

# STUDENT LEARNING DATA

## OVERVIEW

The 2019 - 2020 academic year began typically, incoming students joining the returning students on campus and in the costume shop and scene shop to fulfill class assignments in the creation of fully produced shows, in collaboration with the Theater department. Typically the departments collaborate on 2 or 3 shows per semester, with students filling roles in design, technology and management as the shows are rehearsed, designed, constructed and built by students under mentorship and guidance of faculty and full time staff. Flash forward to Spring, 2020 and the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students, faculty and staff pivoted to fully online/remote teaching and learning, including an abrupt halt to productions in process. It was a disappointing way to end a senior year for some students, although we did complete the shows as "paper projects" and we were able to have photos taken of scenic elements mid-load in, with some colorful stage lights turned on as well. During the summer, faculty and staff dove deep into planning for Fall under COVID-19 restrictions for the health and safety of our Cornish community. Paired up with a full curriculum overhaul during the year, the future looks even more inclusive and collaborative with more space in the model program for students to augment learning with courses along content affinities in the visual and performing arts departments.

## CLOSING EQUITY GAPS

Faculty worked on curriculum review throughout 2019-2020. We studied the pathway of a 4-year student and learned that there were no classes in the sophomore year for students to grow their learning in their discipline. The new curriculum sets up a 4-year progression per concentration. We seek to uncover hidden biases in our curriculum and have begun work on the "Performance Production Statement on Inclusivity and Representation." This statement has measurable outcomes that we will track during 2020 - 2021. For example, the published scripts we are working on for Fall 2020 achieve more than our goal of 50% written by BIPOC, LGBTQIA or non-male artists, and in fact we have achieved the 78% mark (11 of 14 texts.)

## CONTINUOUS PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Because there is always room for improvement, the full faculty and staff are united in this work starting with our assessment rubrics and their use in all classes. Collecting student learning data mapped against our Program Learning Outcomes is critical, in order to learn if the curricular changes we have made are working and if our students are progressing as we hope. At the end of the 2019 - 2020 academic year, information was shared by our students of a perception or expectation gap that some of them experienced. For example, the perception that some of them were being held to a "professional standard" for their work, and how can we come to an understanding of a student's progress or more clearly explain faculty and staff expectations. To help remedy this misunderstanding we have scheduled 2 "all hands" meetings for students in the Fall, 2020. The agenda for the first one centered on students sharing victories and challenges, and they were able to brainstorm and suggest ways to overcome challenges as a group. 77% (27 of 35) of participants wanted to meet again, so we have it scheduled! Alternating faculty are leading the meetings for a variety of voices. When we meet as a department, faculty and staff are also resisting the urge to run these meetings like a production meeting! And make them less formal, more fun, with more space for everyone to speak and have dialogue with each other.

## HIGH IMPACT TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

All students participate in an Internship as part of the model program. In the time of COVID-19 there are no live performances happening, thus no scenery or costumes being built, thus a very different landscape for Internships. Two students had internships with local companies that had to pivot to all online experiences. This was surprisingly successful for them, for example, a technical directing student who was working at Village Theater KIDSTAGE on a summer show was able to pivot from drafting and building scenery to drafting and building scale model scenic pieces that were then part of a video taped production to show a virtual audience the scenic design of the show. Other students are assisting core faculty Melanie Burgess as she designed costumes for a fully videotaped production of a Pacific Northwest Ballet piece. Faculty will continue to identify alternative safe experiences for Internships for the coming year.