Department of Fine Arts

Assessment Report
2010-2011

Mission/Purpose
The University of West Alabama Department of Fine Arts provides students with the knowledge and technical skill needed to become active practitioners in the arts as well as engaged members of the artistic community. Through hands-on instruction in the classroom and a myriad of artistic showcases, the Fine Arts Department creates a forum for students, faculty and members of the Livingston community to engage and appreciate the arts.

I. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes, With Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

A. Goal: Address the major educational issues of the region
Address the major educational, social, cultural, and economic issues of the region and in doing so promote a positive image of the institution and the area

1. Outcome: Critical Thinking
Students who complete an introductory level class in the Fine Arts will be able to analyze, discuss, and contextualize a work of art or performance.

   a. Measure: Play Presentation Project
   Students in Introduction to Theatre will analyze the a portion of a selected text and present that section in a manner of their choosing. This could be done through a reinterpretation and performance of the text, a new and creative contextualization of the text, or a lecture based presentation.

   Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

   1. Achievement Target:
   Student scores of 80% and above on the grading rubric.

   2. Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
   Students in the Summer 2010 Introduction to Theatre course averaged 88% on the project. Students in the Fall 2010 Introduction to Theatre course averaged 83% on the project. Students in the Spring 2011 Introduction to Theatre course averaged 90% on the project. The overall average was 87%. The rubric for this assignment can be found in the document repository.

II. Goals and Other Outcomes/Objectives, With Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

A. Goal: Address the major educational issues of the region
Address the major educational, social, cultural, and economic issues of the region and in doing so promote a positive image of the institution and the area

1. Objective: Maintain quality fine arts programs.
The Department of Fine Arts will maintain quality programs of instruction in music, the visual arts, and theatre.
a. Measure: Course Evaluation Scores

Course evaluation scores on the question "I have become more competent in this area due to the course" will improve.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

1. Achievement Target:
   3.5 or Higher

2. Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met
   The score for the question, "I have become more confident in this area due to this course" was a combined 3.56 for Introduction to Theatre, Introduction to Art, and Introduction to Music for the Spring 2011 semester and 3.42 for the Fall 2010 Semester, leading to a 3.49 overall average. The following is an individual breakdown: Spring 2011 Introduction to Theatre - 3.67, Introduction to Art - n/a, Introduction to Music - 3.5; Fall 2010 Introduction to Theatre - 3.63, Introduction to Art - 3.15, Introduction to Music - 3.48.

3. Action Plan:
   Improve Introduction to Art course evaluation scores
   Investigate ways to improve the course evaluation scores for Introduction to Art, focusing on the question, "I have become more competent in this area due to this course." Currently this area is the lowest of the three introductory classes.
   Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
   Implementation Status: Planned
   Priority: Medium
   Implementation Description: Discuss the current approaches to teaching this course, research other approaches to teaching this course at benchmark institutions, and investigate the possibility of sending faculty to workshops to discover new teaching methodologies.
   Responsible Person/Group: Department Chair / Art Faculty
   Additional Resources Requested: None at this time, but travel monies may be needed at a later date.
   Budget Amount Requested: $0.00

b. Measure: Provide students with quality program offerings

The Department endeavors to provide students with quality program offerings and will investigate new course and program offerings as requested by departmental faculty and/or student demand. Discussions with faculty and students as well as possible focus groups and surveys will determine the need to add courses and/or program offerings.

Source of Evidence: Discussions

1. Achievement Target:
   Add new program offerings and/or courses as needed based on discussions with faculty and students, focus groups, and/or survey results.

2. Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
   After several months of discussions with the Dean of Liberal Arts, the Fine Arts Faculty, the Administration of the University of West Alabama, and students, it was determined that a new degree program was necessary to meet an institutional need. The University of West Alabama is located in the heart of the Black Belt region of Alabama, and the new program in Interdisciplinary
Arts has been designed to respond to the University’s stated vision “…to be acknowledged as the primary agent of positive change in Alabama’s Black Belt region.” The University also serves as the cultural center of the West Alabama Black Belt. Performances presented by UWA Theatre, UWA Choir, the UWA Band, and events sponsored by the Sumter County Fine Arts Council constitute the chief source of cultural enrichment in its service area. In addition, the student surveys showed that over half the students questioned were either "very interested" or "somewhat interested" in pursuing this new degree. Consequently, the Interdisciplinary Arts Degree was developed and implemented in the Fall of 2011.

2. **Objective: Creative projects relating to the Fine Arts**
   
   Students will synthesize their creative knowledge in their areas of concentration through the execution of multidisciplinary presentations of material relating to the social, economic, political, and artistic issues of the Black Belt region.

   a. **Measure: Provide students with performance outlets**

   The Fine Arts Department students will be able to put into practice the skill sets developed through classroom instruction by participating in Fine Arts Department sponsored events. Through these performances, students will demonstrate their continued understanding and growth in the disciplines of music, art, and theatre. Furthermore, these performances will be evaluated by the faculty to track the progress and development of the students.

   Source of Evidence: Performance (recital, exhibit, science project)

   1. **Achievement Target:**

   The Fine Arts Department will sponsor at least six performances that focus on showcasing student work.

   2. **Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met**

   The Theatre Program sponsored two full productions which included nineteen students. The Theatre Program sponsored a staged-reading which included nine students. The Choir Program sponsored two mainstage concerts which included sixty-one students. The Art Program sponsored a student show which highlighted the work of thirteen students. The Band Program performed throughout the semester and in conjunction with the Choir and involved one-hundred and thirty-two students.

3. **Objective: Creative Process Documentation**

   Students will be able to articulate an ethical and artistic framework for their continued development through the documentation of their creative process.

   a. **Measure: Creative Process Portfolio**

   In order to empower students to continue their artistic growth, they will create a portfolio chronicling their work in the Fine Arts Department. To be included in this portfolio are statements of artistic vision, photos or recordings of performances, research papers, visual representations of their work (i.e. photos, drawings, sculptures, etc), and a documentation of the student’s creative process.

   Source of Evidence: Portfolio, showing skill development or best work

   1. **Achievement Target:**

   Students will submit their portfolios to a committee of Fine Arts Faculty for evaluation and review.
2. **Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met**
   The process of compiling student portfolios has begun; however, due to the fact that the degree program is only beginning in the Fall of 2011, the review process has not yet begun.

3. **Action Plan:**
   **Develop Portfolio Review Standards**
   In order to confidently and equitably evaluate student progress, the Department is developing rubrics and standards for evaluating graduating student portfolios.
   - **Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011
   - **Implementation Status:** Planned
   - **Priority:** High
   - **Implementation Description:** Establish a portfolio review committee. This committee will research portfolio review methodologies. This committee will also create a rubric for the assessment of portfolios at the University of West Alabama and establish the guidelines for portfolio submission. This process will need to be reviewed by the Dean of Liberal Arts and the Provost and should be completed by the end of the coming academic year.
   - **Completion Date:** 04/02/2012
   - **Responsible Person/Group:** Department Chair/Portfolio Review Group
   - **Additional Resources Requested:** None
   - **Budget Amount Requested:** $0.00
   - **Implementation Notes:**
     8/16/2011 The Portfolio Review Standards committee has been formed and is collecting information on evaluation processes.

4. **Objective: Integration of Aesthetic Values**
   Students will demonstrate an understanding of the Fine Arts by the application of the creative aesthetic values of their areas of concentration to a variety of projects and artistic endeavors.

   a. **Measure: Provide students with performance outlets**
   Fine Arts Department students will be able to put into practice the skill sets developed through classroom instruction by participating in Fine Arts Department sponsored events. Through these performances, students will demonstrate their continued understanding and growth in the disciplines of music, art, and theatre. Furthermore, these performances will be evaluated by the faculty to track the progress and development of the students.

   - **Source of Evidence:** Performance (recital, exhibit, science project)

   1. **Achievement Target:**
   Student performances will be evaluated by faculty members on the basis of their technical execution and ability to articulate their artistic concepts through the presentation of their work.

   2. **Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met**
   This process has been transpiring in an informal manner, but needs to be more formalized and recorded with the addition of the Interdisciplinary Arts Degree.

   3. **Action Plan:**
   **Develop Performance Standards**
   With the addition of a new degree program, greater attention is being paid to the evaluation and recording of Fine Arts Department performances. Students
have been evaluated on their work in the performances or showcases, but this has transpired in a more impromptu manner.

**Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High  
**Implementation Description:** Form a committee to develop performance evaluation standards, research other methods of performance evaluation that occur at benchmark institutions, reevaluate any existing rubrics and discuss the potential of developing new rubrics or alternative means of evaluation, implement a standardized evaluation methodology and practice, and finally record and track student evaluations.  
**Completion Date:** 01/31/2012  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Department Chair / Performance Evaluation Committee  
**Additional Resources Requested:** None at this time  
**Budget Amount Requested:** $0.00  
**Implementation Notes:** 8/16/2011 Existing rubrics have been collected, and the Performance Standards Committee has been formed.

### III. Other Plans for Improvement

#### A. Purchase band instruments

- **Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010  
- **Implementation Status:** On Hold  
- **Priority:** High  
- **Implementation Description:** Band Director will submit request to Chairperson  
- **Responsible Person/Group:** Band Director  
- **Budget Amount Requested:** $25,000.00  
- **Implementation Notes:** 7/24/2011 Due to budgetary issues, no new band instruments were purchased. However, several upgrades including repair kits were purchased in the Fall of 2011.

#### B. Purchase two replacement pianos for practice rooms

- **Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010  
- **Implementation Status:** In Progress  
- **Priority:** High  
- **Implementation Description:** Piano faculty will submit request to Chairperson  
- **Responsible Person/Group:** Piano faculty  
- **Budget Amount Requested:** $15,000.00  
- **Implementation Notes:** 7/27/2011 Budget constraints restricted the purchase of new instruments. Piano faculty will submit new quote in Fall 2011.

#### C. Rebuild Steinway piano in Pruitt Hall 23

- **Established in Cycle:** 2009-2010  
- **Implementation Status:** In Progress  
- **Priority:** High  
- **Implementation Description:** Piano faculty will submit a request to Chairperson  
- **Responsible Person/Group:** Piano faculty  
- **Budget Amount Requested:** $20,000.00  
- **Implementation Notes:** 7/27/2011 Budget constraints restricted the completion of the goal.
Piano faculty will submit new quote in Fall 2011.

D. **Rebuild two grand pianos in Pruitt Hall 25**
Rebuild two grand pianos in Pruitt Hall 25. One piano was repaired, but not rebuilt.

*Established in Cycle:* 2009-2010  
*Implementation Status:* In Progress  
*Priority:* Medium  
*Implementation Description:* Music faculty will submit a request to Chairperson  
*Responsible Person/Group:* Music faculty  
*Budget Amount Requested:* $30,000.00  
*Implementation Notes:*  
7/27/2011 Budget constraints restricted the completion of the goal. Piano faculty will submit new quote in Fall 2011.

E. **Repair Allen electronic organ in Pruitt Hall 27**
Repair Allen electronic organ in Pruitt Hall 27

*Established in Cycle:* 2009-2010  
*Implementation Status:* In Progress  
*Priority:* Medium  
*Implementation Description:* Piano faculty will submit request to Chairperson  
*Responsible Person/Group:* Piano faculty  
*Budget Amount Requested:* $4,500.00  
*Implementation Notes:*  
7/27/2011 Budget constraints restricted the completion of the goal. Piano faculty will submit new quote in Fall 2011.

F. **Investigate the possible creation of an Interdisciplinary Arts Degree**
With no majors in the fine and performing arts available to them, UWA students with interests in the fine arts face limited opportunities to pursue their passions. Indeed, it is fair to say that UWA has a large number of talented students who are not receiving the professional nurturing and training that would be met by a more fully developed instructional program in the fine arts. Currently, the existing minors (art, music, and theatre, with creative writing soon to be added) operate in isolation from one another and are insufficient to meet the needs of students interested in pursuing a career in the arts. Moreover, the region UWA serves is a talent-rich area despite the often poorly funded arts programs in the area's high schools. This talent and the accompanying level of interest are indicated by the growth of many of our fine arts-related programs: the choir, with over fifty members, and the band, with some one-hundred and thirty members, are the largest in the University's history, and a new minor in theatre is attracting a great deal of attention, with last year's UWA Theatre performances boasting the largest casts in recent years.

*Established in Cycle:* 2010-2011  
*Implementation Status:* Planned  
*Priority:* High  
*Implementation Description:* Conduct student surveys to gauge interest in the program. Research similar programs. Develop a curriculum for the major, and investigate the need for additional classes. Secure approval from appropriate University academic groups. Secure approval from the Alabama Council of Higher Education.  
*Completion Date:* 03/11/2011  
*Responsible Person/Group:* Department Chair  
*Additional Resources Requested:* None at this time.  
*Budget Amount Requested:* $0.00  
*Implementation Notes:*  
7/24/2011 Student surveys were completed by 10/5/2011. Department Chair, Arthur Grothe, and Dean Timothy Edwards completed analyzing other Interdisciplinary Arts related programs by 10/10/2011.
G. Maintaining the Interdisciplinary Arts Degree

In five years, the Alabama Council of Higher Education will conduct a review of the Interdisciplinary Arts Degree. One of the key components of this review is that the program will have an average of six graduates per year for the first five years. Consequently, recruiting students is a high priority in the coming years. In addition to a new focus on attracting students to the Department and the new degree program, as the program grows, continued attention will be given to evaluating the course offerings and assessing the need for additional faculty members and training for current faculty members.

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Implementation Description: Establish a recruitment plan, evaluate current course offerings and current teaching loads, research potential interdisciplinary conferences and send faculty to these conferences to research new curriculum ideas, and investigate the potential hiring of new faculty.

Completion Date: 05/01/2012

Responsible Person/Group: Department Chair

Additional Resources Requested: None as of right now, potentially travel monies and potentially new faculty lines.

Budget Amount Requested: $0.00

Implementation Notes: 8/16/2011 Mr. Glen Smith and Mr. Adam Anderson have been actively recruiting students. Based on the work of Mr. Smith and Mr. Anderson, the Department has begun to create a more formalized plan for recruiting new students.

IV. Analysis Answers
A. What specific strengths did your assessments show? (Strengths)

In analyzing the University of West Alabama Fine Arts Department, several strengths quickly emerged. First and foremost among those is the hands-on application based nature of the Department. Students can very quickly and easily become involved in the Fine Arts at the University of West Alabama through a number of avenues. The theatre program has grown significantly over the past two years and is continuing to expand its season to include more performance opportunities and more diverse course offerings. The UWA Band has grown into one of the largest, most vibrant student groups on campus, currently boasting its largest contingent of members in over ten years. In addition, the UWA Choir has increased its numbers and the number of performances over the past two years. A second key strength is the dedication and commitment of the faculty to develop new outlets for showcasing student work. This is demonstrated by not only the number of new performance initiatives in the past two years, but also through the creation of new degree program. This has been achieved by the dedicated efforts of a relatively small faculty.

B. What specific weaknesses or challenges did your assessments show? (Weaknesses)

The single biggest weakness for the Department of Fine Arts at the University of West Alabama is the current state of the facilities and equipment. While several key upgrades have been, or are being, implemented, this area needs continued attention. This is demonstrated by the need to upgrade and improve the caliber of pianos the Fine Arts Department uses for practice and performance, the continued need to upgrade Band and Choir uniforms, and the need to renovate both the Theatre Program performance spaces and the Art Studio spaces.
C. What plans were implemented?
This year the Department of Fine Arts was able to implement the following: Investigate and implement a new Interdisciplinary Arts Degree Program. Purchase a new kiln for the Art Program. Create a strategic plan for the continued renovation of the Bibb Graves Auditorium. Purchase new Band and Choir uniforms.

D. What plans were not implemented?
The Department of Fine Arts was not able to implement: The purchase of new pianos. The rebuilding of existing pianos. Renovations to the Art Studio Spaces.

E. How will assessment results be used for continuous improvement?
The assessment results have indicated the need to continue to research funding avenues for the continued upgrading of Department facilities. As the Department continues to grow and expand, it will be crucial to have the materials, facilities, and technology to meet current industry standards. In addition to continuing to address the physical needs of the Department, with the implementation of the new degree program, there will be a need for continued training of faculty to integrate the separate disciplines in new and creative ways. Furthermore, the faculty will need to continuously reevaluate the degree requirements and courses to ensure that the students are receiving the proper training to provide them with the tools needed to seek gainful employment upon graduation.