

Agnes Scott College  
Department of Theatre & Dance External Review  
November 4-5, 2018

External Review Team

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I. Overview & Charge

Professors Anna Filippo from Berry College, Chandra Hopkins from Converse College, and Sally Radell from Emory University conducted an external review of the Department of Theatre and Dance at Agnes Scott College on November 4 and 5, 2018. In addition, Professor Radell also attended an Agnes Scott Dance Performance on November 9, 2018 in Gaines Chapel. Review activities for the three consultants included attending a theatre performance of *She Kills Monsters* by Qui Nguyen in the Dana Winter Theatre; dinner with Professors David Thompson and Bridget Roosa; a conference call meeting with Dr. Kerry Pannell, VP for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College; meetings with music professor Tracey Laird; dance professor and chair Bridget Roosa; theatre professor David Thompson; adjunct theatre instructor Sara Thompson; art professor Nell Ruby; adjunct dance professor Amanda Byars; a tour of the campus with Leah Owenby, manager of the Dalton Gallery; and separate meetings with theatre (Blackfriar group) and dance students.

The charge given to the review team by Dean Pannell is as follows:

- What are some ways that the department can increase student engagement and collaboration within the department, with other departments and beyond the walls of Agnes Scott?
- What is the state of the Department of Theatre and Dance, how does it compare with other departments nationally and what are some ways it can move forward?
- What are some “best practice” ideas that the department can adopt?
- Please suggest some ways the replacement theatre tenure track line could be reconfigured that would be collaborative and embrace new trends in the discipline?
- How can the department become a more attractive feature in the recruitment of prospective students to Agnes Scott College?

## II. Facilities & Recommendations

### A. Dance

#### Dance Program Building

The dance program occupies the old physical plant building on the south edge of campus that has two studios, three offices, and a storage space. The main studio is a reasonable size and is the primary teaching space. However, there is water damage on the walls and ceiling, a mirror is detached from the wall, and most of the windows are painted over which prevents natural light from flowing into the room. **This space requires immediate maintenance attention.**

Unattended water damage leads to water leaks and detached mirrors are a safety hazard and reduce the effectiveness of the teaching environment. Natural light in a studio space promotes optimum learning and visibility of movement. Not taking advantage of this opportunity in an art space is a missed opportunity to optimize the use of the space in the dissemination of new knowledge.



The second dance studio in the building is completely unusable. There is severe mold damage and the floors are buckling, soft, and deteriorating. The mold stench permeates the space and the preceding hallway. There is water damage on the walls. **This space requires immediate maintenance attention. The lack of access to this space for dance courses severely disadvantages and compromises the integrity of the dance program.** Dance programs have unique security needs and adjacencies of dance studios is highly recommended to enable monitoring of the space and also to alleviate the health issues of dancers moving from building to building in dance attire. This space has not been usable for two years and the dance program regularly scrambles to find alternate spaces to use for classroom teaching which are usually not equipped to safely teach dance coursework.



The storage room/changing area behind this studio is also in extreme disrepair and is riddled with water damage on the floor, walls and ceiling. Students have refused to use this space for their changing needs which is totally understandable. There are reports of rodent infestations in this space which is corroborated with recent reports of animal feces found in the space. The one full-time dance faculty member reports being asked to regularly check and monitor the rodent traps in the space. This is an inappropriate request to make of faculty members who have been hired to focus on teaching and research. It is also a poor use of faculty resources. **This space requires immediate maintenance attention.** This space is needed for the dance program for storage and changing needs. Currently students are changing in one of the two bathrooms, which prevent the use of the toilets, or in the faculty offices, which compromise the confidentiality of conversations in these offices. **It also is unprofessional to have students in various stages of undress in faculty offices and does not represent best practices in the profession.**



Students of dance require appropriate hydration facilities to be provided near dance studios. This is a common and best practices feature of dance and sports facilities nationally. **The dance building should have a water bottle filler installed in the building to support the physiological and health needs of dancer athletes.**

### **Gaines Chapel, Presser Hall**

The dance performances are primarily held in the Gaines Chapel in Presser Hall. This space is characterized by a narrow width which limits the type of choreography that can be presented in this space. This hall is a gracious space with ample seating in a raked configuration which allows for better sight lines for the audience to see the presented work. However, there is no working monitor in this space which is a necessary component to professionally running a show. It was reported to the review team that the operators of the show have to use their cell phones to communicate critical technical cues for performances. The light and sound board, while operable, are limited, out of date and not maintained. A sense of neglect is evident in all the equipment. Dance faculty report being asked to climb four stories up into the sound booth to turn the lights on in the space. There are safety violations in the rigging which endanger the welfare of the students who work in the space. Professor Roosa hires technical professionals from the community to operate the space to run their performances. However, this is a difficult task because community professionals do not want to work in a poorly equipped and maintained space that is filled with safety hazards. **A dedicated technical director is needed to run, maintain, and implement equipment and safety recommendations for this space.** In addition, the dance students spoke about their discomfort working in this space due to the multiple safety hazards and the lack of a technical director to educate them on how to most efficiently work in the space. **The lack of a permanent technical director is a missed educational opportunity for the students in addition to falling squarely outside the best practices model for a department of theatre and dance.** A lighting designer/technical director could also train students in the valuable technical skills of lighting design and technical production.

There is also no front of house support for the dance performances in Gaines Chapel. This would include a house manager, ushers and box office staff. As a result, Professor Roosa has to address all these needs with students from other dance courses instead of focusing on her critical role as artistic director. **This is not best practices and should be addressed by support from the Events group or a similar production support group on campus.**

It should be noted that all of the dance spaces that the dance program uses for classes and performance, to a greater or lesser degree, are in violation of OSHA standards. It is incumbent on a university to place the safety of its students and faculty at the foremost of the learning environment. This is a moral imperative of all institutions of higher learning. The parents of Agnes Scott dance students need to know that they are sending their students to a safe and properly equipped environment to learn and grow. In addition, **the state of the dance facilities does not compare well with peer institutions on both a regional and national level. To move forward this needs to be addressed.**

## **Importance of Space**

The quality of the space a university allocates to support courses of study speaks volumes about the values and level of importance the university places on a given discipline. If a student walks into a well maintained, clean, up to date safe space she feels that the college values and honors the discipline and the work done in that space. This encourages a student to feel deeper pride, ownership and a fuller investment in their work. It shows that the university holds the discipline and the work that is created there in high regard and respect. **Fine facilities attract focused students and serve as an important recruitment tool.** The state of the facilities hold power and reflect the values of a university.

Conversely, poor facilities encumber faculty in their roles as teachers and educational guides. Much of their time is spent seeking out alternatives to the poorly equipped space rather than fully focusing on their work as educators. **This is a poor use of faculty resources.** It can be hard for students to fully invest in and take an art form seriously if the facilities are not respected and taken seriously by the university administration. It would be in the best interest of the educational mission of the university and the Department of Theatre & Dance to prioritize the needs of these spaces. **Teaching space is foundational to the efficient delivery of the teaching mission in any department in the arts and one that sorely needs to be addressed.**

Dance Facilities Recommendation Summary:

1. Dance Building

The Dance Program facilities require immediate maintenance attention. The primary studio needs to have water leaks addressed, the mirror repaired and the paint on the windows removed. The second studio urgently needs a major renovation to bring it in line with safe practices standards and to allow it to be usable for classes. Repairs need to be done to the storage room/changing area, including addressing the rodent challenge, to restore this essential space to be fully utilized by the dance program. Students also talked about their desire for a water bottle filler in the dance building with filtered water. This is a standard feature of peer institutions with comparable dance programs.

2. Gaines Chapel, Presser Hall

Gaines Chapel needs to be updated and fully maintained. Safety issues need to be addressed and a technical director needs to be hired to run, maintain and update the space.

## B. Theatre

### **The Charles A. Dana Fine Arts Building**

The Dana Fine Arts Building houses performance and gallery spaces, classrooms and faculty offices including those associated with the Department of Art & Art History and The Department of Theatre & Dance including the Winter Theatre and the offices for Theatre Professor David

Thompson and Adjunct Theatre Professor Sarah Thompson. Associate Dance Professor Bridget Roosa's office is not located in the Dana Fine Arts Building. Both the Dalton Gallery and the Winter Theatre bring off-campus visitors into the building and there are manageable improvements to be made to improve the maintenance and care for the building.

The main entrance has large white stains creeping across the brick façade and arched entrance to the building. **Cleaning the bricks to remove the stains as well as increased signage out front can improve audience access and impression of this critically important arts space.** A large green space is located between the arched entrance and the main doors to the building. This space is neglected with **shrubbery and grass that needs to be trimmed** and a collapsed outdoor sculpture that appears abandoned. The large windows on the front of the building that face this green space have moisture and appear to have leaks perhaps stemming from the overgrown shrubbery pressing against the glass and inviting water and insects to the windows over time. The carpet inside the Dana Fine Arts Building that stretches across the first floor and up the Winter Theatre is faded and has large stains. **Replacing this carpet would significantly improve the general impression of care and routine maintenance to the building.** Storage is an important concern that must be addressed with the Department of Theatre & Dance as evidenced by furniture and outdated equipment lining the hallways outside the Winter Theatre.

### **The Winter Theatre**

The Winter Theatre is the sole performance space for the Theatre program and offers a unique—yet very outdated—performance experience for student theatre artists. The backstage has no wing space, making it difficult for actors to navigate entrances and exits, and for crew to sustain props tables during performances. More importantly, and easier to address, is the severely outdated technology that serves the space. An antiquated light board, lighting instruments and sound board sit in the control booth. Not only is this technology outdated by decades, but it's extremely unreliable, and disadvantages students who would like to hone their theatre tech skills while at Agnes Scott. The light board is not computerized (this reviewer doesn't know of any other colleges/universities who now operate on an analogue system). From the catwalk, and with high ladders, are the dangerous methods of hanging and focusing lights for each show. Also, buckets, catching leaking water from the ceiling/roof and HVAC system, are scattered throughout the catwalk, actually hanging directly above the backstage and stage areas, potentially pouring onto lighting instruments, actors and crew members. **Needless to say, this is not only not in line with best practices, but is very dangerous and must be addressed immediately. Recommended: computerized light board with updated, reliable lighting instruments and an updated sound board with digital music/sound cue capabilities. Repair to the HVAC system as needed to stop leaking.**

### III. Personnel & Recommendations

#### A. Dance

Perhaps the greatest strengths of the dance program are its dynamically engaged students who give fully of themselves both physically and intellectually and the superb full-time faculty member and part-time faculty members in place. The faculty are well respected regionally and nationally, have excellent credentials, tireless work ethics and the creativity and ingenuity to do great things with the students who are at the center of all they do. Agnes Scott is a highly respected and regarded liberal arts women's college known for developing leaders who have a complex understanding of the global complexities of the world which we inhabit. In these areas the dance program compares favorably to its peer institutions.

Associate Professor Bridget Roosa is the only full-time faculty member in dance and is an exceptional faculty member on multiple levels. She has a deep concern for the students and works tirelessly to bring them the best educational opportunities she can find including dynamic guest artists, meticulously reconstructed masterworks from Labanotation score, and participation in the American Dance Festival Association regional conferences. Students unanimously speak about her work in the most positive terms. Their faces light up when they described her dynamic and challenging teaching style, her tireless work ethic, her talent as an artist, and her steadfast concern for each of them.

The review team learned that Professor Roosa only has a production budget of \$6,000 for the entire year. This low number adds significant pressure to not only get all needs covered but to do it at a very low cost. This places Professor Roosa in a difficult situation and does not reflect favorably on the administration of the college. **It does not represent “best practices” for running a dance program at the university level in this country.**

Professor Roosa has a history of reconstructing masterworks from Labanotation score for her students, professionals in the community and in collaborative contexts with dance students from Agnes Scott and other universities including Brenau, Emory, and Jacksonville University. This reconstruction and directing work is highly specialized, takes years of preparatory training, and few dance professionals possess this skill at the university level. Professor Roosa has consistently brought the great masterworks of modern dance literature to students and professionals which enables them to have an embodied experience of the history of the artform. It allows them to feel the movement values of the time the work was created which is one of the most valuable ways to empathize and understand a culture and time period. The skill of reconstructing dance from score is highly sought after in universities around the country and in the world. I hope the administration realizes the outstanding gifts Professor Roosa gives to her students through these skills.

For example, Professor Roosa did a heroic job of directing the Danceworks 2018 production in November 2018. Out of the five pieces on the program she was responsible for four of them. On the program was a meticulous and historically significant 1928 reconstruction of Doris Humphrey's *Air for a G String*, a seminal work in modern dance history which was beautifully



and authentically performed by five students. She choreographed two other pieces on the program and the final one she worked on in collaboration with the dancers. Professor Roosa's choreography skills are well developed. She moves students dynamically through space showing them off to their best advantage in engaging original choreography. The artistic output reflected on this concert was quite simply astonishing. It would be normal for dance faculty to produce one new work a year, where on this concert Professor Roosa was responsible for four!

She is also committed to collaborative arts endeavors and has been involved with projects from music and visual arts faculty most notable in the *Complex Mammal* collaborative group. Professors Laird and Ruby from music and visual arts respectively both commented on Professor Roosa's highly tuned ability and interest in collaboration and said how much they enjoyed working with her. The dance students also commented on these exciting collaborative opportunities brought to them by Professor Roosa. Collaborative and interdisciplinary work is at the heart of the liberal arts investigative process and is a path that many liberal arts colleges are pursuing throughout the country. **These types of collaborative projects increase student engagement on campus and allow them to combine knowledge from different disciplines to forge new ideas and pathways of inquiry as they move forward in their educational journey. They are also an important recruitment vehicle and demonstrate the forward thinking nature of the curriculum and arts opportunities at Agnes Scott College.**

In addition to directing the dance program and chairing the Department of Theatre and Dance, Professor Roosa teaches all the courses necessary for the major and minor degree in dance with some help from two adjunct faculty. She has had to send some students, through the ARCHE program, to the Emory Dance Program to take dance history since she does not have the space in her schedule to teach this course. She also directs and choreographs for the Studio Dance Theatre dance group, advises students and serves the department as costume creator, administrator, and all-around problem solver. She also is a well-respected artist in the Atlanta area and has been active as a performer and master teacher for years in the community and beyond. One cannot help but wonder how long Professor Roosa can keep up this super-human pace and level of production on all fronts. **The dance program needs another full-time faculty member to support the teaching and performance mission of the department and to provide support in all associated administrative tasks and advising.**

### **Part-time dance faculty**

The dance program also employs two outstanding adjunct faculty members. Professor Amanda Byars teaches three classes a semester and has excellent credentials. The students speak enthusiastically about her skills, commitment to the program and concern for their learning. Professor Byars appreciates the strong leadership that Professor Roosa provides and is fully engaged working with the students. Professor Amanda Lower teaches only one or two classes a year and is a positive, talented and highly regarded member of the Atlanta dance community. The Agnes Scott dance program is fortunate to attract such strong adjunct support. Both of these professionals add much to the program and have many other skills (i.e. administration, artistic) that are not being utilized. **Professor Roosa reports that while she values these faculty**

**immensely she is not comfortable asking them to help with any other aspect of the program due to their low compensation levels which are not on par with other university adjunct positions in the Atlanta area.**

Recommendation Summary:

A second full-time dance faculty member needs to be hired. This could take the form of upgrading one of the current part time faculty members to full-time. This would enable all of the required coursework for the dance major and minor to be taught on campus and would help guard against “burn out” of the regularized faculty who are stretched way beyond what are reasonable expectations for a dance program of this size. A dance major and minor program require a minimum of two full-time faculty members to administer the curriculum and provide the individualized support the art form necessitates to be taught effectively. **This would represent “best practices” and allow the dance program to compare appropriately with peer institutions similar to Agnes Scott.**

## B. Theatre

**The most pressing faculty need for the Department of Theatre & Dance is to hire a new colleague who would teach design and technical courses including a foundational course in production practice such as Stagecraft or Fundamentals of Production to serve both the theatre and dance students and address the lack of a production course in the curriculum for current dance students.** This colleague would need to be a designer who can serve both the theatre and dance productions. From multiple interviews, it was clear that this new faculty hire needs to be a collaborative creator with specialization in lighting design. This individual should be comfortable with artistic collaboration and possess a flexible mindset and open attitude toward creating artistic work across disciplines and toward teaching courses that could tie the department back to larger college needs such as developing creative leadership courses in the Summit program or in the Peak Week series. This new faculty hire must also be creative in addressing spatial needs including employing technology to enhance older performance spaces with less material costs such as the strategic use of projections and lighting.

Currently, Agnes Scott does not have an Associate Dean and will be completing an external search for the position. It was evident that without an Associate Dean there seems to be a leadership gap between the Department Chair and the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of the College. **The Department of Theatre & Dance would benefit from the new Associate Dean leading the college as an arts champion on campus** to drive collaboration within the arts and with the full campus, to cultivate arts funding and donor development for the arts, to monitor closely how and when emergency facilities repairs are addressed, and to serve as a crucial bridge between the arts and the admissions team to increase recruitment.

Agnes Scott is fortunate to house a number of performance spaces including the Winter Theatre and Gaines Chapel. These spaces include complex systems requiring routine maintenance and

safety checks such as fly systems, lighting instruments, and sound/light boards. The campus could increase its performance abilities and maintain a safe level of performance practice with the addition of a campus technical director on staff.

#### IV. Key Challenges & Recommendations

##### A. Culture of Department

While a single department with one chair, the Department of Theatre & Dance seems to operate mostly as two separate disciplines teaching courses in theatre and in dance, working with students majoring in dance or theatre, and creating theatre or dance productions each semester. In reviewing the spaces of the Dance Building and the Dana Fine Arts building, the offices of the theatre faculty and dance faculty are housed in different buildings and separated geographically and spatially on Agnes Scott's campus. In terms of artistic practice and production work, the reviewers noted that faculty in both theatre and dance seem open and quite interested in collaborating, but that collaborations in the past have occurred with music (*The Fantasticks*) and with art (the course and performance, *Complex Mammal*) but not between theatre and dance directly.

A post-sabbatical performance by Associate Professor Roosa was performed in the Winter Theatre and was a great success in which both Professors Roosa and Thompson noted how well the performance was choreographed and performed in the space even with its relatively shallow stage depth. However, dance productions do not regularly occur in the Winter Theatre and are staged elsewhere on campus while theatre productions are staged in the Winter Theatre. Students also noted that last year, calendar issues arose when theatre and dance had productions occurring on the same weekend that directly conflicted.

Currently, there are approximately five dance majors and between six to possibly nine theatre majors. Of those, only one student shared that she “did both theatre and dance.” Students noted that while dancers are required to take Acting I, theatre students are not required to take any courses in dance. The Blackfriars, a historic student theatre group on campus, has membership comprised of some theatre majors with many non-theatre majors and creates productions such as the “Spooktacular” performance for students across campus in the Winter Theatre. The Blackfriars have repeatedly expressed frustration with the Department of Theatre & Dance and faculty have noted that the group needs strong guidance in terms of its mission and operating practices as a theatre-producing organization. The Blackfriars mission statement is outdated and was written years, if not decades before its current membership entered the college. High tensions between students and faculty over season programming and use of the Winter Theatre; separate and conflicting production calendars in theatre and dance; the understandable demands of delivering courses in separate disciplines; tight production budgets; small numbers of faculty and students in theatre and dance; and the spatial separation of faculty offices, studios, and performance spaces on campus have culminated in an unhealthy and imbalanced culture for the Department of Theatre & Dance.

## Recommendations

**The creation of a mission statement between theatre and dance faculty and students is necessary** for articulating common goals, uniting the department, and creating a greater sense of shared purpose through clearly stated standards of practice, conduct, and accountability. In conjunction with this work, a mission statement for the Blackfriars must be created that is current and considers student needs, faculty labor, and the material realities of space and resources. Creating a department mission statement and a mission statement for the Blackfriars must be a collaborative venture with equal participation and ownership by students and faculty.

A department retreat could be of great benefit for setting a new tone of professionalism and a healthier work environment for all. At this retreat mission statements could be generated and signed by the department's members and also clear processes for communication could be stressed. It seems paramount to routinely articulate to students the appropriate channels for expressing concerns within the college's leadership structure from the department level to the dean. Additionally, **it is vital that the department grow both student numbers and faculty members**. A "critical mass" is necessary for the department to reach a healthier level of participation and to afford students and faculty the benefit of a robust department in which all members have multiple co-collaborators. This is necessary so that department members do not feel isolated to either shoulder the teaching and production demands alone as faculty or isolated by having a single instructor in their chosen field of study as students.

**Moving forward the department can work to bridge the physical separation of the Dance Building and Dana Fine Arts Building, by holding regular department meetings. Also, quarterly meetings with faculty and students (two per long term) would be a manageable and useful addition to create a greater sense of clear communication and commitment to a unified department.** The Winter Theatre should be considered a space for both theatre and dance students and needs to house regular dance productions and other interdisciplinary arts productions to both promote the importance of theatre and dance and the space as playing an integral role in the vibrant campus community of Agnes Scott College. Of course, and as outlined above under Facilities, the Winter Theatre must have critical updates to the sewing machines, light and sound boards, and shop space. Also, the care and maintenance of the Winter Theatre as an important arts space for regular collaborative performances cannot fall solely to one or two faculty members.

**It is necessary for the department to create a shared production calendar that includes programming in theatre and dance that complements and does not conflict and is in alignment with larger campus celebrations or events to naturally increase visibility and promotion of the strong work happening in the studios and stages of the Department of Theatre & Dance.** Regular, supported, and highly advertised collaborative productions that include dance and theatre could be an excellent addition to the annual production output of the department. Additionally, building collaboration into the course work of the department would be of strong use for students training in the arts today and in uniting the department. If dance students must take Acting I, it is equitable to require theatre students to take a basic dance

course, a movement course, or a “dance for the actor” course. Together, the recommendations articulated above can integrate the Department of Theatre & Dance not only on an organizational level but in artistic practice through production and in departmental culture through coursework, collaborative communication, and a shared mission.

## B. Communication

During the 1 and ½ days the reviewers were on campus, a few common themes emerged: a lack of understanding others’ roles within and outside of the Department; misunderstandings of roles, mission and vision among students, faculty and administration; misunderstandings of expectations, and cross-cultural/generational differences and expectations. Much of this can be resolved with frequent and routine faculty meetings within the Department. Theatre and Dance are two art forms that are quite collaborative, with Theatre culminating in a teaching of not only the performance component, but also the technical component. The many “wheels of the machine” can easily stray off track without constant and clear communication of ideas, goals and the execution of a common vision. This begins with a renewed mission statement that is in line with the current philosophy and climate of Agnes Scott and the Theatre and Dance Department. Considering faculty’s strengths, areas of expertise, budgets, facilities, feasible courses that can be offered, and the changing needs of the theatre world and its practices will all contribute to a fortified mission statement that can address the niche that Agnes Scott has to offer. More pragmatically, the Blackfriars organization lacks a focus and understanding of the opportunity to be available as a producing resource for the Department. With the faculty at the helm, guiding students and offering them a voice within the production process, Blackfriars can be an arm of the producing body that is the Department. Students can learn valuable, marketable skills; the importance of deadlines; collaboration; established hierarchy within an organization, and see results based on their contributions. They will, in appropriate fashion, take ownership in what they have helped create.

A production calendar—updated and maintained by the new Lighting Designer/Technical Director—can be the ultimate communication tool for determining the best way to produce the dance and theatre productions throughout the year. If this faculty member is responsible for keeping an intra-departmental calendar, rehearsals, performances, and college-wide conflicts can be managed through a central system—one that serves both areas of the Department.

Finally, it is vital that students, faculty and administration feel appropriately supported in the mission and vision of the Department. If there is an Associate Dean position created/renewed, perhaps that person might be invited to department faculty meetings twice a year, in order to increase understanding/communication between faculty needs and administrative expectations. Likewise, perhaps Blackfriars could have monthly meetings that Theatre faculty attend to increase awareness of developments and to plan together. There is virtually nothing that can replace the feeling of being appropriately supported and valued.

### C. Budget

Production work is the opportunity for students in the arts to demonstrate, refine, and excel in their discipline. Productions drive student engagement and artistic ownership, foster a sense of excitement that is intangible yet essential for student retention, and allow faculty and students alike to demonstrate the vital importance of their artform to the rich fabric of shared experience that is a campus community. Currently, theatre operates with approximately \$6000 and as stated earlier, dance operates with the same level of approximately \$6000. These budgets are too small for the expectation of regular production work and for the range of expenses they must cover from hiring guest designers to light or costume a production, to buying the actual costumes or material supplies for building a theatre set or lighting a dance production.

With these budgets, the Department of Theatre & Dance is not able to purchase necessary materials or updated technology such as a current soundboard and the result is fewer productions in an academic year with less and less for production work. And yet, dynamic, fully-realized, and excellent production work remains a regular need for any department and an expectation on any campus that has a Department of Theatre & Dance. **The reviewers strongly advocate for Agnes Scott to address this gap in expectation and production practice by raising each budget for theatre and for dance to \$10,000. Or, this calculated increase could be implemented as a shared departmental budget of \$20,000 to foster collaborative productions between theatre and dance and address the financial requirements of production work.** This strategic increase represents only \$4000 per budget or a combined increase of only \$8000 which could yield the far more lucrative benefit of higher student recruitment, retention, and re-center the Department of Theatre and Dance to the heart of Agnes Scott's distinctive programming and excellence as an institution.

### D. Visibility

In the many interviews with both faculty and students, there were concerns about administrative support for the arts specifically in terms of notable, definite, and specific strides being made toward a higher profile both on and off campus. The lack of facility maintenance, the imposed dangers of the current facilities, and the hesitation to replace faculty immediately are viewed as a lack of concern for the arts programs.

On a small yet practical note, the review team noted that to newcomers, the Dana Fine Arts building itself is not a prominent one upon entering the campus from the Welcome Center entrance. From the start, it was difficult to find the building itself, as there were no clearly visible signs directing visitors to that side of campus. Also, the Welcome Center was closed the day the reviewers attended the *She Kills Monsters* matinee. Profiling begins with a visual recognition; sufficient and prominent signage will prove immensely helpful to future arts patrons as they are able to navigate their on-campus visit with ease.

Additionally, faculty discussed training admissions counselors to clearly and fully represent the arts programs so that faculty can focus on teaching, production, and research. One interviewee suggested that “Agnes Scott misses a huge opportunity with the arts...[that] the arts are a well-kept secret.” Additionally, to incorporate more interaction from across campus, the idea arose more than once to **tie admissions events to theatre and dance productions** when at all possible, and to investigate the possibility of **production photos being taken by Public Relations or Admissions**. The impression was that sometimes, but not often enough, Theatre and Dance is included in recruiting materials for the College. Other ideas include a **collaborative performance: “An Evening of Theatre and Dance,”** to better publicize the Department’s offerings. Finally, **developing a signature theatre (or theatre and dance piece) for alumnae weekend. In line with best practices, this review team suggests that the administration designate a budget for arts recruitment.** If this resource is used judiciously, it can raise the profile of Agnes Scott to a more prominent place in the area, the region and beyond.

## V. Final Recommendations

### DANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Address the poor state of the dance facilities with maintenance, repairs and renovations in the main dance teaching space, secondary dance teaching studio and the storage room/changing area
- Install a water bottle filler in the dance building
- Hire a technical director to run, maintain, and implement equipment and safety recommendations for Gaines Chapel
- Provide appropriate staff support for all performance events in Gaines Chapel.
- Add an additional full-time faculty member and/or upgrade one of the current adjunct positions to full time.
- Increase compensation of part-time faculty
- Increase overall dance program budget to \$10,000

### THEATRE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hire a tenure-track faculty member to serve the entire department: specialization in lighting design and technical production
- New Associate Dean to serve as an arts champion
- Create a new/updated departmental mission statement
- Hold regular department meetings
- Develop a departmental production calendar
- Increase departmental budget to \$20,000
- Integrate Admissions and Public Relations to raise the Department’s profile
- Increase student interest and engagement through: creation of mission statement and operating practices for Blackfriars, season planning with students, recruitment and strategic growth of majors, and retention of current majors