

August 31, 2023

Dear Dean Jackson and Director Joshua Williamson:

In accordance with the provisions of [Board of Governors Rule 2.2](#), the Program Review Appeal Hearing for the School of Theatre and Dance was held on August 28, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

The Appeal was of the following Preliminary Recommendation(s):

- MFA Acting: Discontinuance
- MFA Costume Design and Technology: Development of a Cooperative Program
 - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with this program.
 - The unit will discontinue this major and combine all production-related MFA majors into a single new major.
- MFA Lighting Design and Technology: Development of a Cooperative Program
 - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with this program.
 - The unit will discontinue this major and combine all production-related MFA majors into a single new major.
- MFA Scenic Design and Technology: Development of a Cooperative Program
 - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with this program.
 - The unit will discontinue this major and combine all production-related MFA majors into a single new major.
- MFA Technical Direction: Development of a Cooperative Program
 - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with this program.
 - The unit will discontinue this major and combine all production-related MFA majors into a single new major.

The members of the Program Review Appeal Committee for this unit were:

- Paul Kreider, Vice Provost
- Lou Slimak, Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment
- Richard Thomas, Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs
- Sandra Schwartz, Associate Dean, College of Creative Arts
- Brad Humphreys, Associate Dean, Chambers College
- Sean Bulger, Associate Dean, College of Applied Human Sciences
- Scott Wayne, Faculty Senate representative

The following individuals participated in the presentation of the Appeal for the unit: Joshua Williamson and Gerald McGonigle. These individuals and/or this unit submitted additional documentation and information in advance of the Hearing.

Result of the Program Review Appeal

Taking the information presented into consideration, the Committee has made the following determinations:

- Grant the appeal of MFA Acting: Discontinuance by a vote of 7 to 0.
- Grant the appeal of development of cooperative program to include all MFA production-related majors into a single major by a vote of 7 to 0.
- Grant the appeal of the reduction of the number of faculty positions in the unit to 16 by a vote of 4 to 3.
 - Amend the recommendation to reduce the number of faculty in the unit to 17.

The key components that led to the Committee's determination(s) include the following:

- The MFA in Acting is central to all School operations and both undergraduate and graduate programs;
- There are no significant savings or efficiencies to be gained through the development of a cooperative program for the MFA production-related majors;
- The performance faculty have already been reduced by two and those faculty cannot be further reduced without impact to the graduate and undergraduate instruction throughout the School; and
- One further faculty member will be reduced to bring the School further into alignment with FTE-to-student ratios.

Review by the WVU Board of Governors

As a result of the [Board of Governors Rule 2.2](#), the Program Review Process and Appeal Hearing, the following Provost's Office Final Recommendation(s) will be placed on the Public Agenda for the September 15, 2023, Board of Governors meeting for a vote by the Board.

- MFA Acting: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- MFA Costume Design and Technology: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- MFA Lighting Design and Technology: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- MFA Scenic Design and Technology: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- MFA Technical Direction: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- Reduce the number of faculty in the unit from the current number to 17

The following recommendations were not appealed and will also be presented to the Board of Governors as they are listed below:

- BFA Acting: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- BA Dance: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- BFA Musical Theatre: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- BA Theatre: Continue at the Current Level of Activity with Specific Action
 - Reduce the number of faculty positions associated with this program.
- BFA Theatre Design and Technology: Continue at the Current Level of Activity
- BFA Puppetry: Development of a Cooperative Program

- This major will be discontinued and merged into the BA in Theatre as an Area of Emphasis.

Reduction of Faculty Positions

Through this process and as a result of the Appeal decision(s), the Provost's Office has determined that the number of faculty positions in the unit should be reduced from its current number to 17.

If this recommendation is approved by the Board of Governors, the Provost's Office, in consultation with the dean's office and the chair (where applicable), will develop the Reduction in Force Plan, which will determine the specific faculty members who will be retained or subject to a reduction in force / non-renewals for this unit. Additionally, that process will include discussion of which faculty positions can be eliminated as of May 9, 2024, and which positions may be needed for one or two years beyond May 9, 2024, for teach-out programming. Faculty will learn on or around October 16, 2023, whether their positions will be eliminated or retained, or if they will be asked to stay on for a longer period of time to complete teach-out programming.

Providing Comments to WVU Board of Governors

Individuals have two opportunities to provide comments to the Board of Governors in advance of the September 15 vote. First, they can provide a written comment about a Provost's Office Final Recommendation or about WVU Transformation generally by completing this [comment form](#). To ensure that the Board members have appropriate time to review any comments received, we ask that they please submit comments at least two days in advance of September 14.

Second, if they wish to sign up to speak at a Board meeting, they may do so by completing [this form](#). If possible, individuals should try to submit their request to speak at least two days in advance of September 14. However, they will still be able to sign up in-person in advance of the start of the September 14 meeting. Depending on the number of individuals that sign up to speak, the Board may limit the number of speakers who may address a particular topic. The time that each speaker can speak will also be limited based upon the number of speakers.

Notifying Your Faculty and Staff

You must notify the faculty and appropriate staff within this unit of the Provost Office's Final Recommendations by forwarding this email and CCing Associate Provost for Curriculum and Assessment Lou Slimak (Louis.slimak@mail.wvu.edu). This notification should occur **immediately after receiving this letter**.

Additional Resources

The Provost's Office is currently working toward securing services with a career outplacement organization to assist faculty and staff who are affected by the current non-renewal or reduction in force processes. Specific details about this service and how to participate will be forthcoming.

Additionally, the WVU Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) is a free, confidential resource for all active and retired faculty, staff and their dependents (i.e., spouse or child). It is a safe place where employees can talk about any struggles or concerns they are facing and determine the best

way to address them. To utilize FSAP, call their office at [304-293-5590](tel:304-293-5590) or email fsap@hsc.wvu.edu to schedule a free appointment with a counselor.

Finally, information on the process and timeline is available at: <https://transformation.wvu.edu/resources>.

Sincerely,

WVU Office of the Provost