

REQUEST TO RE-DEPARTMENTALIZE DANCE PROGRAM

Peck School of the Arts

April 14, 2003

MOTION

Re-departmentalize the Dance Program by separating it from the current Department of Theatre and Dance in the Peck School of the Arts, effective with the beginning of the next fiscal year on July 1, 2003.

RATIONALE

The Dance Program within the Department of Theatre and Dance in the Peck School of the Arts effectively operates as a department. It has distinct degree programs and requirements, distinct faculty and staff, a separate budget, and even separate catalog sections in the undergraduate and graduate bulletins. As a program it enjoys decision-making autonomy from the Theatre program on budget, personnel recommendations, curricular development, and performance activities that relate to Dance issues. Although Dance and Theatre faculty comprise the current combined department, they have granted each other autonomy on issues specific to their respective disciplines. Reestablishment of the Dance Program as a department would formalize what has been operating since 1991.

Reestablishment of the Dance Department would benefit its recruitment efforts in attracting more and better students and faculty. This separation would also benefit the Theatre program by allowing their faculty and staff to more effectively pursue their efforts to reestablish the Professional Theater Training Program (PTTP). The separation of Dance from Theatre makes pedagogic, curricular, budget, and practical sense for the university, the school, and the students. This separation can be easily accomplished with minor reallocation of existing resources within the current department.

HISTORY

Dance had been a department from 1963 to 1982, but was merged with Theatre for budget reasons in 1982. Loss of dedicated faculty lines and low enrollments suspended the Dance Program from 1986-1989. Since its reactivation in 1989 it has experienced phenomenal growth in enrollment. It is now the third largest student credit hour producer among the school's five departments. Dance has 7 dedicated faculty, 3 degree programs offering 78 courses, and 106 declared and intended undergraduate majors and 20 graduate students. The strength of its degree programs and nationally recognized faculty has significantly elevated its local, regional, and national reputation as an outstanding Dance program.

STRUCTURE

The current Department of Theatre and Dance would be separated into two departments; the Department of Theatre and the Department of Dance. The current department structure now has 7 dedicated Dance faculty members and 9 dedicated Theatre faculty members. The current department has a single, combined executive committee, one department chair, and one associate chair from the other program. The new structure

would require separate executive committees and separate department chairs and associate chairs. The Dance Department would have 5 tenured executive committee members and 2 untenured faculty members. The Theatre Department would have 7 tenured executive committee members and 2 untenured faculty members. Both department chairs would report to the dean of the Peck School of the Arts. The Department of Theatre would retain its current staff and office space. The Dance Department would receive a program assistant staff person through reassignment of an existing line within the school. Dance already occupies its own separate offices, so no new space is required.

ADVANTAGES

The reestablishment of the Dance Department would allow both the Dance and Theatre Departments clearer and direct responsibility over their distinct programs and students without having to seek participation and recommendations from each other's faculty. It would provide equal recognition and representation within the school to have distinct Dance and Theatre departments. It would provide each department chair a clearer line of authority and communication to the Dean and other campus authorities. This separation would also provide each department with clearer missions and enhanced abilities to recruit Dance and Theatre students for their distinct programs. Enrollment growth in both departments will be greater if they recruit students as separate and distinct programs. The reestablishment of the Dance Department, and the parallel redefinition of the Theatre Department, would be consistent with program structures at most universities. The combination of dance and theatre curricula, faculty, and resources into a single department is unusual and inconsistent with the practice in higher education.

TIMELINE

The request will be submitted to the Faculty Senate's May meeting for their consideration. It will also be submitted to the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee, the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, and the Graduate Faculty Council for their information, review, and comment. Following those reviews, it will be sent to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for his consideration. If approval is granted, implementation is scheduled for the beginning of the next fiscal year on July 1, 2003.

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