

Welcome:

Ian Wallace, Chair of the Theatre and Cinema Department at Folsom Lake College welcomed the group. Ian reviewed the role of the Technical Theatre Advisory Committee for Sierra College and Folsom Lake College.

Folsom Lake College Report:

Ian then shared updates on Folsom Lake College Technical Theatre activities, including about still doing 100% online classes since fall, which has been challenging for hands-on technical instruction. They have not offered stagecraft all year or their stagehand classes. This spring they did offer their lighting class online. The shift was to more of a theoretical focus in comparison to the previous spring, which at least had the first part of the semester on-ground. More time was spent on how to program lighting boards. They purchased lighting kits that were sent home with students to work from home, including color source, spots, and “baby movers”, that students were able to practice so they could hang and focus on a very small scale in their homes. Students filmed themselves to demonstrate they understood the steps to accomplish those skills. Ian then showed a short example of a project the lighting students did to select a tv theme song and do the lighting from that show.

Having done a larger scale virtual production last fall, Folsom Lake College did three smaller online shows, also from their homes in front of green screens, which allowed for more opportunities for actors to participate.

In the fall, FLC will be on-ground for most of their theatre classes. Larger lecture classes, such as Introduction to Theatre will continue to be taught online, but they will be offering on-ground stagehands, stagecraft, and acting classes. The fall production will be *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in their larger Stage One venue. It will be a streamed production where the actors and technicians will all be in the same theatre space that will be streamed to audiences at home. They are hoping to add a small population of in-person audience members, if they receive approval.

Sierra College Report:

Debra Hammond, Sierra's technical theatre instructor shared that similarly to FLC, they have been all online this term with the exception of a hybrid lighting class this spring. They met six times on campus and the rest of the semester was taught online.

Debra shared that in the fall, their department will be fully on-ground with the exception of two classes (Introduction to Theatre and Script Analysis), which are normally taught

online. Additionally, they will be offering a fall production in person, with the hopes to present that to a limited number of live audience members. No announcements have been made yet to which show, but that announcement will be coming soon.

Thor Tivol described new equipment that were granted through the Perkins grant. They received 12 Source FWD colors. One has been set-up and tested so far that's looking impressive. They will be receiving a computer and design software for the costume shop. Debra elaborated on the software's capability to design and draft patterns, to do a variety of renderings both for productions and for student use in the costume construction class beginning in the fall.

Thor additionally mentioned about video production kits that they were granted that include green screens and camera set-ups, so Sierra can use this equipment in performance classes and as an alternative to enhancing the production presentations.

Lastly, Thor provided an update on the renovation of the T-2 classroom space into a multi-purpose black box space and instruction room. It's being painted, receiving new sprung flooring, travel tracks for drapes, mirrors, a new LED lighting and sound system, and tables and chairs for easy storage. The goal is to complete the project by the end of summer for usage in the fall.

Robert Johnson offered his thanks to the Sierra Theatre Arts Department for working hard to bring back classes such as Stagecraft and Production Crew to be taught fully on-ground again in the fall, as it breaks down barriers for students to achieve the certificate program in Media and Production Event that is housed in commercial music. Thor asked if any of those classes would be taught on-ground in the fall, and Rob responded that they would be meeting soon to request that at least two of those classes, Live Sound and Audio Event Production be taught as Hybrid in the fall.

Open Discussion:

Ian opened up questions from the agenda to the advisor group beginning with, "What are your institution's plans for re-opening, including timeline, protocol, etc.?"

Herb Garman from the Mondavi Center shared about some of their activities this spring. They did some recordings for small groups within the Sacramento Philharmonic, American Bach Soloists, and the American Symphony in their large hall. They worked with UC Davis campus and their own protocols to create and adhere to those guidelines for visiting guest artists. They are looking at offering live performances again beginning in October starting "light" with only 8 or 9 shows compared to their normal 20 during a typical fall season. In the spring, they plan to go back to more of a full load. They also plan to host orientations for academic programs beginning in September. Debra asked if Mondavi events planned to be distancing their audiences,

and Herb responded they were unsure at this time. They may require vaccinations, according to their Vice-Chancellor for indoor events in the fall. Season tickets will be on sale during the first week in June.

Donna Flor added that the aim is to go to full in person instruction in the fall at UC Davis. They are holding one of their primary classroom/event facilities – Jackson Hall, for instruction in the fall for 5 days a week, and then planning to turn the stage around for a light fall schedule. The small theatre is being used for a Covid testing site. They are standing ready to pivot if needed.

Jerry Montoya at B Street Theatre shared that The Sofia Tsakopoulos Center for the Arts partnered with some local film studios as well as just recorded the air force band. For live performance openings, they are taking a lead from Broadway and are targeting September 14. They are still waiting for protocols from the county. They are assuming it's going to be wide open with promising results from vaccinations. They will be doing some concerts outdoors beginning in July.

Misty McDowell at Capital Stage said they are simply waiting for guidance from appropriate officials, because their venue capacity is so small, leaving their abilities to provide space at a stand-still. They have to wait until June 15 for the next update. They are following Broadway lead too, and they are hoping to open in the fall. They have play selections ready and have a plan B in case things change.

Jack McDowell, from the Sacramento Ballet said, along with most ballet companies, that they are waiting until Nutcracker season, and plan to go big at that time given the re-opening of the Sacramento Community Center. They are playing it by ear until they get full casts in the same room together around October and November. They might require their company members to have full vaccination given the large cast with no room for social distancing. They are hoping for full capacity, but they are allowing for 50% audience capacity.

Christian Johnson from Broadway Sacramento announced that they would be putting single tickets for *Hamilton* on sale in early June. It will run for four weeks starting September 15. The Music Circus season has been postponed until summer, 2022. They are planning to sell a full house for all their touring shows which will also include one-week production runs of *Charlie and Chocolate Factory* and *Officer and a Gentleman* over the winter and early spring.

Davie Pier gave an update on the Harris Center. The Los Rios district made a formal announcement that they are wanting to exit from operating a regional wide performing arts center and therefore wanting to put operations of the Harris Center out to a third party. Since no third party has yet been identified to Dave's knowledge, a timeline may

look like two or three months to negotiate a contract, secure bookings, hire staff, get marketing and ticketing in place, etc. So, they might not meet hopeful openings for most outside groups until after January. The Folsom Lake College Theatre department and other campus programs will have events in the Harris Center in the fall, however. Dave said much will be in limbo in the coming months, and that his position (Executive Director of the center) will no longer exist in the new format. Dave elaborated that the reasoning for the district's decision seems to be that they are looking to realign their prime educational priorities with respect to what is offered at the Harris Center. What has been offered in recent years evidently doesn't seem to be meeting those priorities.

Employment Needs:

Dave Pier expressed in general that he's seeing trends ramping up. They are receiving calls from agents about tours going out and looking to fill dates. He said if you look at the employment boards currently, that employers seem to be hiring right now.

Donna Flor shared that she had recently been on a call with industry colleagues, whose consensus was that it would be difficult to find people they know to staff the tours once they are out on the road again due to the number of people who had to leave the industry to remain financially stable during the pandemic. Some qualified people, according to Donna, who were laid off have sought positions in completely different industries. Dave echoed those sentiments about difficulties staffing tours, and he elaborated that international tours in particular would be challenged for quite some time to come.

Jerry Montoya said a lot of their staff has moved on. They have received a lot of calls for later in the season in 2022. Performers are concerned about returning and are inquiring about protocols before committing.

Misty McDowell said being a smaller operation at Capital Stage that they'll be trying to maintain the people currently on staff as best they can, but there will be some positions that need to be replaced. They are hoping to receive funds from the shuttered venues operations grant, which would be a "game changer" for them.

Jack from Sacramento Ballet said they don't qualify for the first tier, because they have a school with some income toward that part of their operation. He said they were trying to build back up their staff, and he wasn't hired back until about 2 and a half months ago in order to plan for next season. Otherwise, he echoed how many people in his industry have moved on for a steady income and are only looking to work in the performing arts as a side gig, dipping into it only slightly.

Herb Garman said they are a reduced staff and that he didn't see them hiring in the near future. They were able to save a lot of positions through thoughtful planning and

financial support through this fiscal year. The soonest they might be hiring would be next January due to a mandate from the UC Chancellor's office to re-design their season and maintain the smaller staff since closing last year.

Robert Johnson added that smaller private sound and media companies who provide public event technical support have taken advantage of this time over the past 14 months to "scrounge up" systems integration work at small churches and country clubs, for example. Robert explained that small tech support businesses like his company could "hunker down" with existing equipment and maintain business without worrying about having to enhance their equipment.

Ways to Prepare our Students:

Larry Stanfil, former IATSE President, said he was concerned about the changes in store for the Harris Center and wondered if it might be possible for students to take some positions there with a third-party space manager coming in. Dave Pier wasn't certain but suggested it might be a non-profit organization. Dave then inquired about the status of the Community Center. There was a broad conversation about the entire project being far behind, but that they absolutely must be ready for *Hamilton*.

Herb Garman said the biggest change is that his staff and new employees are all learning one skill, and that's video streaming and video editing. He said this will definitely continue into the fall, because now they are talking about simulcasting.

Jerry Montoya agreed, and said they will need additional booth help for programming. They invested in 6 PTC cameras, and someone needs to program them. This idea provides a lot more access to people who couldn't and can't get to the theater. He emphasized that access to audience members is clearly a need.

Thor asked the group about what services were being used for streaming. Jerry said they have a Twitch channel and a Vimeo channel. OBS direct provides the service.

Herb echoed that Mondavi is using Vimeo as well and spending a lot for its service. Herb added that captioning is also tripping them up having to know how many options to offer (e.g. Spanish, English, no captioning, etc.)

Misty added that they've had to become like a film production company for their small projects. They've used OBS. She feels this will change as the demand changes. They have a person on staff who shares the links, but licensing houses are only allowing so much. She and Herb both said it's unfortunate we can't offer their shows on demand like Netflix, as it is just not cost affordable. She summed up by saying their intent is to continue to offer shows virtually, so students should acquire software and editing skills, and they can also be taught.

David Harris from FLC pressed on this issue asking if folks felt students should learn new media skills after the pandemic is a thing of the past. Jerry Montoya said they should be learning obs livestream studio.

Jack McDowell said they are going to livestream at least one production of every production they do in the foreseeable future and probably 5-10 years down the road. Patrons are now asking for access into their homes, because they're not able to get out.

Herb added that he feels streaming theatre can be a money producer in the future, and he agreed with Jerry and Misty about the need to offer more access to their audiences' demands.

Ted Granier shared that from the high school perspective, he's seeing more drama teachers being reassigned to English and other areas, and that this may result in fewer students coming into our programs. When asked the reason for that, Ted offered a familiar response that drama is looked upon as an extracurricular with more funding and focus being placed on common core subjects.

The group agreed that beginning in the fall for the next advisory meeting that a Hybrid option for the advisory members who can't meet in person would be helpful.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned just after 7:30pm.