



**Divisional Strategic Planning Brief – Arts and Entertainment**  
**5/31/3017**

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**CAMPUS OUTCOMES**

**Learning Assured**

Campus objective #6

Develop and design strategic campus curriculum including associate degree programs, pre-majors, certificates and courses to align with community, student and workforce needs including exploration of bachelor's degrees

**Partner with the Community**

Campus objective #17

Identify both strategic and engagement opportunities to leverage Valencia's curricular, co-curricular and institutional influence and abilities to support and bring value to the community

**Department Outcome**

Expand co-curricular opportunities in Entertainment Design & Technology to align with Program Learning Outcomes and Workforce needs along with inter-departmental synergies.

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**BACKGROUND**

Arts & Entertainment AA and AS academic programs innately offer co-curricular opportunities for students through the many performances and "real world" artistic experiences that occur in and outside of the classroom. Many of these individual academic programs have achieved great success in developing student clubs and Facebook groups for student and alumni engagement.

One such successful model for co-curricular activities was founded by Program Chair for Theater, John DiDonna. Over the past five years, John has built up a co-curricular program for Theater Performance AA Pre-Major students that includes: majors meetings, a Theater Salon series, and weekly Acting Gym. During all of these events, which are funded through Student Development, students receive enhanced training and opportunities to further engage and learn from each other, faculty, staff, and community theater professionals. It was observed that many students who were interested in the technical side of Theater and/or solely interested in the AS in Entertainment Design & Technology program also attended the Theater co-curricular activities, which focused moreso on performance elements versus technical production elements.

As explained by Kristin Abel, the Program Chair of the Entertainment Design & Technology AS program, faculty and staff determined that there was a need to "provide students with the extra-curricular activities for broadening their scope of skill sets for industry." While students were getting plenty of hands-on experience by working on productions on the Valencia campuses and/or through off campus internships, with a robust advisory board and faculty connections to a myriad of community professionals, faculty envisioned a student club and series of events, similar to the Theater Salon

offerings, that could enrich the Entertainment Design & Technology program and better prepare students for the diverse career opportunities in Central Florida and beyond.

## INTERVENTION

Entertainment Design & Technology Professor Sonia Pasqual worked with students to establish the Theatre and Entertainment Technology club in the spring of 2016. The club was funded with \$8000 for the 2016-2017 Academic Year, which was its first full Academic Year in existence. Sonia explained the value of the club: "As a former Valencia student that went through this program and with extensions into our community, I definitely love having this opportunity to connect the two and invite greater possibilities for our students with this club." Sonia serves as the club advisor and stated that she hopes that the club's workshops for students "present hands-on, developmental, new techniques, and portfolio building facilitations that make (students) gain insights for an ever-evolving industry - an industry that is looking to hire creative, innovative thinkers, doers that can generate ideas for entertainment experiences."

The second intervention that was implemented was the creation of a Facebook group for the club. The social media component would allow for students, faculty, staff to further connect and promote activities as well as reach out to the greater artistic community in Central Florida and beyond. Founded December 13, 2015, the Theatre and Entertainment Club at Valencia College Facebook Group is self-described as: "A club designed to further the education and skills of Entertainment Design and Technology students at Valencia College through workshops, seminars, and guest speakers." Kristin Abel indicated that the club was "envisioned as a way for students to get some skills we couldn't cover in classes and to socialize." As evidenced in the results that follow, both the face-to-face and the Facebook clubs have accomplished what faculty and students intended and beyond.

## STRATEGIC RESULTS

The Theater and Entertainment Technology club, with an average of 80 active members to date, has held regular meetings with a dynamic student group of officers and has offered many workshops and co-curricular experiences for students. The Student Government Association recognized the Theater and Entertainment Technology Club with an Award for Continued Excellence and dedication to East Campus for 2016-2017. On-campus workshops in the past year included presentations by:

- *Black Wolf Production Services, Inc.* - A special effects props, and scenic and installation group for Disney World, retail and other local companies. This workshop prompted students to come prepared with resumes in hand for potential hire.
- *AEO studios* – Alan Ostrander, Special Effects Makeup
- Jamie DeHay (Valencia ED&T and UNCSA alum) - Creative Solutions for Stage and Screen - strategies for creating an effective set design and scenic portfolio and staging design techniques
- Rebekah Lane, Puppet Master and Valencia Adjunct - Puppets and Muppets workshop - created hand puppets using foam, yarn, socks and cool templates, that allowed for a personal creation

This club achieved its vision of promoting inter-departmental synergies, working closely and often with the Film students, often serving as the Art Department, guiding students on how to build sets, scenic paint techniques, props, costumes and special effects makeup. The Theater Salon and Acting Gym is yet another collaborative partnership where many students and projects overlap.

In 18 months, the Facebook Group has grown to 278 members (students, alumni, faculty, staff, and local professionals). Promoted through club meetings and reinforced through the Facebook group, as a result of the club, students were recruited and hired for many paid and volunteer events as well as informed of numerous opportunities including the following:

- Paid employment at: Rhino Staging, Orlando Repertory Theatre, Disney Entertainment Group, Universal Studios, Orlando International Fringe Festival, Walt Disney World, IATSE 631 (Stagehands union), Black Wolf productions, Iron Robot Films, Central Florida Community Arts, PRG, Gaylord Palms, Bob Carr, PSAV, local clubs, and Private events and projects (ex. Home restoration, smaller “one of” productions)
- Volunteer/Community Service opportunities: Disney Entertainment Volunt/EARS (events for Edgewood Childrens’ Ranch and United Cerebral Palsy), Valencia Film Program, Circle Theatre Company, Evans High School/Valencia College summer camp (through grant from United Arts/JP Morgan & Chase Co.), Central Florida Community Arts, Central Florida Vocal Arts + Orlando Light Opera, WGI Sport of the Arts, Tax Day
- Audition opportunities: Legoland, Cirque du Soleil, Valencia Film Program, Valencia College Theater
- Discounted training/services opportunities for students: ETC Ion training (stage lighting), AEO workshops and supplies (stage makeup), Head shot photography session, Valencia summer student tuition discounts
- Internships (both paid and unpaid): Trinity Prep, Black Wolf productions, Texas Shakespeare Festival, Circle Theater Company, Orlando Repertory Theatre, Central Florida Vocal Arts + Orlando Light Opera, Orlando Shakespeare Theatre
- Over 20 on and off campus event invitations (speakers, panels, performances)
- Numerous crowdsourcing opportunities on Facebook (equipment, advice, etc.)
- Numerous free and/or discounted show ticket opportunities

As Sonia summarized, through student Development funds and club fundraising activities, four students traveled with her to see a top notch university that focuses on technical theatre:

“The highlight of our club is that it has impacted students in a positive way, but nothing compares so far to the trip to Winston-Salem, North Carolina visit to the North Carolina School of the Arts. I was able to take four students to this school, to expose them to the possibilities of a continuing educational program that is fine-tuned and prestigious to the industry employers. During my first visit, it was a job fair and companies such as Cirque de Soleil, Disney Global Entertainment, Busch Gardens, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, plus representatives from dance companies and opera houses; major lighting, Broadway design and scenic companies; leaders in the entertainment and special events industries; and even summer camps from the NC. I personally want to see our ED&T students who are interested go onward to attend schools like this that will best prepare them and then bring the employer to them because they are brilliant for hire. It is important to know that UNCSA school of Design and Production sought our Valencia’s ED&T program with an interest to create a bridge and partner. This opportunity is one I guarantee to pursue until it comes to fruition and we can sign an articulation agreement.”

Kristin has noted the positive impact that the club has had on enrollment and participation during the past year, stating that students who are involved in the club have become more involved in the program and technical opportunities for our on-campus productions. Kristin explained: “ I noticed a huge uptick in the Spring 17 semester of students seeking me during my office hours to ask about internships, experiential learning packets, independent studies and job opportunities. Club members also seem more inclined to seek academic help from me as well. Active club members are definitely more engaged in the program and are learning important leadership skills as well.” In sum, the club has provided a framework and formal conduit for information to be shared with students and creative and professional sparks to energize the curriculum and student relationships. As indicated in our “next steps,” we hope that these sparks ignite passion in our high school students this summer as well.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Theater and Entertainment Technology Club has big plans for the Summer 2017 semester and the upcoming Academic Year, including:

- A Student Development budget increase that will hopefully double from last year
- An advanced level makeup workshop during the JP Morgan Chase Career Pathways for Creative Jobs Evans High School Camp at Valencia along with a Life Casting workshop (a joint activity for the college and high school students).
- Summer workshop on carpentry and painting; will yield a hands-on project - building a new staging platform and table for the Evans High School, Digital Media & TV production studio, which Octavius King will be directing over a series of days until completion with students. This endeavor stretches us into the community, lending a hand for students to strengthen carpentry skills and for Evans to gain a new stable and functional studio platform stage. The workshop is in June-July, called Studio Staging Workshop.
- This summer Sonia is acting as the Art Department director for six Film shorts for the Film program in July 2017. The club will be able to provide assistance and hands-on carpenters, painters, costumers and makeup artists to coherently bring their stories to life.
- As a multifunctioning club we will be working on the *Operation Viper* project on August 4<sup>th</sup> with Rob Pigman, Assistant Director of Security, to create a "moulage" special effects makeup to include simulated: traumas (gunshot wounds, lacerations from an explosion, shattered glass and or knife wounds, severe burns and blunt force trauma injuries) for approximately forty people.
- The club will seek partnership opportunities with the Pop Culture Club and African American club in the future.
- Administering a survey to students to help track correlations between club events, academic success, and employment



Facebook interface for the Theatre and Entertainment Technology Club at Valencia College. The header shows the club name and a search bar. Below the header is a large group photo of club members posing in front of a brick building with a red sky backdrop. The left sidebar contains navigation options: Discussion, Members, and Events.