College of Liberal Arts
Planning and Assessment, 2007-2008
Executive Summary

The College of Liberal Arts Academic Council met on Wednesday, November 12, 2008, at noon, to discuss together the planning and assessment documents of the departments of Fine Arts, Languages and Literature, and History and Social Sciences and to choose priorities for the College of Liberal Arts for the coming year. The Council was joined by Dr. Lesa Shaul, who presented the Honors Program planning and assessment documents.

Dr. Nancy Kudlawiec reported that last year’s achievements for the Department of Fine Arts had included purchasing much needed equipment for the art classrooms, such as sinks, tabolets, and a wares cart for ceramics, as well as replacing music storage boxes for the choral library. The Department also participated in a District V Band Contest and the Scuraniche Folk Life Festival. Dr. Kudlawiec stated that while 26 new band uniforms to match the present band uniforms and band instruments are desperately needed, her department’s greatest need is the hiring of a full-time, tenure-track choir director. Mr. Jim Carey has been an adjunct for choir this fall, but he was unable to lead the UWA Singers this semester or next, and because of illness, he will not be able to continue with the university after May. Dr. Kudlawiec explained that she has scoured the area, including several states, in hopes of locating a part-time choir director, but she has had no success, and she believes that acquiring a full-time choir director would not only allow our students to be involved in both choir and the UWA Singers but also give us a start toward a Music major. Further discussion ensued concerning the repair or replacement of the practice pianos used by Dr. Blackwell’s piano students.

Dr. Shaul reported that the renovations are almost complete in Kelly Land Hall, where the Honors Program will reside, beginning in the spring. The Honors Program has 38 freshmen this year; the Honors Forum is focusing on the theme of “The Renaissance and the Concept of Genius”; a highlight was a visit in October to the Leonardo da Vinci exhibition at the Birmingham Museum of Art. Eight Honors students will graduate in 2008-2009 with their theses completed. Dr. Shaul explained the following plans for the Honors program: an update of the both the UWA Honors Handbook and the UWA Honors Website, efforts to recruit academically superior students across the campus as well as to recruit (and offer stipends to) across-campus faculty to team-teach the Honors Forum course, the development (along with Dr. Mark Davis, Dr. Tim Edwards, and Dr. Rob Riser) of a pre-professional course for mentoring students interested in and capable of going on to graduate school. Later plans include special Honors recognition events, more Honors students/faculty events, the development of an undergraduate student internship and junior and senior-level incentives such as tuition support and/or scholarship money for outstanding Honors students who remain in the program.

Dr. Riser reported a variety of activities this year by the History and Political Science faculty and announced that they are in preparations for hosting two state-wide meetings at UWA in February. Dr. Riser explained that a main development in his area will be a new undergraduate level certificate program in Historic Preservation/Public History. Because this program will require the services of Ms. Valerie Burnes and because the division of the History/Social Sciences Department will entail Dr. Riser’s load reduction, the department will be short four courses each semester. Therefore, Dr. Riser’s top priority is a tenure-track position in history,
preferably a Europeanist, for 2009-2010. Dr. Riser’s second planning goal is to begin work on a political science major, and this would require another tenure-track position in political science; this new hire would be able to assist Dr. Griffith in developing the paper work needed to present the request for the major to ACHE.

Dr. Tim Edwards’s statement of achievements in the Department of Languages and Literature was lengthy this year, including the presentation of author Tony Grooms during the Black Belt Symposium, the use of over $8000 in department funds for travel and faculty development, the visit to our Journalism students of the head of the University of Alabama Communications program, the Reed Odyssey to New Orleans in July, and the development of two new literature Courses. Perhaps the Department’s most important activity this fall was the inauguration of the redesigned English 101 under the auspices of NCAT. This project will require a new computer classroom/laboratory (through a grant which is already being sought, with the assistance of Dr. Becky Harvard) and a custom-designed textbook, also underway. Because all sections of English 101 will probably be taught under this new format, Dr. Edwards believes that his department’s most pressing need is the promotion of Mr. Greg Jones from lecturer to instructor. Mr. Jones has been the primary lead in implementing the course re-design, and he will continue to be in charge of the changes. Another main need for the Department of Languages and Literature is a television camera for Studio 96; the one camera is in constant use, and the growing enrollment in the television courses has meant great inconvenience. Dr. Edwards also reported that the hiring process of a theatre tenure-track professor (to replace Mr. McGahey, who is retiring in May) is underway.

Dr. Mark Davis reported the implementation of the new Psychology Lab in Wallace Hall 315 and expensive software for use by both the psychology and the sociology students. He explained that his department’s primary needs—for a clinical psychologist and for a Ph.D. in Social Work—are actually in the process of being filled. Dr. Bonnie Allen will be moving from the College of Education to the College of Liberal Arts (and to the Department of History and Social Sciences) in August, 2009, if not sooner, in the summer of 2009. A position announcement for the hiring of a tenure-track professor in Social Work has already been sent out as a preliminary step toward the new Social Work major, and that position is already in the budget. As a result, at the moment Dr. Davis’s priority is technology, specifically the outfitting of the Psychology Lab with a computer and a ceiling projector.

After further discussion and thought, the consensus in the Liberal Arts Council was for the following year’s priorities, in the following order:

1. To acquire a full-time, tenure-track choir director *
2. To promote Mr. Greg Jones from lecturer to instructor*
3. To acquire a full-time, tenure-track professor in European History* 
4. To upgrade the Psychology Lab in Wallace Hall 315 with a computer and ceiling projector 
5. To acquire a new camera for Studio 96 
6. To repair or replace the practice pianos used by Dr. Blackwell.

*These requests are found in the Faculty Staffing Plans attached to the respective departmental Planning and Assessment documents.