February 17, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: James F. Harris
    Dean, College of Arts & Humanities

FROM: Phyllis Peres
    Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to modify the curriculum in the M.A. in Theatre
          (PCC log no. 05016)

At its meeting today, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula, and Courses
approved your proposal to modify the curriculum of the Master of Arts in Theatre. (The
associated proposal [PCC log no. 05015] to change the degree program name to Theatre and
Performance Studies was also recommended for approval.) A copy of the approved proposal is
enclosed.

The changes are effective in Fall 2006. The College should ensure that the new
requirements are fully described in the Graduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials,
and that all advisors are informed.

/cwr
Enclosure

cc: James Baeder, Chair, Senate PCC
    Sarah Bauder, Student Financial Aid
    Mary Giles, University Senate
    Barbara Hope, Data Administration
    Anne Turkos, Archives
    Linda Yokoi, Records & Registrations
    Gay Gullickson, Graduate School
    Elizabeth Loizeaux, College of Arts & Humanities
    Heather Nathans, Department of Theatre
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

DIRECTIONS:
- Provide one form with original approval signatures in lines 1 - 4 for each proposed action. Keep this form to one page in length.
- Early consultation with the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs is strongly recommended if there are questions or concerns, particularly with new programs.
- Please submit the signed form to Claudia Rector, Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus.
- Please email the rest of the proposal as an MSWord attachment to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

DATE SUBMITTED_10/19/2005__

COLLEGE/SCHOOL_ARHU_

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM_THET_

PROPOSED ACTION (A separate form for each) ADD______DELETE______CHANGE____X____

DESCRIPTION (Provide a succinct account of the proposed action. Details should be provided in an attachment. Provide old and new sample programs for curriculum changes.)
Proposal for Non-Substantial Modifications to an Existing Degree Program: The MA in Theatre and Performance Studies (*please note that a separate PCC request has been submitted concerning a name change from MA in Theatre to MA in Theatre and Performance Studies)

In re-structuring our current Master's Program in Theatre, we hope to implement changes which, we believe, will update the program to keep pace with current developments in the field of Theatre Studies, and which will also make it a stronger complement to our doctoral program.

Goals: Our goals are threefold: To introduce Performance Studies formally into the MA program; To create a "fast track" towards the PhD; To restructure the curriculum so that it emphasizes original research and advanced scholarship, thereby better complementing the PhD curriculum.

The new program will serve both the candidate interested in completing only a MA degree (before returning to his/her career or pursuing a doctoral degree at another institution), as well as the candidate who hopes to undertake both a master’s and a doctoral degree at the University of Maryland.

JUSTIFICATION/REASONS/RESOURCES (Briefly explain the reason for the proposed action. Identify the source of new resources that may be required. Details should be provided in an attachment.)

The doctoral program in Theatre was reconstituted in 1999, and the field of Performance Studies added as a vital component of the new degree (which became "Theatre and Performance Studies"). For a number of reasons we did not alter the structure of the MA program in that process. Now that Performance Studies has become such a strong presence in the field of Theatre Studies, we need to begin training our MA candidates in this area in order to prepare them for doctoral work either at UMD or elsewhere. No new resources will be required for this proposed change.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES
1. Department Committee Chair
2. Department Chair
3. College/School PCC Chair
4. Dean
5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required)
6. Chair, Senate PCC
7. Chair of Senate
8. Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost

DATE
10/19/05
11/7/06
2/17/06
2/17/06
Proposal for Changes to the
Master of Arts in Theatre Program

Introduction:

The MA degree in theatre is the Department of Theatre’s oldest and most venerable graduate program. Originally designed with practical tracks in directing, design, management, and history/criticism, the MA was a generalist’s degree with two primary objectives:

- To prepare students for advanced graduate programs in theatre (MFA and PhD)
- To upgrade the skills and knowledge of primary and secondary school teachers

Although small, the MA program fulfilled its traditional function until two events compromised not only the curriculum, but also the value of the degree: the introduction of MFA degrees in design and theatre management, which made MA tracks in those areas redundant; the elimination of the directing track when the head of the area died. By the mid-1990s, history/criticism was the only track left—largely because those areas most closely matched the emphases of the doctoral program and the expertise of senior faculty in the History/Theory area. At the turn of century, however, the doctoral program underwent significant revision and restructuring in order to better reflect changes and innovations in the field. Not long after those revisions were approved and implemented, two senior members of the History/Theory faculty retired—including the sole instructor of theatre criticism. Three new members of the History/Theory faculty replaced them: two historians and newly minted scholar in the emerging field of Performance Studies.

Perhaps because so much energy went into restructuring and revitalizing the doctoral program, the History/Theory faculty has only tinkered with informal changes to the MA—thus leaving it conceptually unchanged. In the face of increased enrollments in the MA program, new students with different expectations of graduate education, new faculty with different areas of expertise, and major conceptual and practical shifts in the discipline, the need to re-envision and restructure the program is increasingly urgent.

In re-structuring our current Master’s Program in Theatre, we intend to implement changes that will update the program to keep pace with current developments in the field of Theatre Studies and make it a stronger complement to our doctoral program. Introducing formal course work in the field of Performance Studies is a particularly important step. In 1999, we supplemented the doctoral program’s traditional curriculum with a new concentration in Performance Studies. For the reasons stated above, we did not alter the structure of the MA program at that time, but find it necessary to do so now.

Although advanced knowledge of history and criticism is still vital to the success of any scholar in Theatre, the topography of the discipline has shifted to make way for a greater emphasis in Performance Studies at an earlier stage of graduate training. Given the current structure and emphasis of the MA program, we are not able to offer students a comprehensive introduction to Performance Studies. This will undoubtedly handicap
students who intend to apply for doctoral study, whether at the University of Maryland or elsewhere.

1. Description of current program:

**Overview:** The current Master of Arts in Theatre program offered at the University of Maryland is a two-year masters program. It is a generalist's degree that emphasizes research and writing. The M.A. program is intended to serve as a preparatory course of study for students wishing to pursue a Ph.D. It is also suitable for teachers who wish to upgrade their skills so that they can teach theatre at the secondary level.

**Requirements:** Currently the MA requires up to 33 credits, including a master’s thesis (or a non-thesis option). Students combine up to twenty-four credits at the 600-level and 400-level, chosen with the aid of each student’s advisor to meet the student’s perceived needs. Currently, MA students are generally not encouraged to take 700-level (doctoral) courses, nor are there any means of moving an advanced MA student with a strong interest in the doctoral program into those classes in less than two years. In the current program, MA students complete comprehensive exams at the end of their third semester of coursework, then submit a 100+ page thesis (or complete a non-thesis option, consisting of two additional courses, and two article-length essays).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Comprehensive Exams</th>
<th>Thesis/Non-Thesis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33 credits to be completed within 2 years, consisting of 400-level and 600-level courses (MA candidates may not take 700-level courses before completing comprehensive exams)</td>
<td>6-hour series of exams to be administered at end of third semester of study</td>
<td>Thesis: Research thesis to be completed during fourth semester or Non-thesis: two additional courses, plus two article-length essays</td>
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</tbody>
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2. Proposed changes:

**Goals:** Our goals are threefold:
- To introduce Performance Studies formally into the MA program
- To create a “fast track” towards the PhD
- To restructure the curriculum so that it emphasizes original research and advanced scholarship, thereby better complementing the PhD curriculum
The new program will serve both the candidate interested in completing only a MA degree (before returning to his/her career or pursuing a doctoral degree at another institution), as well as the candidate who hopes to undertake both a master’s and a doctoral degree at the University of Maryland.

For those students interested in completing only the MA before moving elsewhere, the program as it currently stands does not reflect those changes in the field (namely developments in the area of Performance Studies) that have been initiated in the doctoral program and that form a vital component of scholarly training for a candidate hoping pursue the study of theatre either inside or outside the academy. By re-thinking the requirements and content of the degree, we can better prepare candidates for work beyond the University of Maryland.

For those students interested in completing both the MA and the Ph.D. at the University of Maryland, the extant program no longer offers them a foundation of coursework or experiences that will allow them to make a smooth transition into the doctoral program. By creating an internal articulated transfer program from the MA to the Ph.D., we will simplify the process and shorten the time to the degree, without compromising the integrity of the program or quality of the MA degree.

**Definition of Performance Studies, and why it is an essential component of the MA degree:** In 1999 we expanded our Ph.D. program to include the emerging field of Performance Studies in recognition of the growing importance of the study of the performative aspects of a wide variety of social activities that go beyond the traditional concerns of theatre departments. In the last decade, Performance Studies has been embraced by a range of disciplines because it offers a theatrical model for cultural analysis, helping us to understand the production of culture, identity, and even scholarship itself, as a vital and complex performance. In the discipline of theatre studies, Performance Studies has taught us new ways to understand and contextualize theatrical production. Street theatre, performance art, public parades, rituals, and sports, and even the most ordinary performances of everyday life have now become part of our analysis of theatrical events. Through Performance Studies, theatre scholars are beginning to integrate methodologies such as ethnography, anthropology, and sociology with classic methodologies in literary, semiotic, and historical analysis. Moreover, these disciplines have begun to reach into our field to better comprehend their own. Thus we believe it is vital that students entering the field at the master’s level be given the opportunity to learn and apply this new vocabulary.
Summary of proposed changes: We propose to streamline and unify the existing Master of Arts program through the following changes:

- Reducing by two the total number of credits required to complete the degree
- Altering the curriculum to more accurately reflect changes in the discipline of Theatre and Performance Studies
- Doing away with the current requirement to take a comprehensive exam and write a thesis
- Making it possible for qualified students to transfer easily from the MA to the PhD program at the end of their third semester of study while still completing a viable MA degree

Overview of peer institutions: If the proposed changes are approved, the University of Maryland would be the only institution in the D.C., Maryland, or Virginia area which offers both an MA and a Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies. Few of the University’s identified peer institutions offer such strongly unified masters and doctoral programs, nor do the Department of Theatre’s own peers (including Cornell, Tufts University, Stanford, NYU, Northwestern, University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, Brown, and Northwestern) offer the same kind of carefully articulated transition between the master’s and the doctoral degree that we are proposing.

Change to the required number of credits: By reducing the number of credits required to complete the masters from the pre-2003 level of 33 to a recommended 31, we ensure that students will be able to complete the degree in a timely fashion (two years). Please note that for a student pursuing the “fast-track” into the doctoral program, we will recommend a total of 34 credits towards the degree, but that those credits will include at least three out of the four doctoral methods courses required for the Ph.D., so that a student entering the Ph.D. program directly from the MA, will essentially have a full semester’s worth of credits to bring into the program.

Recommended programs of study for students completing the Master of Arts only:

All master’s candidates are required to take a certain number of foundational courses and seminars, including Introduction to Graduate Research Methods (THET 600), Frameworks and Approaches to Theatre & Performance Studies (THET 601), and two of three seminars in the History of Theory sequence (THET 685, 686, and 687). Students are also required to take a minimum of two 600-level courses in Theatre History/Theory and Performance Studies. Beyond those requirements, they work closely with their advisors to create a unified and coherent program of study in their particular area of interest/research. Students completing a thesis take a total of 6 credit hours of thesis research, while students electing to take the comprehensive examination take 6 credit hours of additional coursework. Please see the example below.
Sample program for students completing the MA only (Foundation courses are marked with an *)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
<th>Semester 3</th>
<th>Semester 4</th>
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<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. THET 698: Graduate Seminar in Theatre/Theory OR THET 608: Graduate</td>
<td>3. THET 698: Graduate Seminar in Theatre/Theory OR THET 608: Graduate</td>
<td>2. Elective taken outside the department</td>
<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OPTION: Electives in THET Area - either 698 or 608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar in Performance Studies</td>
<td>Seminar in Performance Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. THET: 606 Teaching Theatre* (one credit)</td>
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<td>TOTAL: 10 credits</td>
<td>TOTAL: 9 credits</td>
<td>TOTAL: 6 credits</td>
<td>TOTAL: THESIS: 6 credits NON-THESIS: 9 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NON-THESIS: 3 credits</td>
<td>Completion of Thesis or comprehensive examination</td>
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**Comprehensive Examination Option:** In the current MA program, students must take a comprehensive examination and write a thesis. Exams are taken at the
end of the third semester of study and the thesis is completed at the end of the fourth semester. We propose to eliminate the requirement to do both, thus allowing students to choose between exams or thesis. The new exam will be taken at the end of the fourth semester. It will test not only students’ general knowledge of theatre and performance history and theory, but also a declared area of interest. Students will work from two reading lists, one standard and one devised by the student and her/his advisor. A student who chooses the examination option must take two additional graduate level courses.

**Thesis Option:** In the current program, students can choose between thesis and non/thesis options. We propose to eliminate the non-thesis option. Students who choose to write a thesis rather than take the comprehensive examination will engage in original research and submit a manuscript of approximately 100 pages based on independent research to his/her thesis committee.

**Recommended production component:** Master’s students are expected to enter the program with training and experience in the artistic and production areas of theatre. Persons without such training and experience are urged to obtain it before earning the degree by enrolling in appropriate classes or engaging in production activities appropriate to the student’s skills and areas of interest (e.g. directing, dramaturgy, stage management, film, acting, video production, etc.).
Creating a fast-track in the doctoral program from the MA: More and more frequently, we have highly qualified students in the MA program who we would like to encourage (or who indicate an interest) in moving directly to the doctoral program after completing the MA.

As part of our revisions to the current MA, we seek ways to facilitate both a smooth transition for those students, and to ensure that they will be able to complete both degrees in a timely fashion. THET 601, Frameworks and Approaches to Theatre & Performance Studies, will function as a “gateway” to the PhD program. At the end of this seminar, students will submit a paper of 20-30 pages to the History/Theory faculty. Those who are adjudged capable of advanced research will be encouraged to apply to the doctoral program. (Please note that all students are welcome to apply from the MA to the PhD program, and we will encourage students to work closely with their faculty advisors to develop their skills accordingly). Students who demonstrate ability and show interest in tracking towards the PhD will be advised to begin taking doctoral methods courses in their second semester of the MA degree. With careful planning and advising, they may be able to complete the required four doctoral methods courses by the end of their fourth semester. They will thus enter the doctoral program having completed four of the required courses for the degree (600/700, 711, 712, and 713). In lieu of a comprehensive examination or a thesis, fast-tracked students will submit a 30-40 page publishable quality manuscript based on independent research to a committee selected by the student and her/his advisor. Please see the sample course plan below.
Sample program for student with interest in transferring in the doctoral program (Foundational courses are marked with an *)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester 1</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1. THET 600: Introduction to Graduate Studies*                             | 1. THET 601: Frameworks & Approaches to Theatre & Performance Studies*     | 1. THET 698: Graduate Seminar in Theatre/Theory  
  OR  
  THET 608: Graduate Seminar in Performance Studies                          | 1. Master’s Practicum, 3 credits                                           |
  THET 712: Theatre Historiography  
  OR  
  THET 713: Performance Studies                                               |                                                                 |
| 3. THET 698: Graduate Seminar in Theatre/Theory  
  OR  
  THET 608: Graduate Seminar in Performance Studies                          | 3. Elective: Chosen from recommended list of affiliated courses            | **Recommended Elective**  
  2. THET 711: Critical Research Methods                                     |                                                                 |
| 4. THET 606: Teaching Theatre (one-credit)                                 |                                                                          |                                                                          |                                                                          |
| TOTAL: 10 credits                                                          | TOTAL: 9 credits                                                          | TOTAL: 6 credits                                                          | TOTAL: 6 credits                                                          |

Completion of gateway paper in THET 601  
Fast-track students must apply for PhD program  
Completion of publishable quality manuscript

Please note that for a student pursuing the fast-track into the doctoral program, we will recommend a total of 34 credits towards the degree, but that those credits will include at least three out of the four doctoral methods courses required for the PhD, so that a student entering the PhD program directly from the MA, will essentially have a full semester’s worth of credits to bring into the program.
Additionally, we will not encourage students who cannot or do not elect to complete a thesis to fast-track into the doctoral program, though of course they are free to apply to the program once they complete their MA degree.