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*This article addresses some of the specific responsibilities of Colleges and Schools of Fine Arts and the obligations of these academic units to the K to 12 educational system in the area of arts education, which include responsibilities in the preparation of teachers. Programs and projects of three universities will be cited and described as examples of various types of institutional involvement that have a positive impact on the learning environment.*

# The University and Arts Education

Progressively over the past six to ten years, the American educational system has become less functional. Lower test scores, larger class sizes, and fewer offerings in the arts or even the complete elimination of arts programs, are only the beginning of the negative commentary describing American schools. Universities, whether they are willing to admit it or not, are critical to the resolution of many of the indicated and admitted problems. University responsibilities begin with the preparation of teachers and the ongoing commitment to in-service and graduate education.

This article will address some of the specific obligations of the Colleges and Schools of Fine Arts to the K to 12 educational system in the area of arts education, which include responsibilities in the preparation of teachers. Programs and projects of three universities will be cited and described as examples of various types of institutional involvement positively impacting the learning environment.

A basic premise of arts educators has long been the importance of the arts to the educational process of all children. One has only to reflect on the years of strength of our public educational system, perhaps the late forties to the early sixties, to conclude there is indeed some correlation between quality educational systems and the quality of arts education in those systems. Even now, there are indications that in Detroit, Chicago, and Indianapolis, that the high schools which stress the arts all have stronger attendance, higher student test scores, and a higher percentage of graduates going on to higher education in comparison to other public high schools in these cities. The National Arts Education Research Center (NAERC) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is currently surveying both public high schools with strong arts programs and Performing Arts High Schools to determine the extent to which these variables are more positive in those high schools with strong programs in the arts.

The arts are especially important for the "at-risk"

student. Many of the "at-risk" students are in fact gifted creatively, however, the large percentage of our schools do not provide instruction in arts, and therefore the "at-risk" student has little opportunity to succeed, let alone excel. It is a basic tenet of learning theory that once a student succeeds in some area of learning, there is higher expectation for success elsewhere. The percentages of students, both urban and rural, that are defined as "at-risk" is increasing. That being the case, it is more necessary than ever that school systems and universities should cooperate in designing learning environments in which students have the opportunity to explore the arts and to challenge their creative abilities as they study all subjects.

In addition, our school systems have as yet not taken advantage of the impact of technology, nor have the school systems acknowledged the impact of changing social developments on the student, starting in kindergarten. The issue of social developments, particularly single parent families, and the mobility of the family unit in urban areas impact children's home learning potential. Video games and other resources available through technology are not being appropriately utilized within the learning experience. How can video games be used within the learning environment? How can contemporary arts -- country western music, rap music, performance art, and museum exhibitions be meaningfully integrated into the learning environment? Universities have been negligent in not providing strategies for the interpretation and use of technology and contemporary arts through pre-service and in-service experiences. Universities must address these questions within the pre-service curriculum; and identify strategies to assist current teachers through in-service programs to determine what classroom changes are appropriate to address the changing family structure and the resulting frequent mobility of the family unit; as well as the changing demographics and the impact of the majority of school-age children coming from homes where English is a second language.

The late forties to the mid-sixties saw the growth of elementary and secondary string programs, school symphonies, sophisticated dance programs, and the integration of dance and drama programs with language arts and social studies. Such integrated programs supplemented the strong tradition of choral music and instrumental programs. Academic test scores of participants were solid and attendance was not a problem. Since then, the deterioration of most urban areas and the vast problems caused by shifting demographics, drugs, loss of industry, and subsequent unemployment, have all contributed to the socio-economic upheaval which has paralleled the decline of an effective public school system in most urban settings. Many of these problems are also affecting public school systems in smaller communities.

In the midst of the declining effectiveness of the public school system, one might ask, what are the responsibilities of the university and, in this case more specifically, the Colleges and Schools of Fine Arts? Universities are frequently seen as the cultural center of a geographic area, either in an urban setting or as the metropolitan center of a geographic area outside the urban center. In this perceived role, the university has provided performances and exhibitions, often with special performance series for elementary and middle schools. The preparation of teachers is the primary contribution of the university to the educational process; but in the area of teacher preparation, universities have not kept abreast of the rapidly changing school environment, and have not provided much needed leadership for in-service work directed at the issues of cultural diversity and technology.

Surveys conducted by the NAERC in 1989 suggest two concerns related to arts education and teacher preparation:

1. The role of the arts education teacher has changed significantly since

- 1962 in comparison to data collected in 1962 by the National Education Association;
2. There has been limited change in the teacher preparation curriculum in that same period of time.

In 1962, the mean number of minutes per week allotted to general music in elementary schools was 75; by 1989 the mean had diminished to 53 minutes per week. Furthermore, concurrently with this significant change in time-on-task, the roles of the classroom teachers and the music specialist in elementary school general music programs have changed dramatically. In 1962, classroom teachers were responsible for teaching general music in 42 percent of elementary schools versus 9.3 percent in 1989; in 1962, music specialists taught general music in only 3 percent of such schools versus 83 percent in 1989; in 1962, classroom teachers assisted by a music specialist taught general music in 39 percent of elementary schools versus only 3.4 percent in 1989. These data reveal a reversal of roles for the classroom teacher and the music specialist which should be reflected in music teacher education programs. Although not as drastic, the change in visual arts education is equally significant.

This profile of the changed roles of the music teacher and the classroom teacher should require a changed curriculum in music. The most frequently used curricula are based on music being taught from 25 minutes to 40 minutes a minimum of three days per week, with both the music specialist and the classroom teacher being involved. With the changed profile, the curricula of what is taught and how it is taught must be addressed.

The obvious question is to what extent higher education has responded to this major environmental change by changing the process of teacher education. A 1992 survey by NAERC and the International Council of Fine Arts Deans indicated that in the past five years there have been some changes in about 7 percent of those institutions offering degrees in teacher education in the arts. Other changes indicated were in response to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the National Association of Schools of Music, as well as new offerings in technology and in language required to meet state requirements. The institutions reporting change suggested that the changes were in response to "Discipline-Based Arts Education," and in response to issues related to multicultural education. Art education programs had changed in a higher percentage of institutions than other spheres of arts teacher education.

Bluntly, what this research indicates is that higher education has not responded with a sense of timeliness to the changing socio-economic conditions affecting the school environment. Students in teacher education programs today study basically the same curriculum as they did thirty years ago despite significant changes in the role of the arts specialist or the time spent in the study of the disciplines. Furthermore, these two areas of change in the school environment are only two examples and are not the only aspects of change which should be meaningfully addressed within pre-service and in-service programs.

When the university functions as a cultural resource in a metropolitan area, what are some of the programs offered and what level of responsibility is assumed by that institution? Programs at three universities have been selected as examples: Wayne State University in Detroit, the University of Montana in Missoula, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. While the universities differ greatly in size, location and the programs described, all of the programs are designed to meet

specific needs in the school system and in the local population. Information cited in quotations within the descriptions of Wayne State University and the University of Montana is taken from the brochures and publicity information provided by the universities. Also, it should be noted that in the development of arts programs involving universities and K-12 students and teachers, the problem is less likely to be a financial one, and primarily more of a scheduling problem. Funding could be an issue, but that can generally be resolved depending upon the university's perception of the importance of public service.

### Wayne State University

Although the program which will be described as "artStart" only began in the Spring of 1992, the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts has a long tradition of involvement with the arts education programs in the Detroit schools. For many years there has been a very successful "Band Day," which includes master class and workshop opportunities for students and faculty. There has also been a Summer Band Camp, and, in 1988, the Music Department and the College hosted the International String Congress. This commitment has also existed in the Department of Art and Art History through special workshops and "Saturday Classes." The Theater Department presents an annual Children's Theater Production during the summer. The goals of these projects are to increase the children's exposure and appreciation of the arts and to improve children's skill levels through the workshops and "Saturday Classes."

The "artStart" project consists of a series of bi-weekly lectures and workshops in the arts for children. The five-part series began in the fall of 1992 and extended into the spring of 1993, with over 400 individual and season tickets sold for the programs. Although tickets are sold, no child is denied admission. "The "artStart" program uses music, theater, dance, storytelling, art, and more, allowing children to experience the magic of creating and listening to their own stories, singing popular songs, getting to know the instruments of the orchestra, and learning the common elements of the arts." The project is designed for grades K to 5, with a maximum enrollment of 550, and is held in the Community Arts Auditorium on the Wayne State Campus. The Detroit school dropout rate is estimated at 28% or higher, with a large "at-risk" population. Wayne State University is located in the lower Woodward Corridor which is an economically-deprived area, much in need of a variety of support systems such as "artStart."

### University of Montana

The "Arts/Education Institute and Graduate Program" began in the summer of 1992. The Institute was designed to provide an opportunity for the arts specialist and classroom teacher to earn a master's degree by studying a curriculum based on critical content areas, rather than a series of course offerings. Topics such as "Creative Process and Theory: A Practical Tool for Learning," "Visual Literacy: Learning to Read Images," and "Arts Education Practicum," suggest both the breath and depth of the offerings and expectations of the program. The core of the program is small group learning experiences "in a variety of designed processes and experiences that allow the student/teacher to practice what he or she knows."

The University of Montana has gone directly to the heart of the issue of education and designed a practical yet intellectually stimulating program for both

classroom teachers and arts specialists. Those participating in the program explore an art form other than one that is familiar to them in an effort "to contribute new artistic and communicative perceptions and awareness." As the participants explore and learn the skills of an unfamiliar art form, they work with classroom teachers from various areas of specialization, and arts specialists from various arts disciplines. This experience provides a basis for the development of interdisciplinary curricula involving more than a single art's discipline, as well as other academic subjects. All involved in the process have a level of understanding conducive to more substantive interdisciplinary curricula: curricula that go beyond "scratching the surface" regarding the interrelatedness of the subjects. This combination of specializations involves more in depth levels of exploration and understanding of the subject matter, than if each of the subjects were studied separately by any one of the participants.

The opportunities for theoretical exploration in such areas as: "Teaching and Learning Through Many Kinds of Intelligences," "The Sensory Language of the Arts," and "Visual Literacy: Learning to Read Images," are followed by the practicum. The "Arts/Education Practicum" serves as a laboratory for the active application of the concepts and theories of the academic core.

The University of Montana program clearly has the potential to motivate major curriculum change, improve the learning environment, and provide in-service opportunities all through empowering the teacher to explore various learning strategies and arts experiences.

### **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

The University provides broad-based opportunities for teachers, parents, and students through an extensive variety of programs.

The Krannert Art Museum has a Curator of Education who is responsible for a Resource Room utilized by area elementary, middle, and high school teachers. The museum also has a very active docent program and large numbers of students go through the museum throughout the school year and summer on guided tours. During the year the Krannert Art Museum also coordinates two "Family Days," one just prior to the December Holiday Season and another in the spring of the year. These involve entire families in projects in the museum with attendance at the "Family Days" growing from about 300 to well over 1200. Programs include music, costumes, hands on creative experience, and the making of art as well as interaction with curators in certain areas throughout the museum.

The Krannert Center for the Performing Arts has an Education Director responsible for educational programs. Performances and workshops in various arts are held throughout the year for elementary, middle, and secondary school students. The "Youth Series" is a special series provided for the school system. The performances take place during the day at the Krannert Center and the children are bused to the Center for the performances. Pre-performance material is provided to the teachers and students prior to attendance at the Krannert Center performances. The materials are prepared by a team of teachers who will be bringing students to the performances. Twenty-seven teachers, from pre-school through high school, are writing materials for the 1993-94 season. Each student receives an age-appropriate and performance-specific magazine. The Krannert Center also sponsors the Krannert Caravan which sends professional and university artists into all grade levels in the schools. The same kind of performer-specific teaching materials as are developed

for the Youth Series, are prepared for the professional artists going into the schools. Theater, music, and dance performances are offered. The Theater Department frequently develops a production which tours to the schools, and several School of Music ensembles perform in the schools. The university Opera Program has a dedicated outreach program, "Opera Look-In," which is in much demand.

The School of Art and Design has a very heavily subscribed Saturday program in the visual arts. This program involves the making of art as well as learning about art, and takes advantage of the faculty of the School of Art and Design as well as graduate students and art education majors. It should be pointed out that the art education majors also work in the Krannert Art Museum on the "Family Days." The School of Architecture has a Summer Design Institute to introduce students, including "at-risk" students, to careers in design.

Currently the College of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, is working with the University of Northern Iowa in a review of teacher preparation programs in an effort to develop a new paradigm for teacher preparation. Faculty from both universities will participate in workshops to redesign course content better to meet the changes which have evolved in the schools. The goal is to develop a curriculum that will equip pre-service as well as graduate students with stronger and more integrated concepts of multicultural education and interdisciplinary work. This integration would address not only the arts disciplines, but also the other disciplines in the curriculum. Individuals preparing to be arts specialists must better understand other areas of the curriculum in which they might be helpful to classroom teachers. Graduates of pre-service programs must be able to utilize the contemporary arts and technology as pedagogical strategies, within the arts disciplines and in interdisciplinary learning. Issues of cultural diversity must be integrated and not repeatedly addressed, rather timidly, in special units. New pre-service paradigms must balance the past and the future, while acknowledging diverse populations and the socio-economic changes in our society.

Clearly none of the programs cited at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, has been developed to its full potential. A stronger relationship needs to exist between those students in pre-service and the programs and projects designed for students and teachers at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels. The desire to change the paradigm in teacher education is only in the talking stages, while the schools themselves have changed drastically over the past five to ten years and will continue to change well beyond the point at which the university paradigm is redefined.

In conclusion, all teacher-training universities, but particularly those that serve as a metropolitan leader, whether in our urban centers or as cultural metropolis and center of population in the more rural areas of America, must recognize and act upon these major responsibilities: We must do our utmost to improve the quality of teachers; and we must alter the paradigms of our pre-service programs and provide more assistance to individuals currently in the schools through in-service programs. Colleges and Schools of Fine Arts have a responsibility to supplement the diminishing arts education in the American schools. It is clear that "at-risk" students benefit from arts education, and the intellectual development of all students is stimulated by the utilization of various learning strategies. Higher education can and should be a player when asked, but more importantly, the Colleges and Schools of Fine Arts must provide leadership in the development of the changing pre-service paradigm, and in the changing role of the schools.