

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department of Drama
Undergraduate B.A. Program in Drama, Drama Education**

Key Assessment Findings

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Financial Planning, Institutional Research and Assessment

**UNDERGRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA
AY2009-2010 to AY2013-2014**

	Fail		Pass		High Pass		Pass w/Honors		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
AY2009-2010		0.00%	5	83.33%	1	17.00%		0.00%	6
AY2010-2011		0.00%	5	62.50%	3	38.00%		0.00%	8
AY2011-2012		0.00%	6	66.67%	3	33.00%		0.00%	9
AY2012-2013		0.00%	5	55.56%	4	44.00%		0.00%	9
AY2013-2014	1	7.69%	11	84.62%	1	7.69%		0.00%	13
TOTAL	1	2.22%	32	71.11%	12	26.67%	0	0.00%	45

Note:

- 1) Milestone outcomes were included in the categories High Pass and Pass with Honors if these designations were explicitly indicated in the students' milestone record.
- 2) Category "High Pass" includes both "High Pass" and "Pass with distinction".
- 3) The count in this table is based on the exam outcomes of all attempts in an academic year.

The Department of Drama uses the following measures to assess departmental learning outcomes:

Direct measures:

DR 451, Senior Seminar, a research-based class
Comprehensive exams, combining a take-home portion and an oral presentation
Grades in all core courses

Indirect measures:

Grades in all courses
Student evaluations of all courses
Student participation in production work
Alumni feedback

On-going faculty review of individual student's degree progress
On-going faculty review of comparable programs

End of Semester Student Reviews

The faculty meet once each semester to review how each student has progressed in his or her courses. The faculty also reviews what each student has accomplished to complete his or her Crew Credits. Finally, the faculty also review what production work each student has experienced to determine what the department should stage in its season to best serve the students. The students must complete their required courses with an appropriate GPA and complete four Crew Credits, each of which includes 60 hours of practical work in support of the department's mainstage season of plays.

DR 451 Senior Seminar

Advisors in the Department of Drama monitor each student's degree progress carefully, and make sure no student takes Senior Seminar until they have completed their core requirements in the department. The faculty and all departmental literature explain to the students that they must pass Senior Seminar as a culmination of their academic work in the department. This must happen before they take the comprehensive exams.

The grades for students in the class are in general high (A's and B's). Because some students continue to need help with their writing, a few still struggle with the heavy writing component. The professor responsible for teaching Senior Seminar offers guidance for writing and re-writing to help alleviate the problem, and he or she sends students to the writing lab when appropriate. Core courses, especially DR 201/202 and 305 help prepare the students for the scholarly work necessary to successfully complete DR 451 by also emphasizing research and writing are part of the evaluative work.

In general the students give this course very high evaluations. They speak of being expected to push their skills farther than they have in the past, and being challenged to think of the material in new ways.

Comprehensive Examinations

The Department of Drama continues to analyze the data from the comprehensive examination results and has determined that though we are concerned about how well our students are trained to write scholarly essays, the majority are successfully prepared for the comprehensive exam. We place an academic hold on all student registration every semester until they have met with their advisors, at which point the hold is removed. The students are advised to take courses in a specific order, and we have reinforced that sequence with all of the advisors in the department. We have also made the senior seminar course available by permission only in the future to prohibit a student taking it before the advisor feels they are ready.

The faculty agree that the existing rubric that the department uses to assess the written and oral portion of the comprehensive exams needs serious improvement. The numbers and traits are not complex enough to provide a thorough assessment.

Eight seniors took the comprehensive exams in 2014-2015. All of the students passed the exams.

Curricular Improvements

Our program continues to compare favorably to BA programs in Drama across the country. We have the ability in the topics classes to address specific areas of interest or concern on a per semester basis. However, the essay portion of the comprehensive exams indicates that our students struggle with longer research papers. This is also apparent in our Theatre Topics (DR 201, 202, and 305) courses. The faculty have expressed concern that Theatre Topics suffers when faculty must sacrifice time to teach course's content to help students learn how to write research papers. This is especially true when students do not come to the courses without a basic understanding of grammar and rhetoric. It would help the faculty in Drama to know what students learn in their English 101 courses. It would also help the faculty in Drama who teach Theatre Topics to share the same approach and methods for correcting the students' essays. Is there an office on campus that helps faculty with these issues? On a positive note, the core literature and history courses in the department introduce students to a range of disciplines within theatre and dramatic literature, and because we teach them in an order designed to build upon each other, we find they continue to prepare the students in an effective manner.