

Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication
Academic Planning Document 2014/15

Reflection on Outcomes from the 2013/14 Plan

The Curb College continued to support student success through revisiting the curriculum to ensure that students leaving CSUN with degrees from this College have the skill sets needed for the related performance and media fields. While key skills are immutable (writing, public speaking, critical thinking, living and working in a global world), others demanded by related professional fields require on-going (and often enormous) change. Currently, the most obvious of these are changes in Journalism (What is it? How do you do it? Where is it accessed? What is a journalist anyway?) and CTVA (Let's watch films, play games and create with our phones and tablets. Are movie theaters necessary? If viewers skip commercials, what is the new business model for TV? What is Ella and what is CGI? Does it even matter?). All of our departments must constantly re-understand and re-envision careers in order to re-invent the curriculum. Most importantly, faculty need to teach students how to do the same for themselves in the decades to come—how to embrace adaptability, intellectual and creative flexibility.

For these reasons, curriculum was one of the most important foci of the Curb College last year and will continue to be so this year and into the future.

The last year also saw improvements intended to move our students more effectively to graduation without negatively impacting their opportunities to learn. Some departments expanded mandatory advisement while others increased the size and frequency of group advising. All departments used department-based advisors more effectively and focused interaction with the Student Resource Center/EOP on advisor training. With the hiring of a shared advisor for Theatre/Communication Studies, all departments now have staff advisors. AdvisorTrac is in use in our SRC/EOP and should be rolled out to our department staff advisors during Spring 2014.

The opportunities delineated in last year's academic plan for students engaged with faculty in research and creative activity have been fruitful. Among faculty most active in this area are those in CTVA, Art and Journalism. However, in a college like Curb, it is difficult to draw a solid line separating students working with faculty on a "class," academic or College project from those working with faculty on their own research/creative projects.

The College is midway through its third year in the Commerce of Creativity series, finding excellent support and a positive reception from both the invited speakers and the community. The two remaining presenters this year are filmmaker Robert Townsend and artist Judy Baca, a CSUN alum.

12014/15 Planning Form

Demonstrating Student Success (through access, advising, retention, graduation rates, student involvement in faculty research and assessment)

Curricular Initiatives:

- In Fall 2014, CTVA admits its first group of graduate students seeking our new MFA in Screenwriting. With its ever-increasing number of majors (over 1600 this Fall), CTVA also is exploring how to teach the essentials of film production in a less space- and equipment-intensive way for students in options such as Screenwriting and Media Theory and Criticism. This course variation will allow more students to complete the production requirement and progress toward their degree in a timely manner. CTVA plans to undertake a broad-based examination of its curriculum, to rethink old assumptions and to challenge students to create solutions to new problems.
- Theatre expects to hire its first tenure-track faculty member in musical theatre while refining the very successful musical theatre minor and exploring the possibility of a major. It also will offer an experimental course, the Veterans Theatre Project, to engage the community creatively on veterans' issues.
- In Spring 2014, Journalism will begin to address one of the newly identified skills students need through a special topics course, Digital Media Entrepreneurship. Creation of this course was driven by the shift in the profession to emerging forms of news media. Over the next two years, Journalism's "converged" newsroom will become a reality; the myCSUNtablet project will be assessed and refined; students will become adept at gathering and reporting news in multiple mediums; the *Daily Sundial* will become a primarily online publication; KCSN News will expand its award-winning newscasts; the TV news broadcast will go daily and social media will become an integral part of news dissemination.
- In Art, steps are being taken to expand the Shanghai Normal University 2+2 program into the Animation and Art Education options. Faculty are working to develop an interdisciplinary master's degree, requiring all of their graduate students to work in a variety of artistic disciplines.

All of our departments have courses in one or more of the paths in the new and successful GE Paths project. The viability of an interdisciplinary degree for the College will continue to be examined.

Advisement/retention/graduation: Staff advisors in all departments involved with the Transfer Model Curriculum project work closely with incoming STAR Act students to insure the best advisement and course placement. Beginning in Spring 2014, all staff advisors will use AdvisorTrac to better coordinate advisement between the SRC/EOP Satellite and the departments. The resultant information sharing should improve the student experience by providing consistency of information among their advisement contacts. This will further improve once faculty advisors begin using the system in the "quick visit" mode.

The Art Department is setting aside classes for interested First-Time Freshmen to create a cohort environment for students and is considering extending this practice to the sophomore level so that they develop into a close-knit community without incurring additional expense. CTVA will use newly accessible data (resulting from the deletion of the pre-CTVA major) to determine relative demand for its seven options and to better design course schedules. Journalism is fine-tuning its first pre-Fall "New Student Meet-and-Greet" to make it more effective as an advisement tool. The SRC/EOP Director has rejoined the College's Administrative Council where she can update chairs and respond to issues and questions.

Since Fall 2011, the MCCAMC has added two or three college-based University 100 courses reserved for First-Time Freshmen in order to enhance a sense of community among our majors. Enrollment is coordinated through SRC/EOP, with staff presenting information in some of the classes. Faculty teaching these courses have been more inclined to use The Early Warning System (TEWS) as a referral mechanism to help their students succeed.

Students involved with faculty in research and creative activity: As noted above, in a college like Curb, it is difficult to draw a solid line separating students working with faculty on a "class" or academic project and those working with faculty on their own research/creative projects. For example, in the Theatre Department, student designers regularly work with faculty mentors to design costumes, lights and scenery for Theatre productions. In Fall 2013, the College sent a team of three faculty members to the "Creative Inquiry and Undergraduate Research in the Arts and Humanities" workshop held by the Council on Undergraduate Research

(CUR). This team is presenting at the January 2014 Faculty Retreat. Our associate dean is leading activities aimed at disseminating strategies and tactics developed by these faculty members throughout the College. In addition, faculty in CTVA and Journalism have received financial support to write research grant proposals that would involve students in CTVA, Art, Journalism and the College of Education.

Assessment: Curriculum decisions in MCCAMC departments are increasingly driven by assessment. This past year, the Theatre Department assessed its SLO relating to acting. As a result, acting classes were moved earlier in the curriculum so that by the time actors are cast in productions as juniors and seniors they have more training. Each department will continue carrying out assessment projects based on their five-year plans with a focus on projects that will yield actionable information ("closing the loop"). These assessment activities include gateway/capstone comparisons, cross-sectional comparisons and HOT assessment (hybrid, online, traditional). An example: The Department of Art will focus assessment on an upper division gateway course (Art 307) and a culminating course (Art 438) next year while faculty institute changes in the previously-assessed foundation-level courses in order to address weaknesses in the presentation/delivery of this material. Journalism will, of course, participate in assessment of teaching effectiveness in two of the seven myCSUNtablet initiative courses (pairing them with traditionally-taught sections) and conducting pre-/post- surveys in five of them. Additionally, faculty will consider ways to address shortcomings revealed about student learning as they move from beginning to intermediate reporting.

Supporting New Faculty

The College takes advantage of all available University support for new faculty. In addition, the College has developed a supplementary program for new(er) faculty that includes such topics as "Exploring Cross-Disciplinary Opportunities," "How Can Service Serve You," and "Those Elusive Acronyms." It will continue its successful first year in the future with new topics/issues relevant across disciplines.

The Dean increased travel funds distribution to departments for all tenure-track/tenured faculty and continues new faculty support. She also has created a small fund to support the research and creative efforts of senior faculty.

We often speak of "new faculty" only in terms of those on the tenure-track. However, in the coming years, the College will look at support for new(er) part-time faculty, an overabundance of who were hired in Fall 2013 to teach the super-large

freshman and transfer classes. Especially critical is the need for training and discussion in technologies routinely employed at the University.

At the department level, CTVA is the most recent to implement use of MOUs for new faculty. All departments mentor new faculty in a variety of ways, most often working with senior faculty in their option or specialty and/or with the chair.

Demonstrating Integrated Planning (Actions in keeping with IT Vision@2015 and sustainability)

All departments continue to develop courses that are either fully or partially online and use educationally-sound principles and technology. For example, Journalism will have its first fully online course in 2014/15 and CTVA is developing online offerings in Media Theory and Criticism to complement its current hybrid and flipped-classroom courses. Creation of electronic resources, such as e-texts, grows. For example, an art professor receives reassigned time from Academic Technology to create an e-text for a required, core lower division art history course. Journalism faculty have developed a variety of resources associated with its participation in the myCSUNtablet initiative, including e-texts. Electronic distribution of materials is used whenever possible in all departments. The College is fully on board with all University technology initiatives as is evident from Journalism's participation in the myCSUNtablet initiative; Comm Studies is applying to do so. MCCAMC faculty have been selected for the summer Course Redesign Institute and received grants/reassigned time for developing materials and revising coursework.

Every new fully online/hybrid course has the potential for decreasing the use of non-renewable resources, through decreased trips to campus, e-texts and the like. The *Daily Sundial* will reduce paper publication frequency, possibly as soon as Fall 2014, and similar plans are being considered for other legacy media, like *Scene* magazine. The department is looking at more efficient use of shared space. Theatre has always been concerned with sustainability and saves, reuses and repurposes everything from screws to costumes. Current and future renovations to performance spaces such as the Music Recital Hall, the Little and Campus Theatres and the TV and Film stages support sustainability through lighting replacement and similar green(er) construction. CTVA already employs energy-efficient LED lighting implements for many student productions because of the generosity of a corporate donor. Comm Studies' forensics squad has moved to mostly electronic tools, replacing large crates of paper files. The College office models good

sustainability behavior by making many of its administrative and curriculum processes paperless.

Increasing Basic Research and Sponsored Programs

The College will have a full-time grant writer in late 2013/14 to help faculty find support from outside agencies for their research and creative activities. In addition, it is expected that such a grant writer, devoted to this College, will be able to turn around grant applications in a more timely manner than has been true thus far. As mentioned above, faculty in CTVA and Journalism have sought and received grant application support from the University. This activity will increase in 2014/15 as the college grant writer becomes active in the process.

A potentially fruitful area of research exploration for the College is the rapid shift in media use, engagement and experience. A start has been made by Journalism, where audience engagement is measured through Internet analytics, particularly for the online edition of the student newspaper. Not only is use tracked by device but also by how users come to the site: directly, via Google, via social media, etc. The students on the newspaper review the data weekly in the classroom. Of course, Theatre measures audience engagement on the most basic level through attendance but can better gauge engagement at the "talkbacks" following performances. Both departments, along with Comm Studies, express interest in partnering with the social sciences to pursue such research.

Increasing Revenue Generation

New self-support degrees and certificates are being pursued by faculty and/or departments in the College and should be in place by 2014/15. Included are:

- "Advanced Professional Development in Post-Production Services" certificate program designed by two CTVA faculty with Tseng College. This could become a significant generator of revenue as well as an on-going link with an important partner in the Hollywood community.
- CTVA faculty also are developing an "Introduction to Television Production" certificate, to be taught during summer sessions, that capitalizes on our location and our ongoing relationships with the television industry.
- Theatre is working on curriculum to offer Saturday theatre classes for K-12, also through Tseng.
- Having a new full-time Director of Development focused on large gifts to the College will help spark interest on campus and among potential donors. The newly revamped Annual Fund operation has seen an increase in outreach to

those who might become more actively involved (or more active contributors).

- Enthusiasm for the College continues to generate potential donors. Follow-up will be a critical job for the Director of Development and the new dean.

Creating and Maintaining Partnerships with the Community

- The "Commerce of Creativity" series partners with both the community members who attend and the presenters. The series will continue beyond the end of this, its third year, bringing new audiences to the campus.
- The College will hire a half-time "media manager"/public relations specialist to assist the departments and the College with websites, social media and publicity for performances and academic programs. When this person is in place, the advancement and development arm of the College will have the core of personnel needed for improved success.
- Our most extensive partnership probably is with institutions and organizations serving children. Most of our departments continue their work with K-12, both in teacher preparation in Art, Music and Theatre and in a variety of other programs that bring our students and faculty directly into contact with the K-12 community. For example:
 - Journalism's Media Mentors program places teams of graduating seniors in local high school journalism programs to work with students in one-on-one and workshop settings, and offers the annual "Generation 'J' Journalism Day;"
 - Communication Studies has the Communication for Youth Institute, which offers oral communication training to students in grades 5-12;
 - The Music Department has the Youth Orchestra and the "Band on the Run" concert series at which our concert bands perform at various schools;
 - The Theatre Department has the Theatre for Young Audiences and the Teenage Drama Workshop programs. TADW will expand its current schedule next summer to include "sensory friendly" performances and integration of children with autism into productions. By 2014/15 TADW will be re-integrated into Theatre, a move that will strengthen both.

These initiatives are supported from a variety of sources, including departmental funds, IRA funds and College funds.

- Departments in the college also partner with other community groups through such activities as the Veterans' Theatre Project and Hospice Theatre, which is a collaboration with Nursing and Health Science.
- As a basic tenet of the College, all departments continue to support/improve their students' public presentations—in musical and theatrical performance, in debate, in art shows, in student print, broadcast and electronic media and in year-end film and TV showcases. As the public face of the University for many in the external communities, we also have dozens of superb faculty performances each year, primarily in music, but also in art. Plans are underway for renovating and upgrading some of the performance spaces and media facilities, which will make them greener, more attractive to our audiences and of greater value to our students. The College is in talks with the Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC) to feature more of our student productions and concerts in the future.
- All of the departments offer internships, a process that is continually refined so that the students we send are the best we have—and the sites they go to are the best available. High-quality internship opportunities are facilitated by our connections with industry organizations across media, communication and the arts.
- Alumni: Journalism is partnering with the newly reinvigorated Journalism Alumni Association to bring alums back to campus to work with students at such events as the recent "speed mentoring" that attracted 80 students and 20 alumni. More events are planned, both in support of current students and to reconnect alumni. This will serve as a model for the other departments in the college to develop similar alumni associations and events.