

Report Fine & Performing Arts

Report from the Discussion Group for the Fine and Performing Arts: 4-10-09

The Arts at Mary Washington thank the UMW Strategic Planning Steering Committee for including our input as part of shaping the future of UMW. While the schedule has indeed been aggressive we are extremely encouraged by our progress. The major issue we face is that the arts at Mary Washington continue to operate as separate entities with little or no communication. This issue became the directive as the committee met to develop a plan that would unite the departments of theatre and dance, music, art and art history, and creative writing along with UMW Galleries and Historic Belmont. The following is a set of goals and objectives for the strategic plan. While some of the objectives are being addressed at the time of this report, we are unable to set a timetable for the remaining goals and objectives at this time.

Objective 1: Solidify image for The Arts at Mary Washington:

Benchmarks:

a) Establish a mission statement

The fine and performing arts have been and continue to be at the heart of Mary Washington's liberal arts experience. We encompass all the disciplines within the academy to realize creative possibility to its fullest.

Art engenders discipline and the creative pursuits of our students and faculty positively impact the campus from our studios, workshops, galleries, musical performances and theaters to the surrounding communities.

Teaching creativity offers a vital and important diversity to Mary Washington's courses and pedagogies; the professors are practicing artists, those for whom artistic endeavor, regardless of medium or genre, is not academic—but essential.

In this unique instructional environment, students are actively engaged in the creative process. They embark on an exploration of the possible and the impossible while learning the value of self-criticism, editing, and revision, gaining the ability to risk failure through dedicated effort and discovering the wonderment of all that is art.

b) Design a web page that features the arts at Mary Washington (Theatre, Studio Art and Art History, Music, Creative Writing, UMW Galleries, Belmont, James Monroe Museum, Orchestra.) This page will link to all the areas listed above.

c) Coordinate ongoing marketing to the community and beyond.

d) Create a combined calendar featuring The Arts at Mary Washington.

e) Establish an internal campus coordinating committee to avoid scheduling conflicts.

Objective 2: Identify the physical and cultural changes needed to advance our standing as a premiere arts venue to the campus community and beyond.

Benchmarks:

- a) Public programming will establish the Arts at Mary Washington as a valuable resource for a growing regional population in search of quality cultural experiences.
- b) Secure funding and support for a Performing Arts Complex.
- c) Identification of type(s) and number of staff required by the expansion and integration of the fine and performing arts.
- d) Secure funding and support for facility updates in music (Pollard), theatre (DuPont) and art and art history (Melchers) and UMW Galleries.
- e) Restore and maintain areas around the Belmont's main house, studio, and outbuildings to the look and character of that achieved by the Melchers during their tenure at Belmont. Increase access and utility of the less formal areas of the property for public use and enjoyment.

Objective 3: Integrating arts into the curriculum.

Benchmarks:

- a) Increase the availability of interdisciplinary courses involving the arts.
- b) Document and research the impact of benchmark 'a' and look into possibilities of further integrating the curriculum
- c) Provide more opportunities to showcase and/or inform our students.
- d) Create an on-line journal featuring regional events as part of course curriculum.
- e) Identification of new positions necessary to meet goals.
- f) Belmont will strengthen administrative and programmatic ties with the University of Mary Washington to involve and serve more of the campus community.

Objective 4: Integrating arts into the community.

Benchmarks:

- a) Identify possible venues to serve as outreach to area schools and community.
- b) Identify the requirements needed to establish a radio station at UMW.

c) The galleries will achieve subsequent accreditation from the American Association of Museums, signifying an adherence to the highest professional standards of collection care, education and public accessibility.

d) Ongoing communication and/or collaboration with the Fredericksburg Arts Council.

Objective 5: Identify the professional successes of our alumni and showcase our strengths as professionals.

Benchmarks:

a) Maintain correspondence and track successes of our alumni. Design an on-line newsletter (along with updated posts on The Arts at Mary Washington web page) that features the accomplishments of our alumni.

b) Maintain and feature current professional work by faculty and staff in the Arts at Mary Washington.

c) Share information between departments – including Advancement and provide the opportunity to include comments of alumni accomplishments and affinities.