As a result of the third cycle of DePaul University's Academic Program Review Process (Cycle 3), the participants in the process enter into the following agreements. The participants understand that this document will be available to be made public once all the signatures are in place.

**Actions agreed upon for the coming academic year**

1. **MFA Programs**

   a. **MFA in Acting.** After examining this program during review, the School decided not to eliminate this MFA program at this time. Instead, the School will work over the next year to revitalize the program. A team of four faculty will work over the summer for a stipend to develop new models of the program and will present these options to the full faculty in the Fall 2001. One option to consider is to include a year of study for students at one of the professional Theatres in Chicago; several companies in Chicago have been approached and are interested in supporting such a program. The target enrollment will be 24-30 students over three years, taking in about ten new students per year. Once proposals have been made to faculty in the Fall, the School will decide upon a model and outline the details in the Spring 2002, perhaps phasing in new aspects of the Program with current students.

   b. **MFA in Design.** The program currently has one continuing student and one incoming student. As of now, there are no resources devoted to this program, no faculty assigned to this area and no specialized courses offered. The School has decided to suspend the program for the time being; it won’t be marketed or promoted among incoming students, but it won’t be declared terminated as a degree option. The School may decide to revive it at a later point if more possibilities for restructuring arise, and may bring back the degree with a proposed new curriculum. The School would need to consider how terminating or substantially restructuring the Design MFA would impact NCA Accreditation.

   c. **MFA in Directing.** The School has decided to continue this program and feels that it is in good shape. The directors are needed in other areas of Theatre such as the production program, and the graduate student directors do 10-12 productions per year. The School has hired one new faculty who will work with the Program Director to revise some elements of the program in the coming year.
2. Core Curriculum

A review of the undergraduate core Theatre Studies curriculum is underway, regarding the design of the core and the areas for majors; new majors may be considered. The School will examine the possibilities created by the new relationship with Barat (BA in Theatre), which presents a context in which to redefine DePaul’s BFA degree. The School will spend the next year working on the redesign of the core curriculum. The new curriculum will be implemented for incoming students in the Fall 2003 (ideally, by the Fall of 2002).

3. Faculty

a. Professional Contacts. In the coming year, the School will work to increase the extramural professional contacts and involvement for faculty members both in the Chicago area and in other cities. The School notes that these professional contacts benefit students in the program and the School as a whole. The EVP also encourages the School to continue to nurture professional contacts to enhance the professionalism of the school and bring greater visibility to the program regionally and nationally.

b. Support for Attendance at Conferences. The Dean is committed to maintain and improve recent efforts to fund faculty attendance and presentations at professional conferences. The Dean is already gathering funds to support faculty attendance at conferences next year (2001-2002).

c. Support for Research and Creative Work. The School is committed to finding a model that preserves the current level of quality in instruction, production, and advising, while giving faculty more time to pursue scholarly endeavors. Instituting a new model would be a major change to the structure and culture of the Theatre school. By the end of next year, the School will develop a progress report on the options that have been considered with recommendations as to how the university/Academic Affairs could support or facilitate these options. Options to consider include granting more release time to faculty, such as by restructuring core class sequences to allow faculty to take a quarter off, or utilizing part-time/adjunct faculty to take over some of the time-consuming duties of full-time faculty when they are on leave. The School would like to take advantage of the existing university leave policy and will work with the URC to modify the guidelines (e.g. giving advanced notice of leave) to accommodate Theatre’s model. Academic Affairs agrees to consider these recommendations and will support adjustments to the university leave policies based on the Theatre School’s needs.

Issues on which there is joint commitment to continue working

1. Improved Data
a. The School is in need of more accurate, timely data on its students and courses, especially data about Admissions. The School keeps its own admissions data, but it would like the university to provide additional information on incoming and current students, especially trend data on admissions. The university is committed to working with all units to provide support on data and research issues through the Office of Institutional Planning and Research and Enrollment Management (see University Issues and Commitments below).

b. PeopleSoft is not yet able to provide all the information Theatre wants, though it should soon improve in this regard. The School has a Subject Matter Expert working on the PeopleSoft transition. The Theatre School acknowledges that it needs to define what advisors and faculty need to know from the new system, especially related to data that would aid in assessment and evaluation of students. The Dean will coordinate the effort to collect ideas about what the School wants to know about students, and about how to collect, organize, and report it.

2. Intra-university Collaboration

The School is committed to continue pursuing collaborative ventures with other units in the university, such as the School of Music, School of Education, and the Art Department. Music is a particular possibility, especially in relation to possible shared facilities in the future. One step toward collaboration would be to get the faculty from different programs to know each other better. Curricular possibilities include a joint degree programs with Education (Theatre Education) or with Art (Design) in some sort of multimedia program. Other joint endeavors could include co-sponsoring programs and events, such as with the Humanities Center. The School and its students are supportive of these types of collaboration, though the specific details and direction are not yet determined. The School will continue to have discussions with faculty from other programs, and the University/Academic Affairs is committed to supporting cross-college interaction (see University Commitments section below).

3. Facilities

The School and the University agree that the current Theatre Facilities are less than adequate to meet the needs of the students and faculty of the Theatre School. The need for an improved facility has always been a major issue for the School. The School and Academic Affairs are beginning to have discussions to consider a range of options for improving the facilities. The options could range from building an entirely new complex (which would depend on how much external funding could be raised for such a venture), to selling the land/building of the current facilities, providing resources necessary to address space needs for training and academic facilities. The University is committed to working with the Theatre and Music schools to address the facilities and space needs in the next few years.
Issues noted for further discussion

1. Diversity. The EVP noted that the Theatre School should be recognized for its significant progress in improving diversity in faculty hiring and student recruiting. The School should be commended for its efforts in this area.

2. Technology. The EVP noted that this issue should receive attention as planning for facilities and cross-college collaboration moves forward. He recommended that the School consider how it currently uses technology in instruction and training, and what it may need in the future, especially considering the possibilities of a new media studies program and a new media center.

University-level Issues and Commitments

During Cycle 3, the unit program review self-studies raised several issues that have important university-wide implications. In subsequent conversations about these major issues, the units, the deans, the Academic Program Review Committee members, and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs all have recognized the need for university-level coordination in the following areas: a) developing appropriate staffing models to support growth; b) assisting units in the transition to the PeopleSoft student administrative system and in getting the maximum benefits from it, such as identifying and counting double majors, enforcing prerequisites, and securing better information and support for student advising; c) providing research assistance to units through university-level research offices; d) improving support for advising, especially in light of PeopleSoft; e) facilitating cross-college collaboration within DePaul with respect to new programs of study. To follow up on these common issues and determine the appropriate courses of action needed to address them at the university and unit level, the Academic Program Review Committee and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs agree to do the following:

1. The Academic Program Review Committee agrees to prepare a summary report on Cycle 3 to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs which discusses these and other issues that have important connections to other university-wide initiatives. That report will be made public, along with the Memoranda of Agreement.

2. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs agrees to direct the appropriate university-level offices to work with the units and their deans to determine how to effectively address these issues.

3. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will require a progress report in June of 2002 from the appropriate university offices that will be shared with the Academic Program Review Committee.
Acknowledgements

The APRC chair and subcommittee thank the unit’s review committee for its work in this cycle. The APRC feels that the Theatre School did an exceptionally thorough job on reviewing its programs and produced a quality self-study. The EVP also commends the Theatre School for doing a good job on review. He thanks all those involved in APR for making this process work. It is an important part of the university’s monitoring and maintaining academic quality.

***

A hard copy of this document was signed by:

Chair of the Unit Review Committee
Chair of APRC Subcommittee
Chair of APRC
Dean of the College
Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs
Executive V.P. for Academic Affairs

*The hard copy with signatures is on file in the Office of the Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs and is available upon request.*