

# College of Arts and Letters

## Space Committee Report

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### **What are the trends both internally and externally in our various fields as they relate to space needs?**

#### **Internal**

Reading each of the reports upon which this report is based leads the reader to wonder at the abilities of these departments to produce quality graduates and research/performance from faculty. Though improvements have been made in the Music Department's facilities in the last 15 years and Communication is happy with office and classroom accommodations, all departments are struggling under extremely crowded or unusable space concerns. As programs have grown, facilities have not, leaving students and faculty to share facilities; to negotiate scheduling to avoid sound problems and equipment use; and in some cases, simply to do without needed equipment for student success. Additionally, most departments are scattered across the campus and community, making communication within the departments difficult. Not only is this difficult for faculty, but it also causes some supervision problems when student activities are far removed from the faculty responsible for those projects or programs. Distances between sites often penalize students who have difficulty getting from one location to another in a timely manner. Email is handy for information communication, but it does not allow for the face-to-face discussion and collaboration necessary in a collegiate environment.

#### **External**

In order to compete for quality faculty and students—both undergraduate and graduate, we must compete with other universities across the nation:

- The art world is moving toward bigger and more expansive works and projects; we cannot offer students the opportunity to experiment in a way that will keep them competitive with their peers without more space.
- The Communication Department's Center for Dispute Resolution conducts internal and external mediations, but space and time conflicts are common. External mediation demand is higher than available space will allow. Debate team recruits have occasionally inquired about whether the squad's placement far from the department should be viewed negatively.

- The English Department, when compared with two other universities, does not have the office space, graduate assistant space, or classroom/computer lab and computer classroom space offered at other schools. This has increasingly been a problem in recruiting quality faculty for the department.
- The MJF programs must be able to allow students to train in broadcast and film development space to be competitive in the field.
- The Music programs are highly visible in the community and surrounding area. However, both SEMO and MU are planning new performing arts spaces which will be far superior to what is now available to students as Missouri State.
- The Theatre and Dance Department, when compared to other programs of similar size, is amazingly scattered. Collaboration is absolutely necessary in theatre and dance, which is why faculty are located in one building close to performance and rehearsal space at other institutions.

## **What are the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats faced by COAL in terms of space?**

### **Strengths**

In all departments, our strengths are our committed faculty, our willingness to continue to find solutions to overwhelming problems, and our patience for working through many planning sessions with colleagues, consultants, architects and administration:

- The Art and Design Department has a plan developed in 1999 in consultation with the architectural firms Antoine Predock and Chiodini Associates for a 74,000 sq. ft. facility that was part of a renovation plan that would have impacted the entire college. Current needs are now at 85,000 sq. ft. because of program growth. The department has a growing program with gallery space for student and faculty shows. The studio space, distance, and safety issues, however, are problematic.
- The Communication Department's office and classroom space is satisfactory. We are pleased with past success and future prospects in improving and maintaining these spaces.
- The English and Modern and Classical Languages Departments are currently anticipating the renovation of Siceluff Hall to accommodate both departments' needs, including larger office space, more appropriate classroom space, language lab facilities, and more.
- The Music Department does have access to office and studio space as well as performance space in Juanita K. Hammons Hall for the Performing Arts and Ellis Hall as well as rehearsal, classroom, and instrument storage space in Wehr Band Hall. Unfortunately, the performance space in JKHH is too large for most performances and the limitations of poor sound in Wehr have caused rehearsal problems.
- Though the Theatre and Dance Department has Coger Theatre and the smaller performance space on the mezzanine for performances, rehearsal space and shop space, again, are limited.

## **Weaknesses**

Weaknesses throughout the college are related to inappropriate, inaccessible, unusable, or unsafe spaces for the work done by students and faculty alike:

- Art and Design is utilizing space in seven different buildings between Ellis Hall and the Morris Center downtown. Several safety issues in the Art Annex and Ellis Hall concerning ventilation and wiring exacerbate the problem. Additionally, poor lighting, cramped conditions, and storage in hallways are not only dangerous, but also are not conducive to a positive learning environment.
- The Communication Department's major concerns are related to the dispersal of programs across the campus. The single largest concern is the Center for Dispute Resolution is based upon external demand and commitments; the CDR needs both a departmental office and three mediation rooms to meet its present and near-term obligations. The basic course program is located in Siceluff but overseen by a faculty member housed in Craig, creating occasional problems for faculty, GTAs, and students. The debate team is housed in Cheek but overseen by a faculty member housed in Craig. The Cheek space had recently become less effective due to restricted access to classroom work spaces and, apparently, irresolvable climate control issues. Finally, additional departmental storage space would improve the security of some expensive equipment.
- The English Department struggles with classrooms which do not fit the teaching needs of the discipline: some are too large and many are too small. Additionally, the limited computer classroom situation has four faculty members scheduled for the same computer classroom at the same time throughout the day. This is difficult, to say the least, since they have to negotiate when each will occupy the classroom. Furthermore, other writing classes needing computer assisted instruction or for essay exams have no access. Improvements have been made for computer presentations in most classrooms in Pummill Hall, but often the number of media carts available is not sufficient to meet demand. Office space is another major area of concern with the average office space at 90 sq. ft, well under the 170 sq. ft. university standard. Graduate assistants are three to a desk in a very small room, and 38 GAs this semester are sharing 16 computers.
- The Media, Journalism, and Film Department has an extreme lack of space for production equipment needs and editing labs, as well as journalism labs. The current journalism lab is booked 33 hours a week; thus, an additional lab is needed for students' use of specific software. Eighteen faculty members are spread across six buildings, and no dedicated large lecture room is available for MED 120, making it a challenge to accommodate some of the unexpected changes to the classroom facilities and equipment shared by multiple people.
- The Music Department is in desperate need of space for faculty offices/studios; student practice rooms; and instrument, equipment, and sheet music storage. In Ellis Hall, 38% of the practice rooms have been converted to either storage or faculty space. Remaining practice spaces have poor sound isolation, making those spaces unusable during performances in Ellis Recital Hall. Other problems include the lack of sufficient and appropriate library and listening lab space and a lack of easy access to the recital hall from the street, making loading/unloading of equipment difficult. In the Wehr Band Hall, more practice rooms have been converted to storage or faculty space; in addition, inadequate sound isolation issues exist. Overcrowding of the facility grows, and a

performance space without stage or lighting for the stage area and poor acoustical setting continue to hamper the program. In HHPA, the rehearsal space is too small and needs acoustical improvements, the electronic music/recording studio is too small for current demand, and though storage cabinets are available for instruments, no rehearsal rooms are available requiring students to store the instruments in a different building from where they rehearse. Scheduling performances is difficult due to the high demand for HHPA's auditorium and stage.

- The Theatre and Dance Department has received an accreditation team report from NAST indicating concerns for the infrastructure of the theatrical facilities. Additionally, these spaces are occasionally utilized by other hierarchies on campus without regard to department activities. Also, a need for more and larger offices for faculty exists. The department has a list of 13 different kinds of spaces which are needed for a quality program to run efficiently, including but not limited to the following: a large scene shop with tool and paint supply rooms, acting and dance studios, a design/technical studio, dressing rooms with showers for dance classes, a larger costume shop, a green room, offices, and storage space (perhaps off campus).

### **Opportunities**

The anticipated move of English and Modern and Classical Languages to Siceluff will create space in Pummill and Craig Halls for other departments to utilize. The Art and Design Department is skilled at preparing and presenting materials to potential donors about renovations and/or building projects. Demand for space is increasing within all departments in the College of Arts and Letters, and money for renovated space seems likely to become available. The University seems unlikely to add new space in the near future; if space gains are to be made, it appears they will need to be achieved by maximizing existing spaces. The Ellis Hall renovation, currently scheduled to begin in three to five years, will address many of the Music Department's needs. All departments will need to be aware of opportunities and significant events during the next five years to capitalize upon their potential through the Missouri State University Foundation.

### **Threats**

We as a College are in direct competition with other universities for faculty and students. With inadequate funding from the state, competition for grant monies even among ourselves, and declining infrastructure of existing buildings, the programs offered by the various departments will decline in quality.