1. Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the BA program, graduates will be prepared to:
1. Demonstrate a literacy of "language of the stage": analyze a script, explain its historical and contemporary structure, as well as the social and political effects of a performance of the script.
2. Interpret stage events: read gesture as action, translate rhythm of design elements into predictable responses from observers.
3. Retrieve, evaluate and effectively use information to address pertinent research questions in theatre.
4. Tell original stories through live performance.
5. Demonstrate acting skills and the development of character for the stage.
6. Apply the basic skills necessary to plan, perform, produce, write and direct for the theatre industry.
7. Demonstrate professional-level skills in practical production work.
8. Make use of current theatrical technology in the areas of design, design implementation, and operation.
9. Produce a scholarly and/or creative project based on the individual's intended area of contribution in the professional industry.

2. Explanation of Methods

The following table lists the four assessment methods along with implementation details and outcomes addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description/Target</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>Objectives addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review Board</td>
<td>Faculty from various disciplines within the school meet to evaluate students' work on internships, practicum projects, classroom progress, self-evaluations, and progress in the degree program.</td>
<td>Each BA student is evaluated once per year.</td>
<td>Head of the BA program</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency Exam</td>
<td>Pass/Fail written essay exam based on the analysis and interpretation of a given script.</td>
<td>One occurrence near the end of the sophomore year / first year in the program for transfer students.</td>
<td>Head of the BA Program</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio &amp; Resume</td>
<td>Produce and present a visual display of selected work by each student that showcases the best work of the student and produce a resume to professional norms. (THEA 466)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Head of the BA Program</td>
<td>3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Evaluation</td>
<td>Using a given set of guidelines, each student evaluates his growth and development, and sets goals for the coming year.</td>
<td>One occurrence at the end of the senior year.</td>
<td>Head of the BA Review Board</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Available Data.

- **Review Board**
  - **Activity:** The entire BA faculty meets as one body to examine each student's progress. Topics addressed include, but are not limited to, class performance (GPA), teamwork, leadership, behavior, work ethic, and professionalism. Prior to 2008, the Board met with students individually to discuss their strong and weak points and make recommendations for the student to improve their weaknesses. As the number of students has grown in the program, the Board’s function has been focused more on meeting with students who demonstrate significant weaknesses that need to be addressed and discuss consequences, including probation and dismissal, of not following the recommendations. The Review Board also works with the student to set goals for the following year and their long term ambitions.
  - **Target:** The goal of the Review Board is to maintain 90% retention of students in the program.
  - **Findings:** The Board has not retained specific records regarding the exact number of students who have been disciplined or dismissed. However, from 2007, less than 5% of majors have been dismissed due to poor performance, and fewer than 8% have been placed on probation. The opinion of the Review Board is that the goals have been met.

- **Competency Exam**
  - **Activity:** Students must demonstrate, in writing, the capacity to analyze a play and propose a coherent and aesthetically satisfying production showing sensitivity to all elements of design, casting, and performance.
  - **Target:** 90% of majors to pass the competency exam on the first attempt.
  - **Findings:** Although this exam is administered with rigor and regularity, the results of the exams have not been archived from previous years. The recent emphasis on statistical measures of student progress in the form of long-term assessment alerts us to the need for a stable and consistent archive of results of these exams. From 2007 to 2011, the pass rate for BA Students taking the competency exam was 100%. However, during that time period, approximately 5% students failed their first attempt at the exam. They were counseled by the BA Review Board to seek additional help through the NIU writing center, and passed the exam on the second attempt. The opinion of the Review Board is that the goals have been met.

- **Portfolio & Resume**
  - **Activity:** During the final semester of the senior year, each student produces and presents a visual display of selected work that showcases their best work, complete with a resume that adheres to professional norms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Review Board</th>
<th>Competency Exam</th>
<th>Portfolio &amp; Resume</th>
<th>Self Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage Literacy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Skills</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Practicum</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Target: 90% of the students produce a portfolio and a resume that would meet the standards of the profession.

Findings: Currently, there is no quantifiable evaluation tool in place. The student receives verbal feedback from individual faculty members on a regular basis throughout the semester, as part of THEA 466, The Business of Theatre. From 2007 to 2011, 100% of the students in the BA program have produced a professional resume and portfolio. The opinion of the Review Board is that the goals have been exceeded.

Self-Evaluation

Activity: In writing, students review their experience in each of their classes and production assignments. They reflect on their strengths and weaknesses as revealed by the challenges of the year. Students are further asked to report on experiences or circumstances that have either strengthened or weakened their resolve to continue in the program. In addition, they are asked to share with faculty their appreciation of the strength and weaknesses of the program. Do they have any suggestions for changes in the curriculum or its execution? As a further service to the school, they are asked to share the advice they would give to incoming students in the program.

Target: 90% completion of the evaluation tool.

Findings: Although this evaluation is administered with rigor and regularity, the results have not been archived from previous years. The recent emphasis on statistical measures of student progress in the form of long term assessment alerts us to the need for a stable and consistent archive of results of these evaluations. From 2007 to 2011, approximately 10% of students failed to complete the self-evaluation, and were summoned before the Review Board. All of the self-evaluations that were completed were deemed acceptable. The opinion of the Review Board is that the goals have been met, but improvement is needed.

4. Use of Results.

The BA faculty has a system in place, the BA Review Board, which evaluates the progress and performance of each student in all aspects of their professional growth. Prior to 2007, the faculty met with each student every year to discuss their progress. Feedback from the students, as well as an increase in enrollment in the major area, prompted the faculty to begin meeting only with students who are not showing satisfactory progress or are deficient in some areas. This has allowed the faculty to focus their time more on correcting the path of students who need more guidance.

As a result of the change in focus of the BA Review Board, the faculty has noted an increase in the number of students who have passed the competency exam on the first sitting, as well as an increase in the quality of the work submitted.

Although no empirical evidence can be cited regarding the portfolio and resume reviews, the quality of the portfolios and resumes have been steadily improving over the past four years.

The self-evaluation tool makes the faculty members aware of the student’s perception of themselves and their investment in the learning process. It allows an alignment of student and faculty perceptions to develop a path that will lead them forward. Consistent and regular application of the
self-evaluation encourages students to set realistic short term and long term goals, and establish a solid plan for achieving them.

5. Gaps in Current Data

As noted above, the recent emphasis communicated to the faculty had clarified the need for better record keeping and comparison of annual results. While the results are applied at the time of the evaluation, they have not been archived, so “gaps” are difficult to quantify at this time. Beginning with 2011-2012, each member of the BA faculty will submit survey-based documentation on the evaluation tools, and records of those surveys will be collated and recorded.

As a result of the discussions prompted by the formation of the assessment committee in this school, comparisons have been made between assessment tools from different areas. The BA faculty is planning to adopt a word-based evaluation rubric currently in use by another area within the School in an effort to standardize the evaluation methods used by all faculty members in the School.

6. Resources Needed.

The school requests support (approximately $1000.00) for a graduate assistant to perform 80 hours of computer work, hours to be worked between February 2012 and June 2012. This person would be expected to create a series of online surveys that will allow faculty members to complete evaluations via Survey Monkey, and an Excel spreadsheet that will tabulate the results in a format that can be recorded, archived, and compared to results from other years.

The school requests funding for five licenses for Microsoft Office ($75 each, $375 total) so that the Area Heads and Assessment Committee members have the ability to enter and process the results of assessment tools.