November 5, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bonnie Thornton Dill  
Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

FROM: Elizabeth Beise  
Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to Modify the Master of Fine Arts in Performance (PCC log no. 13000)

At its meeting on October 4, 2013, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula, and Courses approved your proposal to modify the curriculum of the Master of Fine Arts in Performance. A copy of the approved proposal is attached.

The change is effective Spring 2014. Please ensure that the change is fully described in the Graduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials, and that all advisors are informed.

MDC/  
Enclosure

cc: Marilee Lindemann, Chair, Senate PCC Committee  
Sarah Bauder, Office of Student Financial Aid  
Reka Montfort, University Senate  
Erin Howard, Division of Information Technology  
Pam Phillips, Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment  
Anne Turkos, University Archives  
Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar  
Alex Chen, Graduate School  
Alene Moyer, College of Arts and Humanities  
Leigh Wilson Smiley, School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM/UNIT PROPOSAL

• Please email the rest of the proposal as an MSWord attachment
to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

• Please submit the signed form to the Office of the Associate Provost
for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus.

College/School:
Please also add College/School Unit Code-First 8 digits:
Unit Codes can be found at: https://hypprod.umd.edu/Html_Reports/units.htm

Department/Program:
Please also add Department/Program Unit Code-Last 7 digits: 01202700

Type of Action (choose one):
X Curriculum change (including informal specializations)   □ New academic degree/award program
□ Curriculum change for an LEP Program                   □ New Professional Studies award iteration
□ Renaming of program or formal Area of Concentration    □ New Minor
□ Addition/deletion of formal Area of Concentration      □ Request to create an online version of an existing
□ Suspend/delete program                                 program

Italics indicate that the proposed program action must be presented to the full University Senate for consideration.

Summary of Proposed Action:

The School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies is submitting a revision of the Master’s of Fine Arts in
Performance by proposing the following actions:

1. Shift the order of when some courses are offered, change the title of some of the existing courses, and shift the number
   of credit hours for some of the existing courses.

2. Adding electives in the curriculum to allow students cross-disciplinary learning and engagement with other units in the
   College of Arts and Humanities and the University at large. This is particularly important for developing thesis
   committee members.

3. Enhancing course curriculum and syllabi to more deeply focus on developing the artist, scholar, teacher, entrepreneur,
in order to enhance our graduate’s abilities to be competitive in a growing national and international market.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES - Please print name, sign, and date. Use additional lines for multi-unit programs.

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. University Senate Chair (if required)

8. Senior Vice President and Provost

5-NOV-2013
As the Master of Fine Arts in Performance (MFAP) is a new program, the performance faculty expected that revisions to the original curriculum would be necessary as we assessed the success or challenges of the curriculum that was initially created. The Performance faculty assessed the program each semester examining what was successful in meeting overall program learning outcomes and where changes were required in order for the program to thrive and to be a leading MFA in Performance program nationally and internationally.
PROPOSAL FOR REVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

Master of Fine Arts in Performance

SCHOOL OF THEATRE, DANCE, AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Dean Bonnie T. Dill

Proposed Initiation Date: Fall 2014
Now, at the end of the third year of the first cohort of seven MFA candidates, the performance faculty in the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies (TDPS) faculty has concluded that several changes are necessary to the MFA in Performance Program. These changes focus on:

- Maximizing faculty strengths
- Fine tuning the focus of parts of the training to meet the market pressures that are impacting performance artists in the new economy
- Focus on developing the artist, scholar, teacher, entrepreneur
- Aligning learning outcomes to the information garnered in the experience of the first cohort in performance candidates
- Create more cross disciplinary opportunities within TDPS, ARHU and across the University

As the Master of Fine Arts in Performance (MFAP) is a new program, the performance faculty expected that revisions to the original curriculum would be necessary as we assessed the success or challenges of the curriculum that was initially created. The Performance faculty assessed the program each semester examining what was successful in meeting overall program learning outcomes and where changes were required in order for the program to thrive and to be a leading MFA in Performance program nationally and internationally. One consideration is that the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies is creating a new identity as a School rather than as separate departments (dance and theatre). Given the new identity of the School, the Performance Faculty consulted with the MFA in Dance Program faculty in order to align and create consistency and cohesion between the two performance programs (the MFA in Dance, and the MFA in Performance). In addition, in 2011-12 TDPS was externally reviewed and the new MFA in Performance program was closely examined. Some of the proposed revisions were developed from the external reviewers’ observations, assessments and recommendations.

**Focus of new MFA in Performance Curriculum:**

The new curriculum is built with three points of focus:

1. Creating
2. Performing
3. Teaching

**Creating** will include a knowledge of performance history, the ability to conduct strong research, to devise original productions, to write using dramatic structure and action theory, to direct, to be one’s own marketing/entrepreneur/production expert and to clearly articulate a creative vision.

**Performing** includes facility with the following techniques: communication, listening, collaboration, movement, voice, styles (Shakespeare, Greeks, Commedia, puppetry, etc.), taking and giving direction, and serving a greater vision.
**Teaching** includes the ability to teach with confidence, to understand and embrace individual learning styles, to incorporate time management skills, and class management. This focus will include the ability to articulate technique, assess and evaluate individual students and groups, to build curriculum and a teaching portfolio, and to conduct assessments in a constructive manner.

**NEW AND AMENDED COURSES**

The Performance Faculty refined and refocused a number of courses based upon knowledge garnered in the three years of the first cohort of MFA students. One of the most significant proposed changes in the first two years is a division of the Performance Studio (6 credits), originally designed for the first four semesters, into three separate movement, voice, and performance courses (2 credits each) each semester for the first three semesters. This division of the original Performance Studio courses will make the acquisition and strengthening of individuated performance skills much more focused and aligned in the first three semesters of the student’s study.

The industry standard for studio-based courses is 1 credit=2 hours of studio-based work. Therefore 2 credits for each course are equal to 4 laboratory hours of studio class per week. This is, in performing arts, a necessary length of exposure to skills training each week.

Another change we deemed necessary to fulfill the vision of excellence in the program was to include a number of Performance, Performance Theory, and special topics electives in the last three semesters of the program. These were inserted in order to allow the artists whom we admit to the program to pursue, with strong mentorship from the Performance faculty, the interests and courses which will best serve their individual creative, performance, and teaching goals for their future lives as artist-scholars.

We also include the possibility and will encourage the next MFA in Performance cohort to take two electives outside of the School of Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies, either within the College of Arts and Humanities, or in other Colleges on our campus. This will promote more cross-disciplinary collaborations and research, and provide the opportunity for the MFAP candidates to meet professors who may be appropriate to serve on their thesis defense committees.
ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM

The Performance faculty will review graduate student creative, performance, research and teaching reports at the end of each year to assess effectiveness of course structure in eliciting excellence from the students. At the end of YEAR ONE, YEAR TWO and YEAR THREE there will be a compilation review of student portfolios and three will be a compilation review of student exit interviews. Performance faculty will assess curriculum for effectiveness in conveying performance techniques, creative expression, entrepreneurship, teaching pedagogy and performance research and dramaturgy.

Assessment will be determined by the following; teaching evaluations (MFAP candidates and faculty), quality of performance work and demonstration of learned techniques into performance work, quality of teaching portfolio, quality of thesis performance project and written report, internship report from professional artistic organization, placement of MFAP candidates in internships and projects during summers and winter term.

For assessment of the teaching portfolio, elements will be collected after completion of THET 606 - Teaching Theatre taken during the first semester of the program. Student and faculty evaluations will be collected after each Teaching Assistantship in the first two years of the program and after each course taught in years two and three of the program. After the third year the performance faculty will evaluate a full teaching portfolio. The teaching portfolio will consist of a one page statement of teaching philosophy, copies of syllabi for courses taught, and teaching evaluations from students and faculty.

For the thesis performance projects, all students will include a video of the live performance and a written thesis document. The written document will include; an abstract, an artistic statement for the thesis project written in on paragraph, documentation of research influences, inclusive of visual accompaniment, (no more than 10 pages), and analysis of the process from page to stage, (10-25 pages) which will include the initial idea, how the idea changed in the process, the design collaboration process, the writing/devising process, the rehearsal process, the tech process, the performance process. The performance thesis document will also include a reflection of artistic and collaborative relationships; what worked, what did not work (inclusive of actors, musicians, sound designer, scenic designer, lighting designer, costume designer, projections designer, co-director(s), dramaturg, publicity, outreach, thesis committee), audience feedback, what the candidate learned, and what the future of the project is.

This performance thesis document, which will be uploaded to the Graduate School, will also include the performance script.
EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Evaluation and assessment of individual students work will be reflected in the grade earned for each course, individual student conferences with the entire Performance Faculty at the end of each semester to discuss and review performance, creative, research and teaching progress, (shared documentation reviewed will consist of scripts, videos of projects, scholarly papers, syllabi for courses taught, and teaching evaluations; student and faculty observations), one on one evaluations with individual course instructors which will be included during the end of semester exit interviews, individual conferences with faculty mentor, Head of the MFA in Performance Program each semester, and individual conferences with faculty teaching mentor (the teaching mentor is the faculty member who teaches a course for which and MFA Performance candidate is the teaching assistant), each semester.
**Proposed New Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice I</td>
<td>Thet 630</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verse Analysis</td>
<td>Thet 627</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Movement Awareness</td>
<td>Thet 637</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Performance Practicum</td>
<td>Thet 648</td>
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<td>Semester 1</td>
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<td>Movement Fundamentals</td>
<td>Thet 647</td>
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<td>Semester 2</td>
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<td>Voice II</td>
<td>Thet 640</td>
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<td>Semester 2</td>
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<td>Character Development</td>
<td>Thet 616</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playwriting</td>
<td>Thet 632</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Voice III</td>
<td>Thet 650</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Semester 3</td>
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<td>Movement Styles</td>
<td>Thet 657</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Ensemble Devised Performance</td>
<td>Thet 652</td>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>Semester 4</td>
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<td>Thesis Development</td>
<td>Thet 642</td>
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<td>Semester 4</td>
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<td>Performance Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Thet 660</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Semester 5</td>
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<td>Semester 1</td>
<td>MFA Curriculum 2010-2013</td>
<td>MFA Curriculum 2014 – Future</td>
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<td>Teaching Theatre</td>
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<td>Hist. &amp; Theory of Performance</td>
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<td>Performance Studio</td>
<td>THET620</td>
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<td>Winter</td>
<td>Writing for Solo Performance</td>
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<td>Semester 2</td>
<td>Performance Studio</td>
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<td>Performance Lab</td>
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<td>Independent Study</td>
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<td>Performance Studio</td>
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<td>Solo Performance</td>
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<td>Alexander Technique</td>
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<td>Semester 4</td>
<td>Performance Studio</td>
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<td>Special Topics in Perf.</td>
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<td>Performance Lab – Alexander Technique</td>
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<td>Semester 6</td>
<td>Production Practices</td>
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<td>Performance Internship</td>
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<td>Master's Thesis Research</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Performance Lab</td>
<td>THET629A</td>
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All of the MFAP students will take all of the courses together as a cohort, in the sequence as outlined. The curriculum is designed so that all of the students track and can graduate on time, at the end of the three year program. If a student needs to withdraw from the program for a semester, we will work with that student to make accommodations.

The majority of the courses will be taught by members of the Performance, Production and History, theory and Performance Studies Faculty in the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies. We recently hired a new member of our faculty whose focus is acting and playwriting to supplement the specialties of our current faculty. The teaching load for current Theatre, Dance, and Performance
Studies faculty will not change. Below is a detailed list of who will be teaching which course.

Leslie Felbain, Associate Professor will teach THET 637, THET 616, THET 647, THET 657
Leigh Wilson Smiley, Associate Professor will teach THET 630
Ashley Smith, Assistant Professor will teach THET 627, THET 640, THET 650
Jennifer Barclay, Assistant Professor will teach THET 632, THET 641, THET 642, THET 697
Faedra Carpenter, Assistant Professor will teach THET 608D
Cary Gillett, Production Manager, will teach THET 677 and THET 660

THET 616, THET 648, THET 652, THET 606 will be rotated courses taught by TDPS faculty. THET 619 and THET 660 (when not taught by Cary Gillett) will be taught by a guest artist. THET 617 will be an external internship followed by a faculty mentor. The chair of each student’s thesis committee will supervise THET 799. The revised curriculum allows for MFAP students to take their electives outside of TDPS either in the College of Arts and Humanities or Colleges across the campus.