

# Approved Handbook Changes

## National Association of Schools of Theatre

March 2012

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The NAST Membership approved the revisions to the Bylaws and Standards for Accreditation set forth below during the Second General Session: Plenary Business Meeting held on Friday, March 23, 2012.

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### BYLAWS

— Action by the NAST Membership —

**NAST Handbook 2010-11 – page 5**

(See Note 1.)

#### Article I. Membership

##### Section 2. Individual Membership

**Strike second from last sentence, as noted below:**

**Section 2. Individual Membership.** Individuals, theatre professionals, or educators who, through their teaching and professional activity or through their interest in accredited membership for their institutions, may both derive benefit from the Association and contribute to its effective operation, shall be accorded Individual Membership upon completion of the application process and payment of a membership fee. ~~Such members may serve on ad hoc committees.~~ Individual members have no vote.

**NAST Handbook 2010-11 – page 10**

(See Note 2.)

#### Article IV. Commission on Accreditation

##### Section I. Membership

##### C. Representatives

**Amend first sentence, as follows:**

In addition to the Chair, there shall be ~~seven~~ eight members of the Commission; each shall be the official representative of an institution with membership in the Association as defined in Article I., Section I., of the Bylaws.

### STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

— Action by the NAST Membership —

**NAST Handbook 2010-11 – page 160**

(See Note 3.)

**Add new Appendix I.E.:**

#### **Appendix I.E.: ABET and NAST Statement on Degree Programs Combining Studies in Theatre and Electrical/Computer Engineering**

**A. Introduction.** This statement concerning curricular programs that combine studies in theatre and electrical/computer engineering represents the mutual understanding and agreement between the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) and ABET.

## B. Accreditation

### I. Organizations

- a. **Theatre.** The National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) is the nationally recognized accrediting agency for all postsecondary theatre programs in the United States. NAST was founded in 1965. NAST develops criteria and standards for degrees and other credentials, and for the various specializations and operational requirements associated with those degrees. NAST evaluates results as evident in student work.
- b. **Electrical/Computer Engineering.** ABET is the internationally recognized accrediting agency for postsecondary degree programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology. ABET was founded in 1932 and evaluates academic programs against specific criteria developed for various disciplines of study.
- c. **Commonalities.** For their respective fields, NAST and ABET:
  - (1) Promote excellence and continuous improvement in education at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
  - (2) Ensure performance consistent with the school's mission and ABET criteria or NAST standards through self-evaluation and peer review.
  - (3) Endorse and support diverse paths to achieving high quality education and provide guidance for continuous improvement in educational programs.

### 2. Basic Requirements for Undergraduate Degrees in Theatre and in Electrical/Computer Engineering

- a. **NAST: Official Standards Statements.** NAST standards for all types of undergraduate degrees in theatre, and theatre-related fields are outlined in the *NAST Handbook*, available at <http://nast.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=Standards-Handbook>. These standards include patterns for combining studies in theatre with studies in other fields.
- b. **ABET: Official Criteria Statements.** ABET criteria for Engineering Programs are outlined in *Criteria for Accrediting Engineering Programs*, available at <http://www.abet.org/eac-current-criteria/>.

### 3. Policies and Positions of ABET and NAST

- a. **Program Clarity.** Statements in institutional literature concerning the purposes of degree programs shall be accurate. Degree titles, program descriptions, and content shall in the aggregate both identify and be consistent with the purposes of each program.
- b. **Accreditation Clarity.** Statements and institutional literature concerning the approval of any program shall be accurate and clear to the public. In cases where theatre and engineering or computer engineering studies are combined, accreditation by either ABET or NAST shall not be construed to signify accreditation by both parties, nor shall regional or other institutional accreditation be construed as having provided professional review of degree programs in engineering or in theatre.

- c. **Cooperation.** ABET and NAST will each seek to confirm cooperation between the engineering unit and the theatre unit appropriate to the nature and purposes of any degree program combining studies in the two fields. When the two units share a responsibility in the organization and management of programs, cooperation in the development, operation, and evaluation of the program will be expected.

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## NOTES — RATIONALES

The rationale for each of the changes proposed above:

1. *Bylaws:* Technical amendment to reduce Bylaws specificity and thus provide greater public and Association clarity regarding the fact that individual members may participate in the work of the Association in more than one way. The proposed change does not remove the possibility of individual member service on *ad hoc* committees. As before, such appointments and other types of service would be determined consistent with provisions of the NAST Bylaws and other NAST rules and procedures documents as well as the nature of the task at hand.
2. *Bylaws:* To increase the size of the Commission by one person due to expanding membership.
3. *ABET and NAST Statement on Degree Programs Combining Studies in Theatre and Electrical/Computer Engineering:* To establish an ABET-NAST protocol regarding degrees and programs that combine studies in theatre and engineering that clarifies the scope of each accrediting body and their relationship, and provides requirements for institutions to ensure the accuracy of information about degrees or programs combining studies in these fields.

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