal Carolina University completed a survey of 5400 students accepted to Coastal Carolina University for the fall of 2008. Of those who responded to the survey 19.7% stated that they would be interested in pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Musical Theatre if it were offered by Coastal Carolina University.

A nationwide survey of Bachelor of Fine Arts programs conducted shows a large number of students auditioning for programs for a small number of positions available. The average number of students who auditioned for the 23 programs surveyed was 547.2; the average program accepted 32.5 students and yielded 20.9 students. The average application to acceptance rate is 8.51% for all programs surveyed. Significant interest in the proposed program can be expected. Anecdotal evidence indicates that students who have a desire to study Musical Theatre seek Bachelor of Fine Arts Programs.

Due to the intensive nature of the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre the matriculation rate would need to be directed and controlled. The National Association of Schools of Theatre states in its accreditation guidelines that "Opportunities for performance in workshop and full productions of musical theatre in a variety of formal and informal settings. Performance of a significant role in at least one full production during advanced study is regarded as an essential experience." Therefore class size would be limited to allow for these opportunities.

Acceptance would be based on current University standards and an intensive audition process with no student allowed into the program without successfully completing the audition process. Expectations of annual acceptance rates would be 24-30 students with an anticipated yield of 12-15 students per incoming class. Total annual enrollment for the proposed program would be

expected to be between 48 and 60 with current resources. It is anticipated that this number would easily be reached within four years of opening enrollment for the program.

ASSESSMENT OF EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROPOSED PROGRAM DUPLICATES EXISTING PROGRAMS IN THE STATE

Currently there are no Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre in South Carolina. There are only two Bachelor of Arts programs in Musical Theatre, one of which is currently offered at Coastal Carolina University, the other at Coker College.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM TO EXISTING PROGRAMS AT THE PROPOSING INSTITUTION

The Department of Theatre currently offers a Bachelor of Arts in Musical Theatre. The B.A. provided the curriculum and resources appropriate for students at the beginning of their studies. While there is no specific structure, format or schedule of training which will be effective in every case, the actor-singer ready to embark on a professional career must possess a body of knowledge and skills. The B.F.A will provide a comprehensive program expected to produce a professional ready for career entry. The range of skills necessary for the contemporary actor-singer dictates a more thorough and intensive approach than what is currently in place. Students who are serious about training as an actor-singer seek the specialized, rigorous training indicative of the B.F.A. The Bachelor of Fine Arts will replace the Bachelor of Arts program.

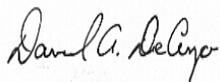
The Department of Music currently supports the Musical Theatre program offering classes that focus on musicianship and applied vocal technique and artistry. There are no plans to change the involvement of the Department of Music.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS VIA INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Coastal Carolina University is interested in developing a cooperative relationship with other institutions in the state, particularly as it pertains to sharing specific performance based expertise. Such cooperation could include sharing personnel or technical resources to supplement the production experience.

TOTAL NEW COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED PROGRAM

The Bachelor of Fine Arts seeks to refine the current Bachelor of Arts degree and therefore we seek no additional faculty for the next two years. Should growth continue at the pace we expect, we will need an additional Assistant or Associate Professor Musical Theatre Specialist (\$48,000-\$55,000). In addition to the new faculty member, we will need a departmental accompanist to accommodate classroom and studio situations. Long term planning should take into consideration the probable growth in the Department of Theatre and the NAST guidelines for B.F.A programs that state that there should be involvement of Professional Companies with the degree program. It is difficult to estimate the fiscal needs at this time, but we do not anticipate other significant resources would be necessary to implement or maintain the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre.



Dr. David A. DeCenzo, President
Coastal Carolina University

July 28, 2008