

Peer Review Team Report
on
Visual and Performing Arts

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CURRICULUM

Findings:

The Visual and Performing Arts division offers students a vast range of knowledge and skills in six different departments of study: Art, Computer Graphics & Multimedia, Film & Television, Music & Commercial Music, Photography (Chemical and Digital), and Theater Arts. Each of these departments is by nature dynamic, and their success is often dependent upon the acquisition of new technologies, equipment, and training. Each faces the constant challenge of updating to meet the needs of students, other institutions, and employers, as well as the challenges of maintaining their own educational environment.

The peer team found that most of the full-time instructors rarely have adequate time to update and revise their courses to meet the needs of state standards, State University requirements, and technology. Several of the faculty from the division were in the process of developing and completing their Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) when the self-study report was written.

In the Art, Film and Television, and Theater Arts departments the current courses are providing only foundation and General Education (GE) requirements because they do not currently offer an associate degree with a major in any of the above disciplines. Inadequate facilities and the lack of full-time faculty have limited the ability of the departments to offer a broader variety of courses.

The AA in Music degree was withdrawn in 1997 because it was out of compliance. It was reconstructed to reduce the number of units required, and was reintroduced in 1998. In 2006, the music major was again 'under revision' for a period of two years. As of 2008 the major is pending approval from the Chancellor's Office.

Since then the Music department recently had the MUS 291 and 292 classes removed from the spring schedule 2009. The absence of these classes will adversely affect those students seeking a major in Music who plan on transferring to the UC, CSU or other universities. The classes were pulled because of the current budgetary situation at both state and college levels.

In the Multimedia, Photography, and Computer Graphics departments, certificate programs for these areas often require courses from a combination of one or more of these programs.

Many of the faculty expressed concern about the level of communication between division faculty and counseling faculty. Students have a difficult time understanding

which courses are appropriate for them to take and the division faculty does not feel the students are given correct advice.

It is not clear how class scheduling is done. It does not reflect what the faculty planned. Division faculty do not know exactly what their role is in scheduling.

The lack of facilities and poor facilities are affecting every program in the division. The division dean does not have office space near most of the departments, so there is a lack of communication between the dean and the faculty. Many of the departments within the division differ over the use of some of the classrooms and how they should be arranged.

Recommendations:

1. Faculty should continue to create a closer working relationship with the AVC Counseling department to ensure effective and consistent communication.
2. Return the division office personnel to the division office located in the Music building.
3. Hire additional faculty where needed to provide the students with properly trained instructors so that all necessary course may be offered.
4. The process used to create schedules needs to be clarified. Reassigned time is extremely important and needs to be retained.
5. Restore applied music classes to enable students to transfer as juniors in a Music program.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

Findings:

The faculty report that they regularly seek input from the students regarding the departments and course offerings, however there is no standardized student program evaluation procedure and there is no statistical analysis of student evaluations in the self-study report.

The division has no systematic method for gathering follow-up data on departing students. Some, but not all, departments in the division utilize local employers as part of their advisory committee.

Areas of concern expressed by some students include: inadequate facilities in every department, the need for more sections of high demand courses and updated or repaired equipment.

Lack of reliable email accounts has been the most serious impediment to instructor-student communication. Instructional Technology Services (ITS) has been consistently unreliable and poorly managed. The impact has been particularly severe for students taking online coursework.

Recommendations:

1. Create a uniform student evaluation procedure.
2. Create additional facilities to allow some advanced classes to be offered more frequently, as well as to accommodate more students and equipment.
3. Appoint a division counselor to facilitate student awareness and understanding of programs and college support services.
4. ITS needs to improve function and reliability.

PROGRAM AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Finding:

The Art and Music departments have completed the SLOs for their areas. However, the Computer Graphics, Multimedia, Film and Television, and Theater Arts departments have not finished completing the SLOs for some courses.

The definition of “program” is still unclear at this time, so the development of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) is still being defined by the SLO committee. Once a clear definition has been determined, the development of PLOs for the VAPA division will begin.

Recommendation:

1. All departments need to finish the SLOs.
2. Create a timeline to complete both the SLOs and PLOs for the division.

PERSONNEL & SUPPORT SERVICES

Finding:

The peer team found that all departments in the division lack adequate staff. Almost every faculty member in the division is teaching overload to compensate for the full time to part time teaching ratio mandate. The ratio of part-time to full-time is unsatisfactory, sometimes there is only one full-time faculty member in an area. The VAPA division is overly dependant on adjunct instructors. This does not allow faculty adequate time to develop new courses, degree programs, or update current curriculum.

Faculty believe that programs are deteriorating due to lack of full-time instructors and lack of space for proper facilities. The Music and Commercial Music departments are especially impacted by lack of full-time instructors who have expertise with a particular instrument. Current full-time faculty are not qualified to teach all instruments and finding part-time instructors is becoming increasingly difficult. The Commercial Music department has a full-time to part-time ratio of 1 to 11.

Every department is in need of adequate support staff. Photography, Commercial Music, and Theater Arts are in need of assistants. The Commercial Music department is in need of a full-time assistant and sound engineer.

The equipment room and check out procedures in the Applied Arts building are awkward. A clear usage guideline for faculty and classified staff needs to be developed. There needs to be more communication about duties between faculty and classified employees.

Faculty are not located in the same building, let alone the same area as the dean. There does not appear to be much unity in the division, as there are many territorial comments throughout the self-study and interviews.

A formal evaluation of the faculty needs to be completed. Many of the adjunct faculty have never been evaluated by anyone.

Recommendations:

1. Centralize the faculty and dean so that communication can be improved.
2. Develop and implement the normal three-year evaluation cycle of the faculty.
3. A clear guideline defining faculty and classified staff duties needs to be developed.
4. Hire additional full-time faculty.
5. Create a list prioritizing the needs of each department for lab techs, assistants, etc.
6. Develop a plan to increase the number of assistants and lab positions in all departments which need such positions.

FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Findings:

The peer team unanimously agrees with the self-study's description of the facilities for many departments as "inadequate."

The Music building has no sound-proofing, leading to severe issues of sound bleed. Practice rooms must be locked during classes so that students can hear the instructor in the central piano room. Other issues include inadequate lighting and broken chairs. Basically the building is in need of significant repair and refurbishing.

The Art department's current facilities are not appropriate for effective teaching and learning. The lighting is poor, temperature control inadequate, and it is difficult for students to hear lectures. The current ceramics lab is inadequate, the electrical supply and circuitry in FA1 can not support the necessary equipment. The lack of dust collectors/filters causes environmental and health hazards. Dust collectors were purchased for the ceramics area, but cannot be installed because of inadequate electrical

infrastructure in the current facility. Shipping containers are needed to store hazardous chemicals, which now sit out in the open creating an environmental and health hazard.

The Film & Television facility is in critical need of more space and improved facilities to function adequately and to maintain course offerings. There is an immediate problem with poor cabling between the media players and the video projector. The department currently does not have any necessary equipment and technology to offer basic digital film production courses, and there are no dedicated cameras or labs.

The Photography department needs its own check-out room, or the current check out room needs to be enlarged. The darkroom facility needs to be replaced or remodeled. A classroom dedicated to digital photography is needed, as well as new video cameras. Both computers and software need to be upgraded regularly. Chemical photography needs new facilities which are safe and up-to-date.

In the Theater Arts department, the Black Box Theater is not ADA compliant. Space for dressing rooms and other theater functions has been converted into classrooms. Costumes are currently being kept in outside storage containers. Damage to costumes has been caused by leakage during wet weather.

APL 216 was originally a film studio/TV studio lab. This space has been co-opted for other activities resulting in damage to lights and cameras. This space can no longer be used for its original purpose.

Adequate, appropriate and essential storage space is lacking for the Arts, Theater Arts, Music, Photography, and the Computer Graphics & Multimedia departments. Costly equipment is being damaged due to the lack of adequate storage for these departments.

Outdated and sometimes hazardous equipment is another pervasive problem.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a plan to prioritize facility and equipment needs per department, then division to update current buildings with better insulation, lighting and soundproofing.
2. Acquire classroom space for Commercial Music department that is closer to their lab.
3. Return VAPA Dean to Dean's office in Fine Arts area.
4. Gain additional funding to replace old equipment and update facilities.
5. Devise a schedule for labs in the APL room 205 and try to alleviate some of the territorial issues of the departments.

FISCAL SUPPORT

Findings:

The biggest division wide complaint is that faculty have no knowledge of budget numbers, figures, or allocations. This makes planning very difficult, because faculty do not know the amount of money they are allocated to spend on any particular item or project. They purchase equipment and supplies until they are told they have no more money left in their supply budget.

If faculty have no knowledge or are unaware of their prospective budgets, it is difficult to state whether anticipated funding is adequate. Some departments believe they have enough funds for their current programs, but are not able to expand the programs with the funds they are being provided. Other programs are in need of new equipment to keep up with new technology and to expand programs.

Recommendations:

1. Direct additional funding to immediately replace equipment, make repairs, and hire additional support staff.
2. Develop at least a rough draft of a division budget to give faculty an estimate of their funds.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PROGRAM AWARENESS

Findings:

The division has an excellent community presence overall. From art shows to theater productions and concerts they are actively involved in the community.

The digital media arts department did not feel they were given adequate support to try to accomplish as much outreach as they would like. They were too overloaded to take on this responsibility.

Recommendations:

1. Look into the possibility of release time for outreach activities or hire additional faculty to allow the digital media arts department to participate in outreach.

STATE AND FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

Findings:

Most of the departments that receive Carl Perkins (VTEA) funding need to ensure that they continue to have advisory committee meetings and members that reflect the perspective of industries within the local community.

Recommendations:

1. Establish routine advisory committee meetings.
2. Set advisory committee membership requirements for each department to reflect the local industry.