



CHAPTER III: THE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

As a relatively small school with a strong tradition of selective excellence, the Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences offers a limited number of internationally recognized teaching and research programs within the context of a major research-intensive university. In the arts, there are two distinguished departments, History of Art and Writing Seminars, which offer rigorous undergraduate baccalaureate majors led by a small cadre of highly regarded faculty scholars, in addition to the renowned Humanities Center. There are also two relatively new and immensely popular minors—in Film & Media Studies and in Theater Arts & Studies—that augment the School’s arts and humanities curricula and hold the potential for equally significant contributions to those fields of study. (It should be noted, however, that these two programs’ non-departmental status without any tenure-track faculty makes them vulnerable in times of constrained budgets even as they enjoy great flexibility.) Finally, students also may take fine arts courses on the Homewood campus. They are offered by Homewood Student Affairs, although the Krieger School awards the credits. The fine arts program, called “Homewood Art Workshops,” is described in Chapter IV.

A number of important partnerships provide additional options for Homewood students to gain access to formal study of the arts. The most important of these is with The Peabody Institute, an academic division of the University since 1977. Two double degree programs offered by the Krieger and Whiting Schools with the Peabody Institute permit a limited number of Homewood undergraduates to study both a performance art and an academic discipline. (The task force, given its focus on the Homewood campus, limited its examination of The Peabody Institute to its joint programs with Homewood.) Another collaboration with The Peabody Institute brings its faculty to Homewood to offer a minor in Music, which the task force views as an excellent model of how to bring academic arts courses to Homewood students. In addition, a small number of students—and faculty—conduct interdisciplinary research that combines their interests in one or more Homewood disciplines, for example, history or computer science, with one of Peabody’s musical programs. Although not part of the formal academic curriculum, Peabody performances at the Homewood campus—exemplified by the annual “Peabody at Homewood” concert series and occasional public performances of various Peabody ensembles at the Mattin Center—also strengthen the artistic and cultural community at Homewood and provide wonderful opportunities for students, faculty, and staff as well as residents of Greater Homewood to experience the power and beauty of the musical arts.

Scholarly and creative arts partnerships with the Homewood Schools are not limited to those with The Peabody Institute. Collaborations between Hopkins faculty and experts at area arts institutions, such as The Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), The Baltimore Museum of Arts (BMA) and The Walters Art Museum (WAM), allow the Homewood Schools to leverage

the selective excellence of their small departments in ways that expand opportunities to study the arts while strengthening the collaborating institutions. There is a deep and continuing legacy of scholarly collaborations with highly regarded BMA and WAM curators. These have enriched Hopkins' classroom studies by allowing students to "learn by doing," the hallmark of the Johns Hopkins education experience: students can study objects of art from the museums' celebrated collections, pursue independent studies, or work as museum interns. The task force considers the joint establishment of a liaison position between the museums and the Krieger School (currently occupied by Dr. Elizabeth Rodini) to be an important step toward fulfilling the potential of scholarly collaborations among the three institutions. (See Chapter VII.)

The complementary nature of Hopkins' and MICA's curricula has led to creative programmatic synergies, exemplified by the fall 2004 program that explored the concept of beauty in different disciplines by MICA, the Space Science Telescope Institute, WYPR, and The Peabody Institute and an interdisciplinary multimedia course co-taught by Hopkins' Digital Media Center Director Joan Freedman and MICA, KSAS Film & Media Studies, and Peabody faculty members. MICA's Environmental Design department also has partnered on a number of occasions with both the Whiting School's Civil Engineering and Krieger School's Near Eastern Studies departments.

The same is true for the Krieger School's Archeological Collection and the University's Historic Houses, Homewood and Evergreen. The Houses and their collections provide extraordinary resources that can be leveraged to the benefit of both the Houses and Hopkins faculty and students. One example of a successful collaboration that expanded Homewood's curricular offerings is the successful recruitment of a Homewood House donor to fund a faculty scholar for the History of Art Department to teach American Architecture, using the resources of the Houses. (Other contributions of the Historic Houses to the artistic life of the University are explored elsewhere in Chapter V.) The Archeological Collection is used extensively for teaching and learning by multiple departments (Classics, History of Art, and Near Eastern Studies) within the Krieger School.

In summary, there are many opportunities for Homewood students to pursue rigorous studies in the arts. Taken together, they provide an essential means for the University to achieve its educational goals for undergraduates, as articulated in the final report of the 2003 Commission on Undergraduate Education: to cultivate their capacity for life-long learning, hone their critical thinking skills, and develop their creativity.

It appears, however, that student interests, as indicated by course waitlists and survey results (see Appendices F and D), have outpaced the current limited number of academic course offerings. Desirable courses are often closed to non-majors, and the number of sections for many courses cannot accommodate the number of students who want to enroll, causing waitlists that, in effect, limit enrollments to juniors and seniors. Many non-majors, especially engineering students whose programs permit only a limited number of electives, also report the frustrating experience of not being able to find an arts course that fulfills a distribution requirement, leaving them without the opportunity to explore the arts in a formal setting at Homewood.

Task force members are concerned that the problem of insufficient offerings to support student interests in the arts is likely to be exacerbated as the Krieger School moves forward with its

strategic plan to increase the number of humanities students. Regardless of major, the Homewood Undergraduate Admissions Office recruits students who are not only intellectually gifted, but who are multi-talented and have a broad assortment of interests and experiences. Many come from high schools that have extensive arts curricula and facilities and expect a world class institution like Hopkins to offer advanced courses in state-of-the-art facilities. Some will have their recreational needs met by the co-curricular programs available to them on campus and in Baltimore, but others will desire the opportunity to engage in the arts in the more reflective and analytical way that is provided by formal classroom study. In any case, if we expect to compete successfully with our peer institutions—for example, Cornell, Penn, and Duke to whom we lose admitted students—we must bolster our credit-bearing arts offerings. While the task force is not recommending the addition of new undergraduate majors in the arts, the array of majors and curricular offerings (and the infrastructure that supports them) provided at peer institutions suggests that it would be wise, if we want to present a campus community that is attractive to humanities students, for the school to consider expanding opportunities for undergraduates to study the arts at the Homewood campus. Until such time as more tenure-track faculty can be added, other alternatives (described below), might be explored.

The promise that students can take music and fine arts courses at The Peabody Institute and through the Baltimore co-op program remains largely unfulfilled. According to Ray Allen, MICA's academic dean, only 98 JHU students have taken courses at MICA, and 67 MICA students have taken courses at JHU since the fall of 2000. Transportation difficulties impede cross-registration, as do logistical difficulties with registration processes that, as reported by students, are difficult at best. In addition, the conflicting course schedules at Homewood and Peabody make it nearly impossible to find courses that fit into a student's schedule without requiring the skipping of classes and impose extraordinary, virtually impossible, demands on the exceptional students who strive to pursue both a Homewood and a Peabody degree. Creative solutions to the transportation and registration challenges as well as synchronization of Peabody and Homewood class schedules would increase the likelihood of success of these co-operative programs as legitimate options to expanding arts-related course offerings on the Homewood campus. Another perhaps less attractive and more expensive alternative would be to hire more Peabody, MICA, and other area college faculty to teach music and fine arts courses at Homewood.

The decision about what courses to offer clearly and rightly rests with the distinguished faculties of the Krieger and Whiting Schools. As experts in their fields, they are singularly qualified to provide oversight to the formal, academic curriculum. In an era of constrained resources, expanding curricular offerings to meet student demand will be difficult; nonetheless, the task force is hopeful that this will be possible within the next few years. A specific need that was mentioned repeatedly in the course of the task force's work was the lack of a comprehensive history of art survey course. In the short term, in addition to solving the transportation, registration, and scheduling problems noted above, the task force urges that interdisciplinary courses within the Homewood Schools be expanded and that innovative inter-institutional collaborations that might reveal important new areas of scholarly inquiry, course offerings, and programs in the arts be explored. The task force considers the junction between the arts and science or arts and technology as potentially profitable areas for creative research and teaching and one that may enhance the missions, as well as national and international reputations, of each

institution. Interdisciplinary programs, for example, a museum studies program, might also serve the purpose of attracting more humanities students to the Krieger School.

Recommendation III-1. The task force recommends that the Krieger School’s faculty consider expanding formal curricular offerings in the arts with the same rigor, support, and principles of “selective excellence” as are characteristic of courses in engineering, the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. This recommendation includes the need for more capacity in existing courses as well as the creation of new academic courses, e.g., a comprehensive history of art survey course. In the short-term, while budgets are severely challenged and there may be little hope of adding tenure-track positions, providing incentives for arts and humanities faculty to develop interdisciplinary courses might strengthen the entire arts and humanities community for both faculty and students and increase the number of cross-listed courses. (See also Recommendation VIII-3 for a description of the Arts Innovation Fund that would provide seed monies to support interdisciplinary and inter-institutional arts programs.)

Recommendation III-2. Synchronize the class schedules used by the Peabody and Homewood campuses. The task force supports the work of the Homewood faculty committee that is currently reviewing this issue and looks forward to implementing a mutually agreeable solution as soon as possible.

Recommendation III-3. The task force supports the work of the joint Homewood-Peabody faculty committee that is reviewing the dual degree program with an eye to streamlining it while retaining its essential rigors.

Recommendation III-4. Enable further integration between the Homewood Schools and The Peabody Institute by improving transportation between the Homewood and Peabody campuses. Similarly, explore creative solutions to the transportation challenges between the Homewood campus and MICA. For example, explore the development of a “taxi culture,” which Loyola College has successfully used to address similar transportation issues.

Recommendation III-5. Provide students with a highly visible, comprehensive resource to facilitate the study of the arts at Hopkins, including Peabody and Baltimore co-op program options. This may take any or all of several forms: an academic advising webpage that includes a user-friendly, on-line option for cross-registration; expanded information in the undergraduate academic manual and in the freshman handbook; and/or periodic updates in the freshman advising bulletin. The resources should include information about how students can petition to receive recognition for these courses as humanities (H) distribution requirements.

Recommendation III-6. Working with the Homewood Art Workshops, explore the use of the weekday evenings and the January Intersession to offer additional courses in the fine arts.

Recommendation III-7. Review the arts curricula, including arts courses offered by the Homewood Art Workshops and those offered by Baltimore co-op institutions, for possible designation as a humanities (H) distribution requirement. More specifically, consider allowing courses in the practice of the arts (i.e., skills-based courses) to fulfill humanities requirements, as do peer institutions such as Cornell, Penn, and Duke.

Recommendation III-8. Make a long-term commitment to the JHU-BMA-WAM liaison position (currently held by Dr. Elizabeth Rodini) in order to coordinate and develop additional collaborations among the institutions in a manner that leverages their intellectual and arts assets to the benefit of all participants, such as the establishment of a museum studies minor. Concerted and sustained efforts to create synergies in the arts and humanities among these institutions as well as The Peabody Institute provide another avenue for the University to contribute to the revitalization of Baltimore. (Elements of this recommendation are cross-listed with Recommendations VI-1 and VI-3.)

Recommendation III-9. Establish a small joint task force of MICA and Johns Hopkins faculty to explore potential innovative teaching and creative collaborations that would enhance the missions of both institutions, draw leading scholars and talented students, and attract external support. The joint task force should also propose creative solutions that would increase opportunities for students to enroll in each other's courses, for example, the development of special evening courses. A similar joint faculty committee established by Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design provides a model for this joint task force. It sought to "draw on and enhance the unique character of each institution, its faculty and resources, to produce new patterns of teaching, creative activity, and research." The Arts Innovation Fund proposed in Recommendation VIII-3 might fund the work of this task force.

Recommendation III-10. Working with the Directors of Undergraduate Studies (DUSs), provide coordination among arts and humanities programs in order to strengthen the community of arts and humanities majors. Bringing undergraduates with similar interests in the arts and humanities together for trips to arts and cultural institutions and for symposia at peer institutions will make available opportunities that small departments with limited faculty resources would otherwise be unable to provide. Work with the Homewood Arts Programs to include non-majors with similar interests. Consider the creation of a residential component in the new Charles Commons that would further strengthen the community of young arts and humanities enthusiasts and scholars. (Elements of this recommendation are cross-listed with Recommendation IV-8.)

Recommendation III-11. Examine ways in which a strengthened relationship between the new program in Theater Arts & Studies and Theatre Hopkins might provide students more opportunities to study, perform, and enjoy drama. (This recommendation is cross-listed with Recommendation V-4.)

Recommendation III-12. Establish a comfortable and acoustically sound film screening or viewing room and film storage space to support the Film & Media Studies program. At least five possibilities could be explored: Gilman Hall when it is renovated; the Mattin Center after non-arts offices are relocated; Shriver Hall after the non-arts services are relocated; the auditorium within The Baltimore Museum of Art; or the new performing arts center after it is built. This recommendation should be considered within the context of the Krieger School's overall commitment to and investment in the Film & Media Studies program. (This recommendation is cross-listed with Recommendation VII-5.)