

**New Program Proposal
Bachelor of Fine Arts
Theatre Arts
with Concentrations in Acting, Design and Technology, and Physical Theatre
Coastal Carolina University**

Summary

Coastal Carolina University requests approval to offer a new program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre with concentrations in Acting; Design and Technology; and Physical Theatre to be implemented in Fall 2010. The proposed program is to be offered through traditional instruction methods on the Coastal Carolina campus. The Physical Theatre concentration will include a requisite one-year residence at the San Francisco Circus Center in the student's final year.

The Program Planning Summary was submitted to the Commission in July 2008 and reviewed and voted upon favorably without substantive comment by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) on October 9, 2008. The Coastal Carolina Board of Trustees approved this proposal on May 7, 2009. The full proposal was received by the Commission on November 15, 2009.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the proposed program is to transform Coastal Carolina's Department of Theatre "into a premier comprehensive undergraduate theatre training program" which will "cultivate practitioners for the theatre and entertainment industry." Coastal Carolina intends to accomplish these goals by adding a professionally-oriented B.F.A. degree program in Theatre Arts to two existing programs: the recently approved B.F.A. program in Musical Theatre and the B.A. program in Dramatic Arts. The latter program will be retained as a general liberal arts program and two existing concentrations in Acting/Directing and Design and Technology will be terminated.

Part of becoming a premier undergraduate theatre training program involves offering the B.F.A. degree, which is considered in the field to be the "professional" degree as contrasted with the "liberal arts" degree, the B.A. This nomenclature and classification system has been established by The National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), the specialized accrediting body for the theatre discipline. NAST requires the curriculum for a B.A. program in Theatre to be 30% to 50% theatre-related. NAST requires the curriculum for a B.F.A. in Theatre to be at least 65% "in theatre studies" and generally requires more rigorous performance experience in order to prepare a student for vocational theatre experience.

The proposal states that the proposed program will offer three concentrations. The Acting concentration will prepare students for "professional audition, rehearsal and performance situations." The Design and Technology concentration will prepare students for "professional, entry-level competence" in technical areas of theatre. The Physical Theatre concentration, which includes a one-year residence at the San Francisco Circus Center, will prepare students for a career "in a large variety of applied physical performance methods," such as acrobatics, dancing and circus skills.

Coastal Carolina staff reports that the Physical Theatre concentration residency will be formalized in February 2010 by a memorandum of understanding between Coastal Carolina and the San Francisco Circus Center. According to the memorandum of understanding, the San Francisco Circus Center will provide one faculty member from the Clown Conservatory for the

equivalent of one semester each academic year (paid by Coastal Carolina University) to adequately prepare Physical Theatre students for the rigors of advanced training. The memorandum of understanding provides for no more than ten Coastal Carolina students to participate in the residency program at any one time. Also, a Coastal Carolina administrator has informed CHE staff that students in the program will continue to pay full tuition to the institution; in turn, the institution will issue \$4,000 payment per student to the Conservatory.

Coastal Carolina reports in the proposal that it conducted a survey of 5,400 students accepted to the institution for admission in Fall 2008. Of the 614 respondents to the survey, no fewer than 216 students (35%) stated they were interested in pursuing a B.F.A. in Theatre. The institution also reports that enrollment in the existing Dramatic Arts and Music Theatre programs has increased 82% between 1997 and 2008, with an additional 30% increase for the 2009 class.

According to the proposal, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) cited Independent Artist “as one of the fastest growing industries in the United States with a 3.3% annual growth rate expected.” BLS further estimates “a 36.2% increase in this field between 2006 and 2016.” With respect to the proposed program and its concentrations, BLS also anticipates steady growth in the need for set and exhibit designers (3.1%) and producers and directors (3.9%). The proposal also states that, according to the South Carolina Employment Security Commission, “the expected rate of growth in the Waccamaw Workforce Investment Area for Entertainers & Performers, Sports & Related Workers] between 2004 and 2014 is 2.6% [per annum].”

No public or private South Carolina institution offers a program leading to the B.F.A. degree in Theatre. More than 20 South Carolina public and private institutions offer a theatre-related B.A. program, and one institution (USC-Columbia) offers an M.F.A. program in Theatre. Coastal Carolina staff have identified the nearest out-of-state institutions with theatre-related B.F.A. programs; there are six such programs in North Carolina (Elon University, Lees-McRae College, Livingstone College, North Carolina School of the Arts, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, and Western Carolina University) and three such programs in Georgia (Brenau University, Columbia State University, and Shorter University).

The proposal indicates that the proposed program will seek NAST accreditation. NAST offers specific accreditation standards for the Acting concentration and the Design and Technology concentration, but not for Physical Theatre. The proposed B.F.A. program in Theatre Arts will consist of 120 credit hours of course work, which includes a general education core curriculum of 37-41 credit hours and 25 credit hours of course work for the major. The concentration requirements are 46 credit hours of course work for Acting, 58 credit hours of course work for Design and Technology, and 36 credit hours of course work for Physical Theatre. For the Physical Theatre concentration, 26 credit hours of the required credit hours must be taken at the San Francisco Circus Center. In addition to all of the residency courses offered at the San Francisco Circus Center, the proposed program includes eleven new classes in the Coastal Carolina Department of Theatre.

According to the proposal, admissions requirements include current institutional standards plus an intensive audition and interview process. The proposal anticipates there will be 36 new students (36 FTE) in the program’s first year, 68 new students (68 FTE) in the program’s second year, 100 new students (100 FTE) in the program’s third year, 128 new students (128 FTE) in the program’s fourth year, and 128 new students (128 FTE) in the program’s fifth year. If enrollment and program completion projections are met, the proposed program will more than meet the Commission’s productivity standards.

The proposal indicates that no new faculty members will be added in the proposed program’s first two years. In the third year of the program, the institution will hire one additional full-time faculty member [1.0 FTE] with an acting specialty. The San Francisco Circus Center will provide one faculty member for the equivalent of one semester each academic year (paid for by Coastal Carolina University) “to adequately prepare the Physical Theatre students for the rigors of advanced training.” The proposal lists as currently on staff and additionally available to support the program one professor, three associate professors, three assistant professors, and two lecturers. With the new hire and the San Francisco Circus Center faculty member, a total of eleven FTE faculty members will serve the program.

The proposal lists \$92,000 in one-time equipment purchases for a recently constructed theatre space. The cost of the \$92,000 in equipment is not recurring and has been budgeted for payment by the institution. Other estimated new costs for the program are estimated to begin at \$3,000 the first year and include new library resources (\$3,000). Estimated new costs increase to \$23,000 the second year and include new library resources (\$3,000) and new faculty salary costs (\$20,000). Estimated new costs increase to \$71,000 in the third year and include new library resources (\$3,000) and new faculty salary costs (\$68,000). Estimated new costs increase to \$117,440 in the fourth year and include new faculty salary costs (\$117,440). Estimated new costs increase to \$120,363 in the fifth year and include new faculty salary costs (\$120,363). The total estimated new costs for the program for its first five years total \$426,803, which includes \$92,000 in one-time equipment purchases, \$325,000 for new faculty salary costs, and \$9,000 for new library resources.

Below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state and new costs not funded by the MRR associated with the implementation of the proposed program during its first five years. Also shown are the estimated revenues projected under the MRR and the Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Estimated Program Costs and Revenue

	Estimated Program Costs		Estimated Program Revenue				(G) Total Revenue - Total Costs (F-(A+B))
	(A) MRR Cost	(B) Other Costs*	(C) Actual State Funding	(D) Tuition	(E) Additional Revenue	(F) Total Revenue (C+D+E)	
Year 1	\$452,138	\$0	N/A	\$415,240	\$0	\$415,240	-\$36,898
Year 2	\$854,038	\$0	\$204,718	\$784,552	\$0	\$989,270	\$135,232
Year 3	\$1,255,939	\$0	\$386,508	\$1,153,864	\$0	\$1,540,372	\$284,433
Year 4	\$1,607,602	\$0	\$568,297	\$1,477,248	\$0	\$2,045,545	\$437,944
Year 5	\$1,607,602	\$0	\$727,158	\$1,477,248	\$0	\$2,204,406	\$596,805

*Includes costs of an extraordinary nature not otherwise included in the MRR cost calculation (e.g., costs for a new building required to support a program).

These data show that if Coastal Carolina University can meet the projected student enrollments and contain costs as shown in the proposal, the proposed program will be able to cover costs with revenues it generates beginning in the second year of implementation.

In summary, Coastal Carolina University is proposing a program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre with concentrations in Acting; Design and Technology; and Physical Theatre. Designed as the state's first undergraduate professional degree in theatre, the proposed program is intended to provide intensive training in the intellectual and physical skills necessary to arts professionals while maintaining Coastal Carolina University's mission to provide high quality teaching and mentoring of students.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission approval of the program leading to a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre with concentrations in Acting; Design and Technology; and Physical Theatre at Coastal Carolina University, to be implemented in Fall 2010, provided that (1) no "unique cost" or other special state funding be required or requested; (2) a signed copy of the memorandum of understanding between Coastal Carolina University and the San Francisco Circus Center be provided to staff prior to program implementation; and (3) notification of termination for the concentrations in Acting/Directing and Design and Technology offered currently under the existing program leading to a B.A. degree in Dramatic Arts be submitted immediately upon approval of the proposed program.