

TO: Tamara Machmut-Jhashi, Secretary to the University Senate

FROM: Austin Murphy, Chair, Senate Budget Review Committee (SBRC)

RE: Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) Programs

DATE: 3/20/07

The SBRC believes the proposed BFA programs are very sound ones and feel that the budgets are reasonably well justified. However, to provide further information that might be useful, we list some questions below that we had, along with the responses from the BFA proposers. We believe these questions and responses provide further positive information in favor of the proposals.

With respect to the first question, however, we continue to believe that there might be at least a few current OU students who initially start out in dance or theater (or thought about it) and then decided to major in something else at OU because of the lack of a BFA. Such students would not be incremental students to OU although they are included in the budgeted incremental numbers for the BFA programs. We recognize these numbers as likely being quite small (and potentially not materially affecting the budgets).

SBRC Question:

The number of students included in the budgets is listed as incremental, and it does appear to be incremental to the current number of majors in the fields. However, the proposals don't provide an estimate of the number of students that is incremental to the university as a whole. In particular, some estimate of the number of students who would otherwise already be an Oakland University and who might major in some other discipline were it not for the programs should be provided and subtracted from the number that are listed as "incremental" to compute the number of actual "incremental" students. Given the nature of the major/program, the adjustment might be very small. Could this adjusted number be incorporated into the budgets? In addition, at least a brief explanation as to why the programs will attract incremental students who would otherwise not come to Oakland would be useful.

"Response

It would be very unlikely for Dance to recruit students from other majors at OU by offering the BFA. To be admitted to the BFA degree, students would have to have had sufficient prior experience and training. In all likelihood, these students would be:

- a) entering freshmen,
- b) students transferring from a dance program at another institution, or
- c) students transferring from the current BA in Dance program at OU.

It would be very unusual for someone with the technical skill level of a prospective BFA student to *not* be currently training in the field."

SBRC Question:

While the figures for the total number of students forecast in the new programs might be justifiable, it would help if the size of other similar programs at other Michigan schools were listed (so that the market share being assumed could be evaluated). Might a brief list/analysis of enrollments at other programs with joint programs also help better evaluate differences between incremental and total student estimates?

“Response

We could not give you accurate figures as to the percentage of BA and BFA students in programs at other schools because all students start out as BA students. Most programs operate as we plan to—admitting all students as BA students and inviting students who are interested to audition for the BFA program (usually after 1 or 2 years of study). Students who are not successful in their audition continue in the BA track. This makes counting the number of BFA students difficult, since in programs that hold BFA auditions at the end of the second year, potential BFA students are categorized as BA students.

We can tell you the number of Theatre majors in the various MI programs in 2005-06:

Alma College	22
Eastern Michigan University	74 (+24 in Arts Management)
Hope College	21
Michigan State University	147 (+16 Grad Students)
University of Michigan	133 (not counting musical theatre)
University of Michigan–Flint	50
Wayne State University	125 (+47 Grad Students)
Western Michigan University	201

Estimates in Dance:

Eastern Michigan University	35
Hope College	40
University of Michigan	50 (+ grad students)
Wayne State University	45
Western Michigan University	55

SBRC Question:

Since the new faculty might be required anyway (given the past growth in the majors without corresponding growth in faculty), would it be useful to include an additional budget that excluded the new faculty costs? Without those costs (that may have to be incurred by Oakland just to keep up the existing majors), the proposals would show positive cash flows throughout that would increase with inflation.

Response

We are very hesitant to do this because of the experiences of other departments in the College. We do need these faculty (one way or the other) and would like to go on record as saying that we do.

SBRC Question:

It was unclear whether any additional classroom/space would be used other than what is necessary to improve the facilities that is already budgeted. Could an estimate be provided of additional space requirements on campus, or more clearly indicated that no additional space, such as conventional classrooms, would be needed?

“Response

Both Theatre and Dance use the lecture halls in Varner (205 and 206) to offer general education courses. Beyond that, MTD does not request or use shared general classrooms on campus for Theatre or Dance. We use only our own spaces for these courses. (Music uses some non-MTD classrooms. Theatre and Dance do not.)”