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The Arts, Liberal Education, and the
Undergraduate Curriculum

THE ARTS, LIBERAL EDUCATION, AND THE UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM

A Statement of the Working Group on the Arts in Higher Education

Contents

Abstract

PART I

The Arts and Liberal Education

- A New Level of Debate
- Starting with the Best of What We Have.....
- Intellectual Foundations and Educational Values Overview.....
- Undergraduate Education and the Arts Overview.....

PART II

Baccalaureate Degrees in the Arts Disciplines

- National Academic Policies.....
- Basic Curricular Structures
- Degree Titles
- Responsibilities of Educational Institutions
- Responsibilities of Specialized Accrediting Agencies.....

PART III

Future Development of the Undergraduate Curriculum

- The Primary and Secondary School Foundation.....
- American Culture: The Arts and Liberal Education

Recommendations

Abstract

Creation, presentation, educations, and scholarship in the arts disciplines are integral to American higher education. Yet, although achievements have been significant, the potential for cultural development represented by this condition has been only partly realized.

A significant opportunity to address this program is now available because the cycle of continuing debates about American higher education has come once again to liberal education and the undergraduate curriculum. This new level of debate provides a means for bringing four basic points about the arts in higher education to the center of current discussions.

- o Works in the art media are central in the lives of human beings. Further, great works of art are among the highest human achievements; they are cornerstones of and reference point for the development of civilization in that they synthesize the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual aspects of the human condition. Therefore, the arts disciplines must have a significant place in the undergraduate education of all students.
- o Conversely, the education of professional artists must continue to include significant attention to science and the humanities. Otherwise, artists are not able to represent various aspects of the human condition in their work.
- o Curricular formats are already in place to achieve these goals. These formats include the liberal arts degree (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science) and the professional degree (Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Music). The maintenance of a variety of formats for students is both academically sound and consistent with the values of openness and choice intrinsic to the concept of liberal educations.
- o The presence of Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Music degrees in institutions throughout the nation has become a matter of crucial importance to American culture. This presence is the primary force integrating the arts and higher education, and it is an essential element in the geographic distribution of our highest artistic capabilities.

The challenge of any broad-based policy review to initiate change which strengthens areas of weakness rather than weakening areas of strength. This challenge is especially significant in the current debate about undergraduate curricula because of the economic conditions present in American higher education, the disparate value systems affecting the professional aspirations of faculty and the educational aspirations of undergraduate students, and the management and accountability structures now in place for postsecondary institutions.

This challenge can be met, however, if faculties, institutions, accrediting associations, and education professionals in all situations and at all levels work in mutually supportive ways which exemplify the values traditionally ascribed to the liberally educated.

The goal must be to infuse all legitimate and time-tested approaches to undergraduate education with improved capabilities to deliver a liberal education. Properly done, this will provide the mechanism for increased recognition of the arts disciplines as significant components of liberal education and for the continuing interchange between the arts and higher education that remains vital to the building of American civilization.

PART I THE ARTS AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

A New Level of Debate

Art. Science. Humanities. Education. Civilization. It is common knowledge that a philosophical and operational interrelationship exists among these activities and concepts. Great achievements in art, science, and the humanities produce civilization; the honing of individual intellects through education in these areas produces capabilities for continuing achievement. While the presence of an interrelationship is widely acknowledged, the precise nature of the equation describing the relationship is a matter of continuous debate.

In American higher education this debate has reached one of its cyclical periods of intensity with a current focus on the undergraduate curriculum. This period of intensity provides a welcome opportunity to evaluate current practice, to discover strengths deserving reinforcement as well as weaknesses needing remedy.

The following statement addresses the arts factor of this equation and articulates ideas important in the decision-making process of each American institution concerned with undergraduate education.

Stating with the Best of What We Are

American higher education has developed a unique approach to the arts disciplines. In Europe, the sciences and humanities, including historical studies in the arts, are taught in the universities while instruction in the practice of art is conducted in separate institutions. The American approach is to remove this distinction for both comprehensive colleges and universities and single-purpose institutions devoted to the arts -- this so that the undergraduate education of the practicing artist can readily include studies in the sciences and humanities. This approach has made creation, presentation, education, and scholarship in the arts disciplines integral to American higher education.

Clearly, this concept creates improved conditions for developing the intellectual capabilities of professional artists. Equally important, however, is its provision of unparalleled opportunities in the arts for all undergraduate students.

These opportunities, though only partly grasped, have produced important results for American civilization. In fact, they are fundamental to our nation's most serious cultural endeavors. Ways must be found to take greater advantage of these opportunities, keeping their larger cultural ramifications in mind as we analyze and improve current institutional practices.

Intellectual Foundations and Educational Values

Our academic heritage recognizes and affirms that great works of art are among the highest human achievements. Great works of art provide uniquely important chronicle of human history, yet both individually and collectively, they have the power to speak and teach irrespective of their historical reference. Their importance transcends time and place.

Clearly, great works of art represent a fusion of the emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and physical realities of the human condition. Therefore, the artistic process and the unique perspectives represented by works of art embody, as no other form of endeavor can, a summation of human experience. It follows, then, that the understanding of great works of art results in sharpened perception, sensitized emotion, and cultivated intellect. The development of individuals with these attributes is constantly referred to as the goal of liberal education.

Given this goal, it is ironic that an overview of American academic practice reveals minimal requirements for competence in the arts disciplines. At the undergraduate level, the norm is one course in the arts other than English literature. While during the last half century consciousness of and receptivity to the study of arts as part of traditional curricula have been heightened, current conditions call into question the real place of art in the value system working out

the art-science-humanities-education-civilization equation in American undergraduate curricula.

Let us explore some of the current misconceptions in this value system which designate too little importance to the study of art.

- o "The creation and appreciation of art are predominantly subjective and emotional. Study in the arts disciplines has little value in a world where advancement depends on devotion to the objective, the rational, and the analytical."

Art does produce subjective response, but such response is generated from a complex matrix of intellectual, psychological, and physical processes. The fine and performing arts have their own intellectual histories and analytical methodologies. The objective, rational, and analytical context of a work of art is available primarily to the extent that an individual has knowledge of the symbolic language and specific craft of the work's medium. One cannot learn from poetry in a language one cannot read.

- o The practice of art is non-verbal. Study of the arts disciplines is inappropriate in educational settings focused on verbal means of conveying and explicating information."

Art often is non-verbal. The various arts employ symbols to deliver complex communications. Students should not be deprived of understanding means of communication that extend verbal methods -- means that make possible the investigation of areas of the human condition not susceptible to linear, verbal analysis.

- o "Art is a mere diversion. The study of art does not deserve a prominent place in the basic curriculum."

The fact that art often is entertaining does not diminish its power to reveal knowledge about the human experience, elicit meaningful insights, and produce profound emotional response, all in the context of a single work. This unique power extends well beyond diversion, a fact that has not escaped the attention of governments and other powerful elites down through the centuries.

- o "Study of the arts disciplines has no utility, especially for those who have little talent or no future in the arts profession.

Every individual lives in a context formed by the history, technology, and art of his or her civilization. This is not a matter of choice, but a fact of the human condition. Given this fact, "talent" should be no more a factor in determining the place of art in an individual's education than it is in determining the place of subjects concerned with the historical, technological, and scientific aspects of human endeavor. Access to the knowledge contained in art is available to all through study of the arts disciplines.

In addition, the issue of utility is a poignant one not just for those concerned with the arts disciplines but for those in other humanistic disciplines. The last twenty-five years have seen an overall decline in attention to studies in these disciplines primarily because their utility in the modern world has been questioned. The result has been ever-increasing emphasis on direct vocational ends for higher education.

Our current national debate on undergraduate education reflects serious concern about this situation and the dangers posed by its continuation, both for individuals and for society as a whole. A re-evaluation and re-ordering of priorities and curricula in undergraduate education are under way.

The Working Group on the Arts in Higher Education considers the current climate of review to be one that offers significant opportunity for many institutions to develop a new sense of their approach to the art-science-humanities-education-civilization equation. For better or worse, the aggregate result of these institutional approaches will do much to demarcate the future of American culture.

Undergraduate Education and the Arts

Since the arts and education are part of the civilization equation, it follows that the quality of civilization depends a great deal on (a) the extent to which the arts disciplines are recognized as being pre-eminently educational in essence, and (b) the extent to which educational policies reflect this fact in stating expectations about what students should know and be able to do.

In undergraduate educations, such policy development concerning the arts addresses the needs of students with four basic educational objectives:

- o Those majoring in science and humanities disciplines or their related professions who should study one or more of the arts in the course of acquiring a liberal education.
- o Those majoring in an arts discipline with career intentions in another discipline.
- o Those majoring in an arts discipline with potential career intentions in that discipline
- o Those majoring in an arts discipline with definite career intentions in that discipline.

Clearly, there is no single national or even institution-wide curricular formula or academic method that will meet all four legitimate and diverse objectives as they related either to the lives of individual students, or to the overall result as the contributions and values of these students are woven into the fabric of American culture. It is obvious that liberal education must be achieved in a variety of formats.

American higher education already contains a range of such formats, relating not only to the study of the arts disciplines but to all other disciplines as well. Without questions, a range of formats will remain after current discussions about undergraduate educations have peaked. Therefore, the challenge at each campus is not how to join campaigns to support or decry the existence of various formats, but rather how to analyze the ability of each format to deliver liberal education conceived in terms of intellectual values, skills, and orientations. Such values, skills, and orientations must be consistent with the specific objectives of each undergraduate curriculum offered by the institution.

Let us explore the concepts we have just presented as they are related to the arts in undergraduate education.

- o No single discipline is liberal in and of itself. To put it another way, any discipline can be taught and learned without reference to the art-science-humanities-education-civilization equation or to the goal of developing sharpened perception, sensitized emotion, intuitive vision, and well-cultivated intellect. Such references are provide only when the educational approach produces the capabilities and the will to work with the analytical and creative components of a particular discipline both during supervised study and independently in perpetuity. Moreover, the knowledge, skills, and insights acquired in the study of a single discipline should be transferable to many other disciplines and fields of endeavor.

- o Most individuals will seek intensive education and careers in science, the humanities, and related professions rather than careers in the arts. Yet, all individuals will live in a culture created in large part by what is seen and heard, beyond what is written. Music, art and design, theatre, film, dance, architecture, etc., both define and create our civilization.

To provide undergraduates with less than intensive work in at least one of these disciplines as an avenue of personal, intellectual insight into the powerful connections between art and civilization is not simply to leave this connection to chance or to natural development. Rather, it is to allow the connection to remain a vacuum that human nature abhors and that the hucksters of mass culture are avid to fill.

Educational institutions ought to give serious thought to the meaning of this situation for the quality of their own futures. For example, how do the aesthetics and commercial values of television, rock videos, newspapers, movies, etc., relate to the values of liberal education or the values needed to support a perpetual commitment to liberal education in American postsecondary institutions.

- o The existence of connections between undergraduate majors in certain disciplines and future careers or graduate/professional study should not obscure the fact that liberal education must provide an appropriate foundation for a broad range of intellectual activity and future study irrespective of the "major" chosen. In fact, serious attention to the principles of liberal education indicates the value of an undergraduate "major" in an area ostensibly unrelated to future professional interest. This fulfills one of the goals of the undergraduate liberal arts degree: the development of transferable insights, approaches, and skills.

In this light, baccalaureate degrees in the arts disciplines can provide the background for other work. A few of the numerous examples are: music majors working as computer scientists, theatre majors working in public relations, dance majors working in health-related professions, visual arts majors working in communications.

- The education and training of professionals in dance, music, the visual arts, or theatre involve a fusion of intellectual, emotional, and physical capabilities based in practice of the specific discipline. This task requires significant time in the discipline itself. Yet, the well prepared artist also must be liberally educated. Thus, education programs for artists aim to prepare individuals who understand the cultural and aesthetic significance of the art they practice. Such comprehensive understanding with attendant skills, attitudes, and aptitudes is the fundamental ingredient in liberal education as traditionally conceived.

From a purely practical standpoint, many subjects have utility for artists. For example, the theatre director requires a knowledge of the historical, cultural, and intellectual background of plays; the actor benefits from knowledge of human behavior; the scientific aspects of arts media are essential to many visual artists; the physiology of movement has immediate applications for the dancer; and foreign languages are a necessary tool for the concert singer. Yet, while specific relationships exist between certain scientific and humanistic subjects and particular arts disciplines, the objectives of a liberal education for artists must focus on the overall development of intellectual and creative skills.

These connections, along with the integral place of the arts in liberal education, lead to the premise that there is a general convergence between the purpose of intensive education in the arts disciplines and the purpose of liberal education.

PART II BACCALAUREATE DEGREES IN THE ARTS DISCIPLINES

National Academic Policies

Bringing the values of liberal education to life in baccalaureate programs with majors in art and design, dance, theatre, music, and the other arts is a continuing challenge, for, just as no discipline is liberal in and of itself, neither is a particular curriculum. Fortunately, national academic policies now current already provide a basic context for meeting this challenge.

These policies exist because during the 1920's, American institutions of higher education created a unique approach to the education and training of professional artists. This approach evolved from two premises: (1) that the arts must be an integral part of higher education, broadly conceived; (2) that artists and teachers of the arts must have a liberal education. The result was that many independent schools of the arts disciplines came to consider themselves colleges in the traditional sense, requiring studies in the liberal arts along with studies in the arts disciplines. Conversely, many traditional colleges and universities became deeply involved in the professional training of artists and teachers of the arts, requiring intensive professional studies in the arts disciplines along with studies in science and the humanities.

The success of the American approach is due fundamentally to policies and practices in effect now for many years which delineate two basic curricular approaches to liberal education with a major in an arts discipline.

Basic Curricular Structures

The four-year baccalaureate degree is the primary format for education at the undergraduate level. This degree normally contains at least 120 semester hours of course work. Curricula comprising these usually are divided among required courses in the major, required courses in art, sciences, and the humanities, and electives. Each institution of higher education develops degree requirements based upon a proportional mix of these elements.

There are two generic types of baccalaureate degrees which prepare individuals for work in the professions of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. Consistent with general academic practice, these are labeled "professional" degrees and "liberal arts" degrees. However, both have the capability to provide liberal education.

The professional degree is intended to provide intensive training in the intellectual and physical skills necessary for arts professionals. Because physical skills development is critical during the period between 18 and 22 years of age, young artists in most disciplines cannot risk postponement of concentrated study until the graduate years. Since physical skills are meaningless without accompanying intellectual development, and since both require extensive time commitments, the professional degree normally involves supportive courses from other fields directly and legitimately related to the professional practice of the discipline.

Professional degrees preparing specialists in the arts for public schools or developing creative arts therapists include in the major field interdisciplinary and professional studies in such areas as education and psychology.

By contrast, the liberal arts degree in the arts emphasizes a broad program of general studies. The major field normally occupies one-third to one-half of the curriculum with coverage of the discipline being broad in scope.

Degree Titles

Professional degrees containing at least sixty-five percent course work in the major area (or the major area and related professional studies in degrees for arts therapists, elementary/secondary teachers, and certain other specialist professions, when the total in the arts discipline is no less than fifty percent) normally carry the title Bachelor of Fine Arts (for the fields of Dance, Theatre, and the Visual Arts) or Bachelor of Music. Institutions designate specific course

work for specialty area; for example, the Bachelor of Fines Arts in Painting, Dance Performance, or Acting, and the Bachelor of Music in Composition.

Interdisciplinary degrees in such areas as musical theatre and stage design must have at least sixty-five percent course work in the arts disciplines involved to carry the title Bachelor of Fine Arts or Bachelor of Music.

Liberal arts degrees containing at least one-third of the course work in the major area carry the title Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science with the generic name of the discipline appended; for example, Bachelor of Arts in Theatre, Bachelor of Arts in Dance. Within these programs various emphases may be possible through minimal variations on the basic plan of course work.

Some institutions are chartered to offer only the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. When these institutions offer a baccalaureate degree meeting professional degree standards, the degree may be designated Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science with the specific major area; for example, Bachelor of Science in Graphic Design or Bachelor of Arts in Music Theory.

Responsibilities of Education Institutions

The specific interaction of values and curricular formats is the responsibility of each academic institution. The nature and quality of this interaction with respect to teaching the arts disciplines are related closely to each institution's mission, goals, and resources.

An institution's mission, goals, and resources necessarily have great influence on its choice of objectives. In reference to the curricular structure and degree titles outlined above, the objective of offering a professional baccalaureate degree in an arts discipline requires a significant commitment of resources. It also presents specific challenges in liberal education since study in the traditional humanities and science occupies approximately one-third of the curriculum. For these institutions the total curriculum for the young artist must be oriented toward the goals of liberal education with the content and presentation of science and humanities courses being of single importance. Clearly, it is the quality of work in these courses rather than the quantity that produces a liberal education in the format of the Bachelor of Fine Arts or Bachelor of Music degree.

Recognizing that neither subject matter nor curricular structure necessarily produces a liberal education, institutions which offer traditional baccalaureate degrees with majors in the arts disciplines also face a formidable challenge. At issue is the intensity and focus possible in the major field of study. Even if pre-collegiate preparation has been intensive, with only one-third to one-half of the curriculum in the major, it is a significant if not inordinately difficult task to amass the knowledge and skills necessary for future work as a professional in the arts. There is also the necessity of assuring that the program of general studies occupying most of the student's time is, in the aggregate, providing a liberal education, not just a passing acquaintance with a pot-pourri of subject matters.

America's institutions of higher education meet these challenges with a variety of approaches producing distinguished results. The two basic degree types - professional and liberal arts - are benchmarks, not formulas, and institutions retain a posture of creativity in evaluating and evolving their unique baccalaureate programs with majors in the arts disciplines.

Beyond the specific formats and content of curricula, each institution carries the responsibility of ensuring that its approach to the subject of art supports the place of art in the realm of highest human achievement and as part of the art-science-humanities-education-civilization equation. Neither considering the creation and presentation of art as non-academic; nor isolating arts activities solely to programs which prepare professional artists supports such a value system.

In addition, many institutions of higher education undertake to serve as major cultural resources for their surrounding

communities. Presentation of art and the support of artists, both as guests and as resident faculty, have become common in these institutions. As important as this is, each institution must continue to ensure that its being a resource for art includes contributing meaningfully to the complete liberal education of undergraduate students. Attendance at arts events is not a substitute for study in the arts disciplines.

Responsibilities of Specialized Accrediting Agencies

The accrediting agencies concerned with the disciplines of music, art and design, theatre, and dance have as their primary responsibility the maintenance of standards for academic preparation appropriate to each field. This responsibility requires a partnership with institutions that seeks to promote values and policies supportive of liberal education. This partnership is implicit in that each of these accrediting organizations is guided by its member institutions.

Historically, specialized accreditation in the arts disciplines has been a primary mechanism for ensuring increased science and humanities studies for undergraduates engaged in professional preparation. The two oldest agencies, NASM and NASAD, were instrumental in establishing the now nationally accepted concept that the artist deserves a liberal education which includes a range of studies in the humanities and the sciences.

Working always with the advice and consent of their member institutions, the four accrediting agencies strive to maintain and enrich this tradition. The accreditation process gives careful and specific attention to the general studies component of undergraduate degrees in the arts disciplines as well as to the role of the unit seeking accreditation in providing appropriate courses for non-major students.

Significant attention also is directed to the effect of curricula in aiding the overall development of the craft of each art form. In this regard, specialized accreditation has a major function in maintaining the relationships between scholarship in the arts and scholarship in other disciplines with curricula preparing creators, presenters, and teachers of the arts.

Maintaining the integrity of academic degrees and credentials is another important responsibility for specialized accrediting bodies in the arts. This involves keeping clear distinctions between the Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science model and the Bachelor of Fine Arts/Bachelor of Music model. Both the public interest and academic responsibility demand these distinctions; thus, specialized accrediting agencies work with institutions to protect the unique qualities and contributions of each basic approach.

It is essential to state that specialized accreditation has no priori role in determining which undergraduate curricula an institution should offer. However, once these decisions have been made by an institution, an accrediting body does have the responsibility to measure curricula and supportive resources against national standards for programs with the same basic goals. In the case of accreditation for music, art and design, theatre, and dance, these standards are developed with wide consultation beyond higher education but ratified solely by the representatives of member institutions.

PART III
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM

The Primary and Secondary School Foundation

Higher education builds upon the foundation provided by primary and secondary schools. Under current conditions this fact presents significant problems for higher education, with particular difficulties for its arts components.

A goal of liberal education is the development of capabilities for intellectual and creative activity. Yet, such development implies knowledge and skills in basic languages and techniques. Without basic mathematics, the science component of liberal education is impossible; without basic command of language and history, critical facility in political and social analysis cannot be expected. To the extent that fundamental content is not taught in primary and secondary schools, to that same extent liberal education is postponed at the college level. Current reports about the state of our nation's education system lead us to conclude that this postponement is in perpetuity for far too many individuals.

Whatever conditions exist in the nexus between school and college work in the sciences and humanities, the condition of the arts disciplines is far worse. While all freshman come to higher education immersed in the latest fads of popular culture, relatively few students enter college with fluency in the language and craft of one of the arts disciplines.

There are many reasons for this failure of the American educational system to produce literacy in at least one arts discipline for each elementary/secondary student. However, most can be traced to the unfortunate basic fact that the national value system as manifested in both homes and schools has not evolved to granting serious study of the art parity with studies in other significant disciplines.

Under present conditions, there is little chance that the majority of freshmen will enter with the skills to do college-level work in the arts. Therefore, the work offered in dance, theatre, music, and the visual arts is usually introductory or experiential, often extracurricular, and frequently based primarily in social or promotional agendas. These conditions for the study of art are reflected in admission requirements to college, in graduation requirements, and ultimately, in the extent to which art is valued by most college graduates. Such values are cycled back into our civilization as these graduates grow older and assume greater and greater responsibilities.

The Nation...

The capabilities and effectiveness of higher education in producing appropriate interrelationships between the arts and liberal education have profound influence on the directions and content of American culture.

At present, many who are involved professionally in the arts and in liberal education seem plagued with grave reservations about a number of pervasive cultural manifestations. There are concerns that too many individuals in our society refuse to acknowledge the possibility of differences or demonstrate little power or will to make distinctions between art and entertainment, achievement and fame, liberal and vocational education, quality and quantity, etc.

The difficulties produced by these conditions are borne by individuals working in the arts disciplines and in other disciplines involved in liberal education. These difficulties place all serious cultural efforts in the context of value systems increasingly adverse to the life of the mind. All elements of the art-science-humanities-education-civilization equation are severely affected.

Despite the presence of such conditions, resource exist in the form of people, institutions, and organizational structures sufficient to meet the challenge of making change for the better. Higher education is one of the most important of these, and the level of arts activity already present in higher education increases significantly the potential of this resource.

... and the Campus

Unfortunately, this potential often is clouded because current economic problems besetting all of higher education do not provide the best climate for coordination and cooperation across disciplines. Adverse economic trends fostered in part by the decreasing pool of college-age students have coincided with growing concern about the rising tide of early specialization among undergraduates. A direct result is that many baccalaureate candidates graduate having little or no acquaintance with subjects traditionally thought to provide the essence of liberal education. This in time has economic ramifications for various academic departments, with many of the traditional humanities disciplines being particularly affected.

In the national forum and on individual campuses, calls are being made for changes in undergraduate curricula. This effort is necessary and welcome; however, concerns have been voiced that a simplistic general formula for all undergraduate education will surface as the panacea for increasing enrollments in humanities courses now sparsely attended.

This notion that there is a direct correlation between the proportion of general humanities, arts, and sciences course work in the undergraduate curriculum, and the extent to which a liberal education will be achieved, bypasses and thus diminishes the importance of the subject matter and skills comprising liberal education. It confuses means and ends by focusing on method -- courses taken -- rather than on function -- knowledge acquired and values learned, the aggregate of which produces liberal education. This should not be construed as denying the importance of both subject matter and proportionality in curricular planning, but rather as elevating that importance beyond formalistic notions of the liberally educated person.

Since the values of liberal education can be developed and encouraged through a variety of curricular patterns, it is essential that all elements of higher education mount a common, long-term effort to bring the highest values expected of liberal education more to the center of American values and practice.

This effort is of central importance not only to the future of higher education, but also to the future of serious artistic endeavor in the United States. The values of liberal education are essential to the maintenance of a significantly informed public which understand the infrastructure supporting both traditional and new work in the arts.

While it is clear that numerous connections exist between the arts in higher education and national cultural development, it may not be so apparent that the professional baccalaureate degrees in the arts disciplines are central to the effectiveness of these connections. The development and use of the Bachelor of Fine Arts and the Bachelor of Music degrees in higher education comprise a significant national cultural resource because the presence of these programs has resulted in a wide geographic distribution of highly skilled artists and teachers of the arts disciplines throughout the United States. The result is that many communities now are able to enjoy unprecedented richness and potential in the arts.

As analysis and action proceed to refine American baccalaureate education, the aggregate national result must provide the mechanism for increased recognition of the arts disciplines as significant components of liberal education and for the continuing interchange between the arts and higher education that remains vital to the building of American civilization. The basic structures for the arts in higher education that are now present provide an excellent foundation for this effort.

Recommendations

Each institution of higher education will approach the arts disciplines and liberal education in its own way. There are, however, several common operating principles that should guide individuals, organizations, and institutions concerned with undergraduate education. If followed, these principles will help strengthened capabilities for liberal education to emerge from current discussions.

- o Higher education must continue and intensify the utilization of its considerable resources to develop

and support the arts disciplines, liberal education, and the interrelationships among them.

- o In addition to commitment to the study and practice of art in colleges, universities, and independent schools, higher education must strive to achieve a greater infusion of serious study in the arts disciplines in elementary and secondary education. For example, admission criteria for baccalaureate programs should encourage in-depth study of the arts at the K-12 level.
- o Nationally, the higher education system must maintain the possibility of choice for majors in the arts disciplines between the Bachelor of Fine Arts/Bachelor of Music model and the Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science model while working to evaluate and strengthen the quality of liberal education provided by both.
- o Programs concerned with the undergraduate preparation of professional artists should (a) encourage the liberal arts degree with a major in an arts discipline as an appropriate base for work in a wide variety of fields; and (b) maintain a program of continuous evaluation to ensure that professionally-oriented undergraduate curricula produce liberally educated artists.
- o Academic leaders should promote mutually supportive activities among disciplines devoted to finding ways to improve the synthesis of professional and liberal education during the baccalaureate years, recognizing that the type and quality of teaching and learning directed toward liberal education is perhaps more important than the quantity and distribution of art, science, and humanities courses.
- o Undergraduate advisement should encourage elective studies and minors in the arts. Participation in courses designed for visual arts, dance, music, and theatre majors should be encouraged and made feasible for all qualified students. Innovative approaches to serious arts education for majors in the sciences and humanities should be explored.
- o Institutions should support efforts of accrediting agencies in the arts disciplines to (a) preserve and enhance the liberal studies component in the education and training of professional artists, (b) require that units preparing arts professionals in multi-purpose institutions give serious attention to education in the arts disciplines for students majoring in all disciplines, (c) maintain the traditional values of academic degrees and credentials while encouraging a variety of innovative approaches, and (d) provide an ongoing mechanism for analysis and action that improves the quality of liberal education for professional artists and education in the arts for all students.

As institutions consider their policies concerning the arts and liberal education, they should recognize the serious ramifications of these policies on educational and cultural development beyond the institution. The crucial role played by higher education in the national arts enterprise cannot be diminished or diluted without adverse effect on our cultural capabilities. Decisions about the future should result in strengthening the capabilities of the arts in higher education for service in support of the meaning and value of liberal education in our national life.

The Working Group on the Arts in Higher Education is a cooperative project of National Association of Schools of Music, National Association of Schools of Art and Design, National Association of Schools of Theatre, National Association of Schools of Dance, and International Council of Fine Arts Deans. These organizations represent the academic and administrative leadership of over 1,000 postsecondary schools and departments providing professional education and training to artists and teachers of the arts as well as arts instruction for all college students.

SEPTEMBER 1988

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