

EVALUATION OF THE DIVISION OF ENGLISH AND FINE ARTS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND ACTIONS

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By

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The scheduled division review for English and Fine Arts commenced in Fall 2003 and was concluded in February of 2004. The traditional focus of a division review is to provide a myriad of pertinent information relative to the effectiveness of the departments contained there in. The current review differed significantly from past considerations in that its scope was substantially expanded to identify an even greater range of useable information with respect to the various departments. The goal was to provide a wide range of historical information pertinent to each department and to focus on present strengths and weaknesses as well as future opportunities and threats. To that end each department performed its own SWOT (strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats) analysis, and established a quality enhancement plan for improving its operations. Summaries of the findings are considered below.

CRITICAL NEEDS

The individual needs of each of the departments in the Division of English and Fine Arts were analyzed independently. A unifying theme in all of the reviews, however, was a serious lack of discretionary funding resulting in various levels of program stagnation within the division. In general, with just a couple of exceptions, this division is limited with respect to any real growth with regard to staff, equipment, and spatial shortages.

1. The English department is in need of additional full-time staff (2 positions). In recent years, the number of part-time faculty members and the number of sections taught by part-time faculty have both increased dramatically, and in fall 2003 no developmental sections were taught by full-time personnel – an approach which is contrary to accepted “best practices.” Serious concern regarding educational quality control has been expressed relative to the overall number of sections presently being taught by part-time faculty
2. The Spanish department needs additional full-time staff and much of the technology for Foreign Languages & Humanities is outdated and in need of replacement. The overall enrollment in Spanish is dropping for a variety of reasons. A major contributing factor to this decline lies in the need for new programs and courses as well as greater community outreach for the offerings. Additionally, Continuing Education is no longer overlaying courses with the Spanish department. Nonetheless, as both state and local demographics change towards a Hispanic majority, there is a real opportunity to make the Spanish

department the hub of an institutional wide effort to increase Hispanic presence on this campus. However, a one person department is insufficient to accommodate the necessary changes.

3. The Art department is perhaps the most dynamic of the departments within the division. Enrollment is up and according to the department chair, all that stops ACC from significantly increasing its numbers further is a lack of facilities. Our current shortage of storage and studio space will stifle any growth of art programs in the immediate future.
4. The Drama department (indeed the entire college) is currently at the mercy of a stage-control-lighting-system which is antiquated and borderline inoperable. Many of the component parts of the current system are no longer commercially available. The consensus is that the system could crater at any moment and the entire auditorium and consequently associated classes and activities would be suspended. Replacement costs for the system are estimated at \$500,000.
5. The Music department is in need of a full-time piano instructor. The position is central to a college music program. All music majors must take piano. It's a vital staffing position within a viable music department and ACC currently uses part-time faculty to man the post. The amount of time this person has to spend on campus far exceeds the part-time faculty job parameters.
6. The Reading department identifies and refers at-risk students to the college's Academic Enhancement Center (AEC), an important support service for students engaged in developmental reading, English, and mathematics courses. However, the AEC is currently understaffed and, at present levels, can provide instructional support for only 25 daytime hours per week and no support during the evening hours. This lack of coverage, in turn, impacts the success of the Reading department's programs.

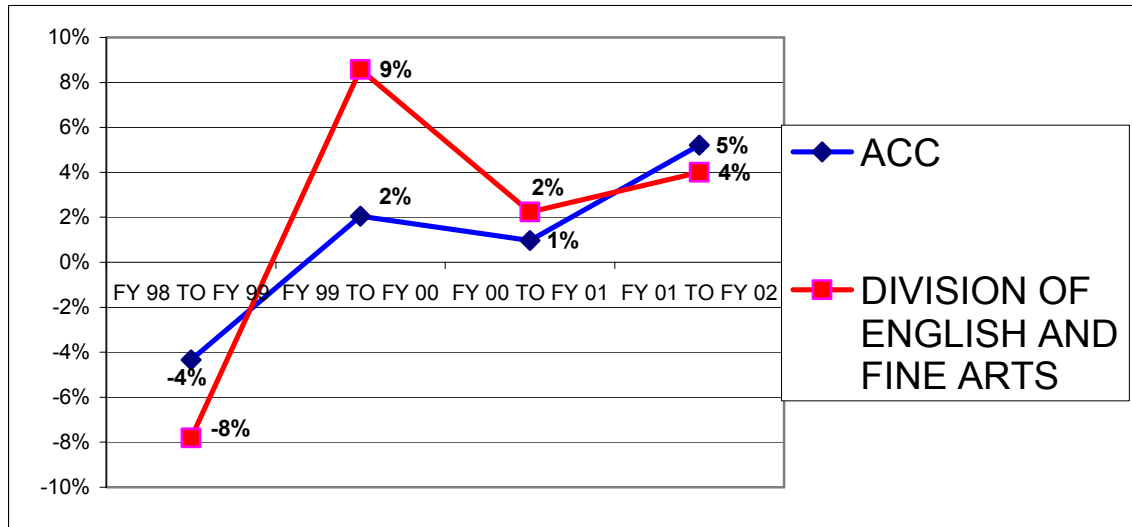
CONTACT HOURS AND GROWTH

As a general rule the division's growth with respect to enrollment and contact hours mirrors the growth patterns of the college as a whole. On the down side, Spanish enrollment has dropped fairly substantially (due in large part to the recent elimination of the overlay enrollment from Continuing Education's conversational Spanish program) while Art enrollment is increasing at an above school average rate.

CONTACT HOUR GROWTH BY DEPARTMENT

| | FY 98 TO FY 99 | FY 99 TO FY 00 | FY 00 TO FY 01 | FY 01 TO FY 02 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| ACC | -4% | 2% | 1% | 5% |
| DIVISION OF ENGLISH AND FINE ARTS | -8% | 9% | 2% | 4% |
| ARTS | 13% | 45% | 3% | 24% |
| DRAMA | 243% | -34% | 48% | -41% |
| ENGLISH | -9% | 1% | -8% | 12% |
| FOREIGN LANGUAGES | -23% | 9% | 24% | -12% |
| HUMANITIES | -55% | 188% | 42% | -12% |
| MUSIC | -7% | 30% | 10% | -7% |
| READ | -22% | -7% | 3% | -11% |
| SPEECH | -13% | 11% | 7% | -1% |

CONTACT HOUR GROWTH BY SCHOOL AND DIVISION



DEPARTMENTAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLANS FOR THE DIVISION OF ENGLISH AND FINE ARTS

Recent changes in requirements by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) now require institutions to develop a global “quality enhancement plan” as part of their periodic review. This concept has now been incorporated into the program review process, and below are summaries of the quality enhancement plans for each individual department in the Division of English and Fine Arts.

Art Department

1. An expanded digital art offering is being championed by the department chair and implementation is targeted for fall 2004. (Implementation: Fall 2004)

English

1. An English Department handbook will be compiled that offers a myriad of useful types of information for part-time English instructors. (Implementation: September 1, 2004)
2. The English Department will create a filing system for tests and essay assignments from every English course taught at the college. Such a central file will allow greater access to materials relating to departmental standards and objectives. (Implementation: January 15, 2005)
3. The English Department will create a WebCT area that will allow campus instructors to add on-line components to campus classes. (Implementation: September 1, 2004)

Humanities and Foreign Languages

1. Future class scheduling will be shaped from data provided by the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research relative to student composition and trends. (Implementation: Fall 2004)
2. The Department Chair will cooperate with the Gulf Coast International Education Committee to provide cost effective study abroad opportunities to ACC students. (Implementation: Spring-Summer 2004)

Music Department

1. Departmental recruitment strategies and procedures will be redefined with an eye toward delegating specific responsibilities amongst the full-time staff. The areas at the core of the effort are publicity material, departmental brochures, web site design and the development of a recruitment packet. (Implementation: Fall 2004)

Reading Department

1. The new guidelines of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) that has replaced TASP will be implemented within the next three years. The Alvin Community College Developmental Education Plan will be revised with an eye toward the change-over time table. (Implementation: Fall 2006)

Speech and Drama

1. An effort will be made to offer more on-line course options. (Implementation: Fall 2005)
2. Recruiting methodology for Drama will be modified. (Implementation: Fall 2006)

3. The theatre shop will be reorganized to facilitate greater safety and efficiency.
(Implementation: Fall 2005)
4. More computer technology will be incorporated into Speech courses.
(Implementation: Spring 2005)

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Each department was asked to examine the data provided and present its own perspective regarding the department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis). Below is a similar analysis for the division as a whole.

Strengths

The consensus within the various departments is that extraordinary staffing is their greatest asset. The various chairs were effusive in their praise of staff. As division chair, I'd like to add another perspective. The department chairs are energetic, focused and competent. The austerities of the last ten years have forced them to do more with less. They have risen to the occasion time and time again. It's my opinion that from top to bottom each of the departments in this division is well-staffed with regard to dedicated and competent faculty.

Weaknesses

The overwhelming consensus within the division is that a lack of funds is endangering their programs. While current faculty are highly competent, there is still a need for increased full-time staffing (English, Foreign Languages, Art and Music), increased space (Art and Music), and additional equipment (Drama, Foreign Languages and English) within the division. In the absence of reasonable redress, enrollment will fall in some departments and ceiling out in others.

Opportunities

Every department attests to the potential vitality and importance of their charge and their respective program. The demographic potential for growth is inherent. We have the people and the vision in place.

Threats

The explicit threat is, at the risk of being redundant, a severe lack of funding. The implicit threat is the likely impact of endless austerity on the morale and subsequent energy levels of the afore mentioned staff.

CONCLUSIONS

The division as a whole is gifted with highly professional and capable staff. However, funding issues threaten the current fabric of its operation, and these issues must be addressed by the institution if the division is going to continue to be viable. Additionally, it is recommended that the institution's efforts to increase its Hispanic enrollment be centrally coordinated at the administrative level and that the Spanish department play a pivotal role in this endeavor.