F. Dramaturgy

Dramaturgy is a component of contemporary performance practice and the theatre making process, providing artists and audiences with deeper context for understanding the creative content. The Dramaturg (in collaboration with the artistic team) researches and analyzes the play to foster interpretation and creative development for the text in production. Dramaturgs contextualize the world of the play; establish connections among the text, actors, and audience; advocate for playwright opportunities; curate aesthetic experiences for audiences; generate projects and programs; and create conversations about plays in their communities.

When evaluating documentation in a tenure dossier, external reviewers, administrators, and the tenure and promotion committee may ask themselves whether the candidate’s tenure portfolio demonstrates the ability to teach and use their practice to explore:

Creative Practice

- Expertise in critical research and cohesive storytelling
- The ability to access the imagination in order to develop the ideas informing a dramaturgical process, workshop, or production
- Expert skill at understanding narrative story structures and how they may be re-contextualized and deconstructed and the ability to offer questions to help other artists realize their fullest potential
- Ability to effectively communicate a visual and aural atmosphere that illuminates the world of the play
- Understanding of the related production areas and an ability to collaborate effectively with the artistic team
- The ability to produce projects and have the follow through to bring them to completion with an eye towards the varied constituencies whom the project serves
- Knowledge of relevant standard safety procedures and regulations, as well as those prescribed by related professional organizations such as Actors’ Equity Association (AEA), United Scenic Artists #829 (USAA), the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDCS), Society of Fight Directors (SAFD), and the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), as appropriate
- In-depth understanding of equitable practices in the theatre through a as formed by expertise in cultural competency and the techniques necessary (consent-based and trauma-informed practices) for honoring the personal and professional boundaries of students.
- Training in Mental Health First Aid, Bystander Intervention, Anti-Racism, LGBTQ+ support, and DEIJE work

Historical Context

- In-depth knowledge of dramatic literature across the globe from classic to contemporary genres
- Applicable knowledge in the many approaches to theatrical storytelling
- Applicable knowledge of contemporary playwrights across geography and cultures
- Knowledge of art history (artists, historic styles, and genres) applied in context
- Knowledge of critical theory, economic and social theory applied in context
- Expert knowledge of contemporary best practices for auditions, rehearsal, and performance
- An understanding of theatre’s capacity for creating social change in a wide variety of political and socio-economic climates

**Collaborative Skills**

- Excellence in oral, written, and graphic communication skills to secure sensitive translation of directorial concepts into effective productions
- Excellent organizational skills as necessary for administering a literary office, editing a newsletter, working with a website administrator, writing program notes, conducting audience discussions, and when necessary and agreed upon, creating an education program or audience engagement activities
- In-depth understanding of best practices for communicating with literary agents, publishing houses, and playwrights to secure production rights as well as an understanding of intellectual property law
- Ability to translate production concepts and play analysis into messaging that will be accessible to the production’s audience
- Knowledge in fiscal management skills
- Ability to work and collaborate under pressure with various artists, technologists, and technicians, many or all of whom may be relatively unskilled students
- Expertise in the higher levels of planning required in seasonal or repertory contexts.
- An understanding of ethical practices associated with the field of professional and academic theatre and performance
- An understanding of how DEIJ is considered when selecting research projects for students
- An understanding of how DEIJ informs the recruitment of students, in cases where that is part of the candidate’s labor
- An understanding of how DEIJ issues impact their life at the university and an ability to think about their own implicit biases

Overall excellence from the Dramaturg requires the ability to integrate knowledge consistently in the areas noted above. Dramaturgs must work with an understanding of the conceptual requirements of any given production to enhance the work of the director and designers in creating work of artistic merit and meaning. Such expertise is demonstrated by participation in realized production, both on and off campus. The Dramaturg is best evaluated by attending a live performance of a production for which the designer is responsible. Whereas the inclusion of dramaturgical notebooks & associated paperwork is essential as support material detailing the process of the dramaturg, it does little to evaluate true ability. Drawings, charts, and other paperwork should be evaluated but they cannot substitute for the viewing of an actual production. Still or video photography might add some useful information to an evaluation but, again, are inferior to a live production. If recorded media are used for evaluation of a candidate, the circumstances of the recordings must be clearly stated.