A. ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

What actions did you take in 2012-2013, based on previous assessment findings, to improve student learning in your program? (Refer back to plans indicated in “Response to Assessment Findings “ in 2011-2012 Assessment Report.)

A key factor in improving student learning in our program has been the addition of tenure-track faculty member David Castellano, who is now in his second year – after the previous two years of having 1-year non-tenure-track appointments in that position. Prof. Castellano has brought much needed stability to that position, and is making great strides in expanding and improving our stage management program. We also continue to refine changes brought about by the conversion to semesters, both in overall curriculum and individual course content.

Our student enrollment has remained relatively stable for the past three years, after dipping to a low of 33 majors in 2010 (we’re at 45 as of Nov. 2013). We continue to actively recruit through our participation in the Ohio Educational Theater Association State Conference. As Area Coordinator, I meet with prospective students and their parents during Raider Open House days and individual scheduled visits throughout the year, often spending an hour or more with them, explaining the details of our program and giving them a tour of our facilities. Prospective students also meet with other faculty and staff as dictated by their specific area of interest, and are invited to attend a performance of one of our shows (or even sit in the lighting booth with our stage manager as he or she calls the show). We would like to expand outreach by visiting high schools in the region but find it difficult to make time to do that given the demands of our production schedule.

One of the issues mentioned in the 2011-2012 was the poor condition of our primary Design/Technology classroom (M257, aka. the Graphics Lab), and its negative impact on our ability to recruit students, many of whom are used to far better facilities in their high schools. As part of the CAC renovation, we will have a new, larger, and greatly improved space for our Graphics Lab. In 2013 we received capital funding from COLA ($24,000) for the purchase of 20 new drafting tables and chairs, which will take place soon, now that we know the configuration of our new classroom.

B. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSED AND EXAMINED

Which Program Level Student Learning Outcomes did you assess and examine during 2012-2013? List the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes using the format of “Graduates will be able to _______________________."

(Please note that due to specialized accreditation requirements, accredited programs may be required to assess and report on all program level student learning outcomes every year; accredited programs should report in a manner that will align with their accreditation. Programs not carrying specialized accreditation may assess all of their learning outcomes every year but may choose to report on 2-3 per year, looking at several years of data.)

As stated in last year’s Assessment Report, “Our yearly Portfolio Review for all Design/Technology/Stage Management students remains the primary benchmark where individual progress as well as the overall state of our training is evaluated. Learning outcomes that are assessed as part of these reviews include whether a ‘high level of competency and responsibility in one or more areas of theatre design and/or technology and stage management’ has
been achieved, and whether a student has demonstrated ‘competency in a key leadership role’ appropriate to his/her level in the program, as well as ‘knowledge of technical theory, application and craft in their area of focus.’ ”

C. METHODS FOR COLLECTING DATA
Which students were included in the assessment? (For example, all seniors completing Course X in Spring 2013, all graduating seniors, etc.)

Student learning outcomes are assessed at all 4 years of study, via our yearly Portfolio Reviews for all students and our evaluation of their individual production and other course work on an ongoing basis.

D. ASSESSMENT MEASURES

- What key assessments/assignments/student work did you examine to directly assess the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes listed above?

  Assessment measures such as yearly portfolio reviews, evaluation of student work on departmental or outside productions/internships, and communication with alumni were employed. Portfolio Review requires that each student present his or her work from the year (through photos, draftings, light plots, costume renderings, etc.) to the faculty and staff, including a brief self-evaluation. This is a key component of our evaluation of the progress of each student within the program, as well as a good indicator of the overall state of our program.

  Our assessment of the above outcomes for specific students is based not only on their performance in the traditional classroom setting, but heavily on their performance in the areas of production to which they are assigned, as technicians, designers and run crew. As such, we have the opportunity to assess all of our students in a continual and detailed manner.

- What, if any, indirect assessments (e.g. exit survey, alumni survey, focus groups, etc.) did you use to indirectly assess the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes listed above?

  Members of the Design/Technology faculty and staff maintain contact with many of our alumni, and part of the ongoing discussion with them involves learning about what new technologies they may be using that we might want to incorporate into our program. We are also able to use our conversations with alumni to gauge the relevance of what we’re teaching and examine whether there is subject matter in the curriculum that needs to be updated or replaced.

E. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS
What did you find from your assessments? What did your data reveal about how well students are achieving the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes that you listed above?

Feedback from our alumni generally tells us that we are on the right track as far as preparing them for entering the professional theatre world. Our graduates are working on- and off-Broadway, in regional theatres, on cruise ships, for producing organizations like Cirque du Soleil, Stomp, and Blue Man Group, stage managing and lighting New York Fashion Week, and in many other diverse venues. We also continue to place graduates in top-notch graduate programs.

F. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS
How were results shared? With whom were they discussed?

The Design/Technology faculty and staff have area meetings at least three times a semester at which we discuss how both our current students and alumni are doing, and any concerns about curriculum or other issues affecting student learning. This information is generally shared with our chair.

G. ACTIONS PLANNED TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING
Based on what you learned from your assessment of the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes, what actions do the faculty in your program plan to take to improve student learning in your program/area? Describe the steps faculty have taken/will take to use information from the assessments for improvement of student performance and the program. List additional faculty meetings or discussions and planned or actual changes to curriculum, teaching methods, approaches, or services that are in response to the assessment findings.

With the stabilization of our tenure-track faculty position in Scenery Technology/Stage Management, we are moving ahead with expanding the Stage Management curriculum so that it’s more in line with our other concentrations in terms of course offerings and required credit hours in the major. This includes adding an upper level Stage Management class and a new course in Theatre Administration, as well as creating more standardized policies and procedures for things like audition weeks and rehearsal schedules.

We have created a WSU Design/Technology Alumni Facebook group which new graduates are invited to join – this has created a wonderful way for us all to connect, and has proven to be a valuable career networking tool for our alumni. When alumni drop by, which happens on a fairly regular basis, we always try to arrange for them to speak with our current students, even if in an informal chat session, to convey some of their experiences in the professional world.

We will continue to discuss program and curricular issues as they arise in our regular Design/Technology area meetings.

H. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (recommended)
Please attach minutes of program faculty meeting where discussion of results and action planning occurred and any other relevant documents.