

## **Sharing the Power of the Arts to Educate and Transform: Expanding Techniques to Teach Drama**

**Introduction:** As research continues to demonstrate, an education enriched with access to the arts results in students who are more proficient in reading, writing, and math, and who exhibit more self-confidence, self-awareness, and self-expression. Students exposed to the dramatic arts learn to take instruction, work cooperatively, and express compassion and empathy towards others. An education that includes access to arts experiences produces students who are more well-rounded and better equipped to be successful members of their communities. Far too often students lack access to this crucial arts education, and I believe that it is our responsibility as students of the arts and education to provide quality arts educational experiences to all students.

**Objectives:** Thus, as a prospective Echols Interdisciplinary Major studying Drama, Arts Administration, and Youth and Social Innovation, I aim to utilize the resources available to Miller Arts Scholars to expand my skills and abilities in arts education. In addition, I hope to share my training with other students with a passion for drama and education in the UVA community. **I would like to utilize MAS funds to attend a Broadway Teachers Workshop this summer. Additionally, upon returning to grounds next fall, I would like to offer a workshop for UVA students who may wish to incorporate techniques for including arts education in their training.**

The Broadway Teachers Workshop is a 3-day intensive workshop offering 8 workshops and master classes with Broadway performers, creative teams, and production staff, and peer sessions throughout. The Broadway Teachers Workshop is designed to inspire teachers and directors of middle school, high school and college theatre with new teaching methods, enhanced production skills, and an exchange of ideas with peers and professional Broadway artists. In addition to class instruction, the workshop includes tickets to current Broadway shows as well as talkbacks or post show discussions with performers, directors, and other key individuals involved in the productions.

Although the 2018 workshop classes have not been announced, previous classes included: oral communication for artists and teachers, acting and song interpretation and scene study, theater games and improvisation, table reading techniques, curriculum mapping, and strategies for successful fundraising campaigns. Workshops are designed specifically for drama educators, are taught by current theater educators, performers, directors or other industry professionals, and include opportunities for networking with arts educators.

Registration for the BTW costs \$799. Area lodging near the workshop averages about \$250 per night, and train travel to New York ranges from \$100-\$197 depending on the booking date. An estimated overall cost for workshop registration, travel, materials/food, and lodging is roughly \$2,254. I am requesting \$1500 to cover the cost of the registration fee and assist me in covering some of the travel expenses.

Attending the Broadway Teacher's Workshop is only one aspect of my proposal. Upon returning to the University in the fall, I would like to draw from what I learned at the workshop and share my experiences with others by organizing and helping to facilitate a training session for UVA students currently involved in arts education or interested in gaining more knowledge

and skills in this area to broaden their educational experiences. Students who may benefit from or be interested in participating include current Curry students, Youth and Social Innovation majors, Drama majors, and volunteers involved with Kids Acting Out and Arts Mentors.

Possible learning objectives include: basics of drama education with elementary and middle school students, including basic drama vocabulary, theater games, improv techniques, and one act productions; ways of incorporating drama into language and other classes, teaching playwriting to kids, and community outreach with the arts.

During the end of summer break and beginning of the fall 2018 semester, I plan to organize my notes from the workshop and continue to research arts education techniques for working with school aged children. In addition, I will contact university staff responsible for facilities management and scheduling to determine possible dates and available spaces for the workshop.

As the fall semester begins, I will again work with faculty in UVA Drama and the Curry School, specifically faculty from YSI, to seek their input in the final plans for the workshop. Likewise, I will begin reaching out to students to advertise the opportunity and seek out participants. I also plan to include information for participants on possible arts education related volunteer or outreach activities in the community, with the goal of providing participants with specific skills, motivating them to seek out ways to use these skills, and connecting them with specific opportunities to do so. I also plan to request participants share/complete a survey seeking feedback about the workshop and offering ideas for possible improvement.

As part of my report on this experience, I plan to research other similar arts educator training activities to gain knowledge of the existence and breadth of arts educator training activities across the country. It is my hope to be able to create a framework or list of “best practices” to be included in an arts educator training or workshop. I also hope to identify, train, and motivate a group of UVA students to volunteer with UVA organizations such as Kids Acting Out, the Autism Theater Project, Project Inspire, Arts Mentors, and community groups such as Empowered Players.

In April of 2019, I plan to present a report including what I learned though the Broadway Teachers Workshop. Critical elements to include in the outcome report include: discussing specific lessons learned, identifying key topics or lessons to include in an arts education intro workshop, and sharing ideas for ways of reaching out to potential participants.

**Concerns:** With respect to concerns and limitations for my project, the cost and location of lodging presents the major concern for me. The Workshop offers lengthy classes, beginning early in the morning and running until late afternoon. The workshop also includes attendance at nighttime Broadway performances as well as post show discussions with the potential to run late into the evening. Thus, securing lodging that is in the theater district is an essential, but costly proposition.

Space Requirements for workshop: An accessible classroom space that would enable participants to be able to move around freely and would offer seating space for 20-30 participants.

## **Project Time Line:**

April and May 2018

- Reach out to key faculty in UVA Drama and Curry School of Ed; YSI, discussing plan and seeking guidance in planning and implementation and help in reaching out to interested students
- Finalize travel plans

July 2018

- July 19-21 Travel to NYC to attend Broadway Teacher's Workshop
- Review notes and plan for UVA Arts Educator Workshop

August 2018

- Work on logistics for workshop
  - o Explore locations at UVA Drama or Curry School
  - o Contact key individuals involved in room availability and scheduling
  - o Reach out to student groups with shared interest
  - o Begin advertising on social media
  - o Reconnect faculty from UVA Drama and Curry to review plan
  - o Determine list of courses for workshop
  - o Identify guest teachers and presenters
  - o Decide on date and location for workshop

September 2018

- Advertise workshop in specific departments, with UVA CIO's, and on social media
- Register students
- Conduct Workshop
- Seek feedback from participants
- Seek student volunteers to assist with community arts ed activities

## Budget

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Total
Registration	\$266.3	\$266.3	\$266.3		\$799
Lodging	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$1000
Transportation	\$100-197	-	-	\$100-197	\$200-394
Materials (notebooks, pens)	\$15	-	-	-	\$15
Food	\$60	\$60	\$60	\$60	\$240
Total	\$691.3-788.3	\$576.3	\$576.3	\$410-507	\$2254-2448

### **Evidence of Participation in the Arts**

Involvement in the arts at UVA characterizes most of my experiences at the University, and I have maintained enrollment in an arts class every semester of my time at UVA. Courses I have taken or are currently taking include:

- CASS 1010 College Art Scholars Seminar \*
- Dance 1400 The Art of Dance
- Dance 2210 Ballet I
- Drama 3410 Acting II
- Drama 4993 Independent Study
- Arts Administration 3100 Principles & Practices in Arts Administration
- Arts Administration 3550 Ecology of the Arts
- Arts Administration 5200 Development and Board Management
- Drama 3651 Directing I
- Drama 3710 Playwriting I
- Drama 4651 Directing II
- Drama 4993 Independent Study

In addition to a course load focused on dance, drama, and arts administration, I have also been involved in the arts through individual performance and directing. As part of an independent study activity, I served as dance captain and performed at *Throw Your Head Back & Sing*, a celebration honoring Maya Angelou at James Madison University. In my first year, I served as musical director for Virginia Players' Lab Series Festival, *Identity: A Musical Cabaret*. In the fall I directed *Black Monologues* with the Paul Robeson Players, and this spring, I will be participating in the *New Works Festival* as a director. I recently performed in "Welcome to the Music Library: An Evening of Short Plays," part of the Making Noise series.

My arts involvement at the University also includes an internship with the UVA Office of the Vice Provost for Arts and a guide with the UVA Arts Grounds Guide. Currently, I am a course assistant for a course in the Arts Administration Department and helped organize the artist residency of Wadada Leo Smith as part of the Impulse Festival at UVA. I also serve on the executive board of Kids Acting Out, a UVA CIO, working as a lesson leader at local elementary after schools.

\*Due to a major-required class, I was unable to take CASS 1011 in the spring of 2018.