



2016-17 Academic Department Annual Report

Academic Department: Theater
Document Prepared By: Kaechele

Annual Report Submission Instructions:

This Annual Report of your Academic Department is intended to serve as a summary of departmental activities over the past year and as an outline of plans for the upcoming year.

Please note that responses are limited to the space provided below for each prompt and do not need to be written in narrative form (you are welcome to use bullet points/lists, as appropriate).

Please submit your Academic Department 2016-17 Annual Report to your Dean via email by May 31st.

For your reference, prior year reports (2011-2015) can be found on the Instructional Support website, <http://www.grcc.edu/instructionalsupport/departmentyearendreports>. If you have any questions about the 2015-16 reports entered into WEAVEonline, please contact Sheila Jones, Dean of Instructional Support, sheilajones@grcc.edu or x4289.

Part I: Report on 2016-17 Progress

Part I is intended to provide a “big picture” overview of your department’s activities during this past academic year. When completing the sections below, please consider the main points/highlights of each category.

Current Year Goals & Outcomes

This section asks you to provide details about the status of your department’s goals and outcomes for this past year. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text boxes below.

2016-17 Goals for Department

Instruct all theater courses and receive high student evaluations (4+) for all adjunct and full time faculty STATUS ONGOING The responses for Fall Semester for all faculty reached the expected level. At this point, Winter evaluations for adjuncts have not been delivered to me, but my own did reach this benchmark for winter semester as well.

Produce 3 faculty directed and designed productions for GRCC Players STATUS SUCCESSFUL The three shows produced by the GRCC Players were all well received by the students and the community. **Facing Our Truth**, a series on one act plays in response to the Trayvon Martin killing, was the highlight of the season in terms of academic impact. As part of this production, we had members of the GRCC community respond to the production in a post-show discussion with the audience. Panel members included Ennis Young, Kate Byerwalter, and Bill Pink, among others. The others, **Somewhere in Between**, and **A Further Education**, played to smaller audiences, but challenged our college performers appropriately. Nearly 700 people attended GRCC Players productions this season.

Select GRCC Players Productions for 2017-18 season STATUS SUCCESSFUL

The 2017-18 season for the GRCC Players will include:

Detroit '67-Winner of the Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired by American History. This is a play about an African American family, set in the midst of the Detroit riots of 1967.

This is Our Youth-Set in 1982 in New York, the play follows three teens struggling to cope with life in the materialistic Reagan era.

Dead Man's Cell Phone-a fantastical play that explores the way that technology both connects and separates us in the present day digital world.

Facilitate all productions and events in Spectrum Theater.STATUS ONGOING

4/5 of the Actors' Theatre season is now complete, as is 2/3 of the Jewish Theatre season. The GRCC Players calendar is complete. In addition, we have hosted some outside events, including Art Prize, the Dental pinning ceremony, and the Integrated Arts event for future students. This is our 20th year producing shows in the venue, and we have a mostly experienced and professional group of artists and technicians working alongside our students to produce consistently high quality shows.

Work with administration to create general Theater Premajor, and articulated Premajors with GVSU and WMU.STATUS UNSUCCESSFUL. Our courses are strongly aligned with both 4 year institutions, but GVSU is resisting the creation of new pre-majors at this point in time. Given the disparity in requirements between theater programs across the state, a general pre-major appears to be less than desirable. I have had initial discussions with Aquinas College to solidify an agreement with their program, but the negotiations are still at an early stage.

Work with our community partners (Actors' Theatre, Jewish Theatre Grand Rapids, and Heritage Theatre Group) and GRCC administration to resolve budget differences. STATUS SUCCESSFUL

Beginning in the Fall of 2017, the community theater groups will be under a new contract with the college that provides less assistance at a higher cost, in an effort to control costs within the program.

Work last of GRCC Theater courses into Curriculog software. STATUS SUCCESSFUL

The last set of courses (TH114,115,116,214,215) were completed in Curriculog and have successfully made it through the channels.

Departmental Professional Development

In this section, please provide details about your department's emphasis for professional development during this year. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text box below.

Much of this year's professional development focused on cross-training staff and faculty to cover what will be missing from the educational component of our mission with the removal of our lighting and sound specialist from our staff. While the job itself will be farmed out to be covered by each theater group separately, we have made some upgrades to technology and trained staff to assist students in learning with the new equipment. This is especially apparent in our "black box" venue, where the new lighting control technology now mimics the software used in the main theater, and the new fixtures essentially duplicate the variables found in the main stage. By helping students train in the smaller environment, we are hoping that they will soon be proficient enough to provide quality assistance on main stage shows.

Other faculty professional development is included in FPE.

Staff professional development :

Poquette

- Queer & Trans 101, Nov. 2016
- Handling Medical Emergencies, Nov. 2016

Urbane

- Zero Based Budgeting, Oct. 2016
- Seeds of Growth luncheon, Oct. 2016
- WMPCC Equity & Inclusion conference at GVSU, Oct. 2016
- Queer & Trans 101, Nov. 2016

Dreher

- Handling Medical Emergencies, ed2go/GRCC - November 2016

Departmental Advising Plan & Outcomes

In this section, please describe your department's advising plan and outcomes for this year. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text boxes below.

Like every year, as the sole full-time theater faculty at GRCC, I advise every student who looks for theater specific advice. The students schedule a 30 to 60-minute meeting (posters throughout the theater let all theater students know how to arrange these meetings). Often the meeting is used to discuss transfer options, usually in state or to a Chicago area Theater or Film school.

Occasionally, students are also looking for a technical theater career path, or specific course or audition advice. Serious theater students consistently use this opportunity multiple times throughout their stay at GRCC, and graduates return to provide feedback on their four year institutions, so my transfer advice remains current. Over the years, we have developed a network of theater professionals working in West Michigan, Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles, so when it comes time for a former student to use their education for benefit, we are able to connect them to fellow alum in those areas who can assist them in establishing themselves in the industry. Theater requires a tremendous amount of persistence in order to achieve success, so these connections help students stay positive as they attempt to succeed in the industry.

Program Accreditation Updates

In this section, please provide details regarding any program accreditation or re-accreditation that occurred this past year, if applicable. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text boxes below.

N/A-The minimum number of full time faculty required for accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Theatre is three. While our program is too small to qualify, we stay current with accreditation requirements and can proudly say that the vast majority of our courses transfer to the 2 NAST accredited West Michigan colleges.



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Perkins & Key Performance Indicators

In this section, please discuss Perkins and Key Performance Indicators for programs (total student enrollment, demographic profile, new students, student progress rate (transferred, graduated, enrolled), number of graduates, graduate employment rate, time to completion), if applicable. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text boxes below.

N/A

Learning Outcomes Assessment Data & Findings on Past Year's Projects

In this section, please summarize your department's assessment work for this year, outlining the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) or Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) assessed, the assessment measure, the findings, and the improvements planned based on the findings. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text boxes below.

TH248 Student Learning Outcome Assessment-Fall Semester 2016

One of my outcomes in TH248 is "Assess if the ideas of a culture can be seen in the plays that culture produces." This has traditionally been a difficult topic for students to deal with, because it requires a fundamental understanding of the beliefs of a culture (in this case, the culture of the Golden Age of Greece), and the ability to perceive these beliefs in the words or actions of characters in the production being viewed (obviously a critical thinking challenge). I believe that this is one of the most important outcomes, since a Humanities course should focus on the understanding of cultures different from our own. The students submit an essay that shows a strong connection of a character's words or actions to each specific concept introduced in the lecture, and I am going to compare the success rates of the three types of classes (Middle College, GRCC in seat course, and online course) to determine if I need to change my lecture delivery in any or all of them. The beliefs covered in the lecture/small group discussion are humanism, rationalism, and idealism, and I will break down the results by both individual concepts, as well as the number of concepts each student can strongly connect as determined by their essay answers. I am hoping that by reflecting on the results, I will find weaknesses in my methodology and attempt to remedy them.

Results

If I use the standard of a C or better, my online success rate is 92%, my Middle College success rate is 69%, and my GRCC in seat success rate is 85%. If I use the standard of 80%, my online success rate plunges to 52%, my WMC success rate dips to 51%, and my GRCC in seat success rate drops to 54%. This is interesting data to wrestle with. I know the question is probably the most difficult question of the semester, because it requires analyzing a 110-minute play that is not a vibrant production, a bit difficult to follow, and requires an agile mind to keep 3 ideas in play simultaneously. That said, I think I perceive an advantage in the on line class, because they have control of the material they are watching and can pause it if their mind is drifting. The WMC classes are disadvantaged by their closeness as a group which can be a distraction while watching a production together. So, with those things in mind, I find it really interesting that by varying the success standard, I suddenly see percentages coming into line across the board.

Another interesting fact is that there seems to be no correlation between the student's grade on this assignment and his/her overall grade in the class. Some of my marginal students performed better on this question than my more advanced students.

I'm wondering if that aforementioned fact stemmed from the notion that the marginal students felt more pressure to succeed at the end of the semester, while some of the others were not as concerned about their grade given their previous positive results.

I'm considering allowing an option for all students to see the production outside of class to see if the scores will align more with the on line success-however, I'm well aware that correlation is not the same as causation, and there may be many factors I'm not considering that are also in play here. Any advice in this area would be appreciated.

Part II: Plan for Upcoming Year

Part II is intended to provide a guide for your department's plans for the upcoming year with regards to the following: **Operational Goals and/or Plans, Curriculum Goals and/or Plans, Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans, and Advising Plans.** When answering the questions or completing the sections below, please consider the main points/highlights of each category.

A. Operational Goals and/or Plans

What are your departmental goals and plans for 2017-18?

Facilitate all productions and events in Spectrum Theater in the absence of a Theater Technician on staff. I perceive this to be one of the more time-consuming issues as we contractually shift to a new paradigm with regard to both community theaters and the college productions. As we work through these challenges, we will be determining budget revisions as well as production calendar issues, not to mention problem solving as new "sub-contractors" learn to work with our theater's lighting and sound technology.

Select GRCC Players Productions for 2018-19 season. This is an annual challenge requiring the reading of dozens of scripts by a collaborative committee-time consuming for certain, but really the best way I know of to select a diverse season that challenges our student performers. Often, comments in these meetings cause me to see a script in a new light, and a second reading reveals ideas not previously noticed by me (since each person on the committee reads from a different life perspective). As a result, the season that is ultimately selected is better than the one I would select if I were the sole voice in this arena. As I look at the 2017-18 season, I know that none of these scripts was high on my list 10 months earlier.

Create a new lighting system and procedures for Spectrum Theater that minimizes the impact of the loss of the Systems Technician. There is a need for a standardized system of basic lighting for the stage that is clearly marked with sufficient detail and interfaced with programming technology in such a way that a production lighting design can be overlaid with relative ease, insuring that the theater companies can keep producing the same number of shows without sacrificing quality. I have been studying this idea since it became apparent that our staffing would be impacted for the foreseeable future, and will have to have the initial design implemented after Heritage Theater leaves in August. This will require a significant amount of energy and time.

Produce 3 faculty directed and designed productions for GRCC Players. The lack of a Systems Technician will make this job much more difficult, since I will have to farm out her former responsibilities to members of the theater community who in most cases will be unfamiliar with our technology. Teaching them will no doubt fall to me. I am hoping that by using directors (including myself) that have previous experience directing GRCC productions that my problem solving in other areas will be minimized.



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What new information from external sources has influenced your planning for next year?

The information that our staffing will change in Fall of 2017 is the single biggest external force we as a program will have to accommodate. It will be difficult.

Are your goals targeting any Perkins or Key Performance indicators? If yes, please explain.

No



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What resources do you need to accomplish your departmental goals for the upcoming year?

There will definitely be new costs associated with the 3 GRCC Players productions, but they will be far out-weighted by the cost savings achieved by the removal of our systems technician and the revised contracts of the community theater groups. I am assuming that the college will see a net savings in excess of 60K in this area, but I can't be specific as to the actual new costs until I can negotiate with the contractors providing the work on my productions. I hope administration can step back and allow me to fight through the new challenges without the added pressure of itemizing costs that I may not be able to completely foresee.

Do you need support from other departments to accomplish these goals? If yes, please explain.

I shouldn't.



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Do you need professional development in order to accomplish these goals? If yes, please explain.

Absolutely. Most of this will be happening over the summer, and not cost the college money. I will be self-training for the most part in the lighting and sound arenas. I have some room in my contractor budget that will allow me to pay for a recording engineer familiar with our software.

For each of your departmental goals/plans/projects, please list the name of the lead faculty member(s) involved.

There is only one faculty member ultimately responsible for the previously listed goals- Tom Kaechele.

For each of your departmental goals/plans/projects, please provide a brief timeline for completion.

Facilitate all productions and events in Spectrum Theater in the absence of a Theatre Technician on staff. August 15- June 27 (Dates begin 2.5 weeks prior to opening of first show on the production calendar and end 3 days after close of the last main season show. While some minor work will also be ongoing during the summer of 2018 Heritage Theatre productions, their minimal budgets make the facilitation less of an issue.

Select GRCC Players Productions for 2018-19 season. Work on this item has already begun and will continue hopefully until April 15 of 2018. Often in the past we have finished later than that, but it is always the goal to be able to announce the season before our students leave for the summer.

Create a new lighting system and procedures for Spectrum Theater that minimizes the impact of the loss of the Systems Technician. The plan on paper should be completed before July 1, and the initial phase of hanging and programming completed by August 25. From there, the system will be monitored for the 1st season of shows and “tweaked” as needed.

Produce 3 faculty directed and designed productions for GRCC Players. Production meetings begin mid-July of this year and work continues until April 21, 2018 (the close of the last GRCC Players production).

B. Curriculum Goals and/or Plans

What are your departmental curriculum development goals and plans for 2017-18?

Work 1/3 GRCC Theater courses in Curriculog software. Now that every course is in the system, I'm hoping that TH247, 248, 260, 261, 262, and 270 can be revised (it's been 3 years for this group of classes). All but one are classes taught by full time faculty (read "me"), which makes their revisions a bit simpler (no committee meetings).

Continue work with administration and other institutions to create pathways for theater students. I believe that most of our students are in demand by the 4-year Michigan colleges and universities, and I want to use my agreement with GVSU's theater program to leverage more of these agreements, so that my students will know they can transfer more smoothly. After I finish with Aquinas College (hopefully by this summer's end), I want to reconnect with WMU's program. I think this (WMU) will be a key relationship, especially for our minority students and our technical/design students, but there is still a lot of work to make it a symbiotic one.

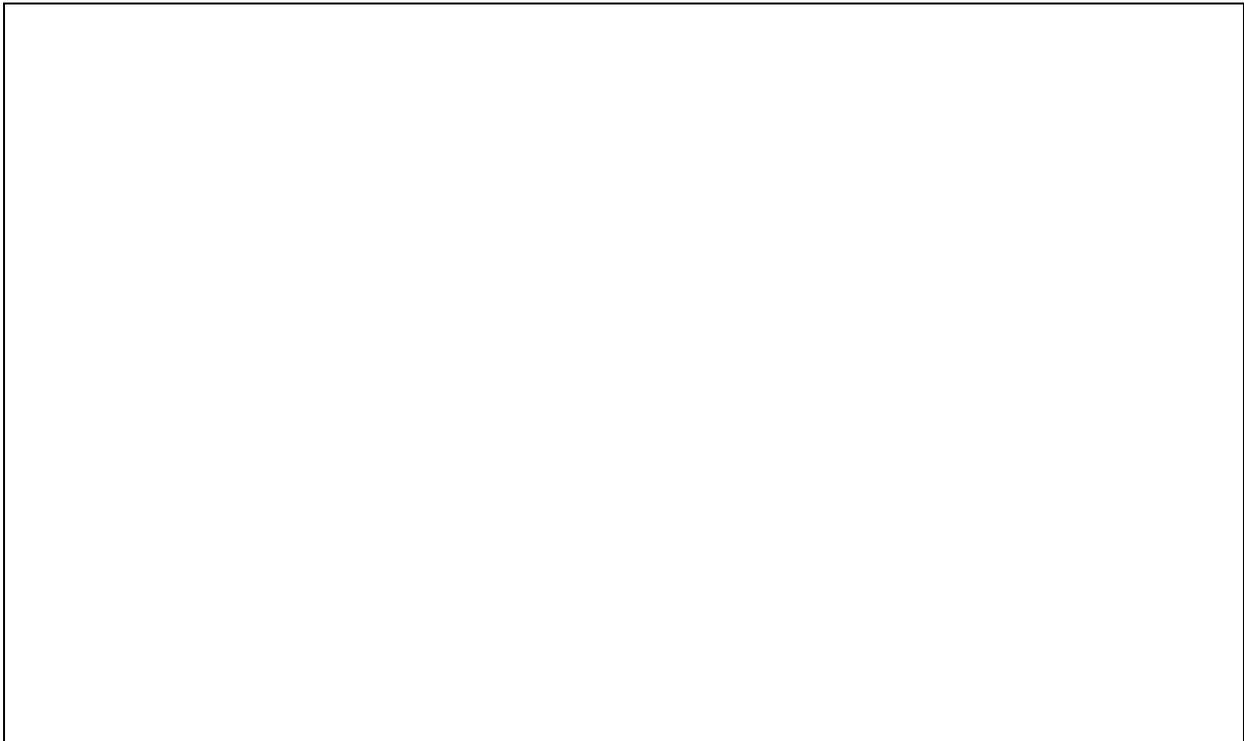
Review of Department’s Curriculum Transferability

Please note: this section should be completed by all SAS Departments, Business, and CIS.

Using transferability data provided by Instructional Support, please summarize your perceptions of how courses in your department transfer to our four-year university partners and how this understanding will impact your curriculum goals for the upcoming year.

GRCC Course	GVSU	FSU	WMU	EMU	CMU
TH 114 - Ballet-1	D	G	D	D	G
TH 115 - Jazz 1	D	G	D	G	G
TH 116 - Tap 1	G	G	D	G	G
TH 214 - Ballet-2	G	G	D	G	U
TH 215 - Jazz 2	D	G	D	G	G
TH 235 - Improvisation	D	G	G	G	G
TH 239 - Script Analysis	D	G	D	G	G
TH 241 - College Players 1	D	D	D	G	G
TH 242 - College Players II	D	D	D	G	G
TH 244 - College Players III	D	D	D	G	G
TH 245 - Introduction to Act	D	D	D	D	D
TH 247 - Acting II	D	G	D	G	G
TH 248 - Introto Theater	D	D	D	D	D
TH 255 - Classical Acting	G	G	G	G	G
TH 260 - Auditioning	G	G	G	G	N
TH 261 - Theatre Tech 1	G	D	D	G	G
TH 262 - Theatre Tech II	G	D		G	G
TH 270 - Directing	G	G	D	G	G

The above data shows that only 3 of the 90 possible transfer options are not recognized by our main 4-year transfer institutions as either direct or general college credit. More importantly, Western Michigan University, the only NAST accredited school on the list allows 14 of 18 listed classes to **directly** correlate with one of their own. This was by design initially, since it made the most sense to pattern our courses after the recognized leader in the state of Michigan for theater. That said, it makes sense for other transfer schools to revisit these courses and asses why an accredited college will accept the courses as designed while they do not. This is the logic I used to help GVSU work toward an understanding the value of a GRCC educated transfer student, and the same logic I am using in discussions with Aquinas College this summer.



What new information from external sources has influenced your curriculum development planning for next year?

The limited success achieved when GVSU overhauled their program requirements (allowing our transfer students to finish their Theater major in only 3 semesters) was the most energizing component.

A second, more troubling one came from a student who had transferred to Western Michigan University with a focus on design, not performance. She told me that she was asked to sign a contract with the Theatre department that said she would stay in the design program for 3 and a half years before graduating. Now, given our small technical theater population of students, I know that we don't teach every course required by their design majors in the first 2 years, but I also know that our basic technical courses are much more difficult than Western's, and I want to work with their department head to trim the time necessary to complete the program. It helps that I know that our 2 most recent design transfer students are near the top of their classes, so I'm hoping I can use that fact as leverage.

Theater as an art form does not change significantly from year to year, but the technology used to create theater often does, especially in the areas of lighting, sound and projection. Students who are continuing down a path that is more technical and design related (as opposed to performance/directing) need to be familiar with technology that they are bound to face when they transfer, so it is essential that we as a program constantly make these educational upgrades. Even performers need to have some basic understanding of this technology since every 4-year institution requires all of its theater students to take technology and design courses. The instruction in these areas needs to stay current.

Are your curriculum development goals targeting any Perkins or Key Performance Indicators? If yes, please explain.

N/A

What resources do you need to accomplish these curriculum development goals?

Time-I may have to juggle my class schedule to create the opportunity for the Western “battle”, but the impact should be minimal.

Do you need support from other departments to accomplish these curriculum development goals? If yes, please explain.

I may need some help from Erin Busscher, my program liaison in Counselling, as well as members of Dr. Jones’ staff to help with logistic details, but I don’t think the help will be a tremendous time commitment.

For each of your departmental curriculum development goals/plans/projects, please list the name of the lead faculty member(s) involved.

There is only one faculty member ultimately responsible for the previously listed goals-Tom Kaechele.

For each of your departmental curriculum development goals/plans/projects, please provide a brief timeline for completion.

Work 1/3 GRCC Theater courses in Curriculog software. The goal is to finish the initial draft by winter break and have project complete by end of the first full week in March.

Continue work with administration and other institutions to create pathways for theater students. I met with the Aquinas theater department head on May 1 and will meet again in June to continue the process of course alignment. This goal will be ongoing for the foreseeable future, but I hope to have WMU (and Aquinas) finished by June 1, 2018.

C. Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan for 2017-18

In this section, please outline your department's plan for learning outcomes assessment work for the upcoming academic year, outlining the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) or Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) that will be assessed as well as the assessment instruments/measure that will be used. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text boxes below.

The following outcome appears in the list for TH248:

"Explain the use of structural components during the 2 phases of directing." It connects directly to the general education outcome for humanities *"Utilize the fundamental language and/or set of concepts associated with the scholarly and creative artifacts and activities being analyzed."*

For the most part, students understand the connections between the elements and the steps with one glaring exception-concept. When it comes to understanding concept (the single unifying idea around which the production will be presented), most students either conflate this with the structural element of theme (abstract intellectual content), since both require

some “think” element, or they assume if the show was “good”, it must have a good concept. Concept differs from theme in that the first unifies the artistic elements of while the second focuses on the message learned or the question pondered by the audience. Further, a show can lack cohesiveness and yet still have a positive impact on a viewer. Using my online classes as a benchmark and recording their response to this element in Fall semester, I want to add an extra lecture for Winter semester that tries to clarify the difference between these elements and ideas using a production that they have all viewed in a previous week. Then, I want to record the difference in responses to see if there is a higher degree of clarity about the idea of concept.

D. Departmental Advising Plan for 2017-18

In this section, please outline your department's advising plan for the upcoming academic year. Please limit your response to the space provided in the text box below.

Same as last year

Part III: 2016-17 Faculty & Staff Accomplishments/Awards

Part III is intended to provide a space to share the accomplishments, awards, and/or accolades achieved by faculty and staff in your department during the course of this past year.

Kaechele-see FPE

Poquette

- Grand Award Nominee, Outstanding Scenic Design, Actors' Theatre "Rapture, Blister, Burn"
- Designed "Brill" by David Wells, Jewish Theater, Sept. 2016
- Designed "Mr Burns" by Anne Washburn, Actors' Theatre, Sept. 2016
- Designed "American Idiot" by Billie Joe Armstrong, Actors' Theatre, Oct. 2016
- Designed "Irena's Vow" by Dan Gordon, Jewish Theater, Jan. 2017
- Designed "Facing Our Truths" by Various, GRCC Theater, Jan. 2017
- Designed "Hand to God" by Robert Askins, Actors' Theatre, Feb. 2017
- Designed "Disgraced" by Ayad Akhtar, Actors' Theatre, Apr. 2017
- Designed "Seniors of the Sahara" by Barbara Pease Weber, Jewish Theater, May 2017

Urbane

- Directed "Hand to God" by Robert Askins, Actors' Theatre, Feb. 2017
- One World Diversity Performance & Facilitation: Ferris State University Latino Business & Economic Center (Oct. 2016); Ferris State University Latin@ Heritage Celebration/Big Rapids campus (Feb. 2017), The SOURCE (Jan. 14 & 21, 2017), GRCC Latino Youth Conference, March 7, 2017
- Circle Theatre Acting Workshop, Feb 4 & 5, 2017
- West Michigan Theatre Festival Respondent at Greenville High School, Feb. 2017
- Instructor at Civic Theatre - Auditioning for the Adult Actor, Thursday evenings, April 13 – May 18, 2017
- Final Aquinas class taken to complete BA in Theater, Oct. 2016
- Committee member & production stage manager for inaugural integrated arts open house "Performing & Fine Arts Preview Night"
- ArtPrize 2016: curated art for lobby, coordinated installations with artists, and assisted with promotion of ArtPrize at GRCC's Spectrum Theater

- Coordinated 4 talk-back panels for GRCC Players production of *Facing Our Truth*
- Attended Jenison High School's spring production ("Peter Pan") & coordinated advertisement for their season playbills
- Co-facilitate Ambassador/Orientation Leader training, May 1, 2017

Dreher

- Grand Award Nominee, Outstanding Lighting Design
 - *Caroline, or Change* – Grand Rapids Civic Theatre
 - *Dogfight* – Actors' Theatre
 - *Sister Act* – Grand Rapids Civic Theatre
- Consultant for lighting design and implementation of lighting for renovated Music Building Recital Hall
- Researched, designed and implemented new LED lighting system for the Spectrum Theater Blackbox performance space
- High School Lighting Design, training and outreach:
 - Caledonia High School – *You Can't Take it With You*
 - Forest Hills Central – *Little Shop of Horrors*
- College Lighting Design:
 - GVSU – *Sweeney Todd*
 - Aquinas College – *Love & Information*
 - GRCC – *Facing Our Truth, A Further Education, Somewhere In Between*
- Community Lighting Design
 - Grand Rapids Civic Theatre – *Beauty and the Beast, Ragtime*
 - Actors' Theatre – *American Idiot, Disgraced*
 - Jewish Theatre Grand Rapids – *Irena's Vow, Brill*
 - Circle Theatre – *First Date, Cats*
- West Michigan Theatre Festival/Greenville High School, Feb. 2017
 - Light Design workshop instructor
- Light design and training - Grand Rapids Civic Theatre inaugural Performance Block accelerated production, April 2017
- GVSU Commencement ceremony – April 2017
 - Show Runner, Captus Creative Group



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Thank you for completing this report. Please submit to your Dean via email.