

FACULTY MEETING
March 4, 2016

MOTION

The Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) proposes that Skidmore College terminate its current affiliation with the British American Drama Academy (BADA) for the Shakespeare Programme in London based on the recommendation of the Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and the Advisory Committee on Off-Campus Programs (ACOP).

RATIONALE:

During the early fall, BADA's Board of Directors determined they could no longer support an affiliation with Skidmore College. This was a difficult decision given the long-standing partnership between Skidmore and BADA. Since 1995, we have enjoyed a fruitful collaboration on this signature program for Theater and English students. However, students' educational needs and partner institutions' financial demands have shifted and enrollments in the program have continued to decrease as a result.

Specifically, the program has struggled for the past 6 years to maintain steady enrollments. We have had as many as 27 participants at our highest point and as low as 3 at our lowest point. (We were forced to cancel the program for that year.) For the program to run effectively on an academic and financial level, and for BADA to be able to justify hosting our program, the program ideally would have 20-25 participants. We met that goal only once in the past 6 years.

These unstable enrollments were the result of a variety of factors:

- In any given year, over 50% of the participants were not from Skidmore; rather, they came from peer schools. We charge all students, including non-Skidmore students, the Skidmore comprehensive fee for the semester. As more of our peer schools have moved to charging home school tuition and fees, the Shakespeare Programme has become financially prohibitive.
- With the emergence of several strong theater programs abroad, students have a wider variety of choices when it comes to studying theater. Students have increasingly sought programs outside of London, specifically programs in Dublin and Moscow. We need to respect and support students' subsequent desire to participate in a broader variety of programs and have approved these options for students. The result has been decreased interest in our own program.
- These other theater programs abroad are strong conservatory-style programs that offer students more hands-on experience in the theater. Students have increasingly sought those conservatory experiences, which the Shakespeare Programme does not offer.

In light of these decreasing enrollments, OCSE has been in discussion with BADA for the past two years considering new student markets, a revised curriculum, and an entirely new program focus. While we considered several interesting ideas, in the end we realized that all of them would mean drastically changing the current program and it would not be the Shakespeare Programme as we've known it. With that in mind, the Director of BADA recommended to the BADA Board of Directors that the program be closed.

OCSE has informed the Theater and English chairs regarding this development and is exploring new theater approved programs options for their students.