

Arts Management Program

Response to Questions Regarding the General Education Curriculum
October 13, 2005

The Arts Management Program does not currently offer any general education courses, so the response of our program relates to observation of skills and knowledge of students participating in arts management classes.

1. Do you believe General Education in its current form at the College is effective in meeting the AAC&U's Learning Outcomes? If not, please identify ways in which you think General Education could meet these outcomes more effectively.

The AAC&U's Learning Outcomes set appropriately high standards. The majority of students that take arts management courses or major in arts management have not achieved these standards. We find that the majority of our students have not yet developed strong analytical and written and verbal communication skills. In addition their ability to transfer skills and knowledge from one situation to another and their research skills are weak.

Our faculty recommends that the current Written Communications general education expectations listed under the English 101-102 requirement should be integrated, where appropriate, into the general education requirements for Social Science, Humanities and History to insure that courses in these areas are helping students develop written communication skills.

In addition we recommend that all students be required to take six hours of Communications Department general education courses to increase their verbal communications skills. We find that junior and seniors in arts management, who have not had either communication or theater classes have had little experience giving verbal presentations. Therefore they don't know what to include in the presentation and are nervous about speaking in front of the class. It is vital that students learn the skills necessary to analyze information, organize their thoughts and create visuals for public presentations, and also be able to stand in front of a class and present the material with confidence. These skills and abilities would enhance learning and class participation in higher-level courses.

2. Do you believe General Education in its current form helps students to succeed in coursework in your department's major or minor? Are there ways a Gen Ed curriculum could enhance your students' work in the major so that they meet these AAC&U Learning Outcomes more effectively?

As noted above improved verbal and written communication skills; the ability to conduct research and write research papers with appropriate citations would enable students to succeed more rapidly in arts management courses. Students also need to become more aware of global customs and issues and how those issues can impact the economic, social and political conditions in their lives.

We congratulate the General Education Committee for taking a new look at this 1998 curriculum and recommend that, if you have not, that you conduct a series of focus

groups with students to determine how they would recommend that the college can best help them reach the standards set by the AAC&U.

In moving forward, using the AAC&U's term "Learning Outcomes," rather than General Education Requirements may be more appropriate and appealing to students.

3. In light of these Learning Outcomes, we ask that you revisit the "Goals and Objectives for Disciplinary Requirements in Current General Education Curriculum" and describe any changes or revisions you think would improve/enhance General Education at the College. We invite your department to give particular attention to the goals and objectives for any Gen Ed courses you currently provide.

The Arts Management Program does not currently offer a general education course. We would, however, be interested in offering a course, "Contemporary Issues in Arts and Cultural Management" under the Humanities sequence in the future. This course would focus on current artistic and management issues of organizations and businesses within the nonprofit and commercial cultural industries in the United States and around the world. The course would also examine the evolution of the field, each arts discipline, as well as contemporary issues of visual and performing artists and arts organizations, entertainment enterprises, and other cultural institutions. Issues would include working with artists, planning, cultural heritage, programming, economic impact, managing information and technology, fundraising, marketing, international partnerships, comparative international cultural management models, and other management issues in the field.

We also recommend that the Humanities requirement be expanded to focus on developing an understanding and appreciation of world cultures, traditions, customs and the current fusion of those cultural ideas and their discourse.

In addition, we recommend that Technology Proficiency and Web-Based Research Skills be added to the list of the College of Charleston learning outcomes for all students. If students entered courses proficient in programs such as Word, Excel, and Powerpoint and were able to access and analyze electronic information, faculty would be able to expect these proficiencies when developing class assignments.

The college may want to consider developing a form of assessment to determine if students who have completed their "general education" requirements have achieved the new outcomes that are being developed.