



CHAPTER IV: THE CO-CURRICULUM

Co-curricular activities in the arts have existed at Homewood since the earliest days of the University. The Demologian Literary Society, formed in 1876, was established to promote literary culture among students. Around 1885, students wrote and published an “opera” (libretto only) called “Gems From The Opera.” The Banjo and Mandolin Club was active in the 1890s. Later, the Musical Club, originally formed as a Glee Club in 1883, enveloped it. The Hare’s Foot Club, which performed plays, was formed in December 1908. Barnstormers, the student theater group, was founded as the Dramatic Club in 1919.

A veritable “Homewood Renaissance,” fueled by the opening of the Mattin Center and the creation of the Homewood Arts Programs (HAP) directed by a professional staff person devoted to the performing and fine arts, has taken place on this campus over the past five years. Furthermore, the monies set aside each year by the Student Activities Commission to fund recognized student arts groups have provided essential, albeit inadequate, funding for expansion of student arts initiatives, including dance, theater, vocal, literary, and musical groups. In short, the creative and performing arts have experienced striking growth outside the academic curriculum: student performing arts groups (especially theater, dance, and a cappella groups) abound. The wealth of co-curricular options in the arts assures that every student can find substantial opportunities to complement their formal studies. (See Appendix H for a list of student arts groups affiliated with the HAP.)

The Mattin Center, managed by Homewood Student Affairs, was a godsend to both the co-curricular *and* curricular arts at Homewood. Its Swirnow Theater, Caplan Dance Studio, Digital Media Center, rehearsal rooms, practice rooms, art studios, and darkrooms offer extraordinary facilities in which to create, study, and enjoy the arts. The Mattin Center provides crucial arts space not only to students who seek to balance their lives in an intensely intellectual environment, or who seek to enrich their lives through the arts, but also to students who have elected to study the arts as part of the formal academic curriculum. Besides providing much needed physical facilities to support recreational endeavors in the arts, its original intent, the Mattin Center often serves as a crucial bridge between scholarly and co-curricular activities on this campus. For example,

- The Peabody Institute offers credit-bearing Music Theory courses in the Mattin Center, strengthening the Peabody-Homewood relationship and permitting Homewood students to more easily enroll in courses that traditionally were offered only on the Institute’s campus in downtown Baltimore.

- Credit-bearing fine arts courses use the Mattin Center facilities. They are offered by the Homewood Art Workshops, a Homewood Student Affairs program.
- Students explore the technologies available at the Digital Media Center for (credit) course projects as well as for arts projects created for their own enjoyment—often working together with students and faculty at other colleges, such as The Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and The University of Maryland at Baltimore County.

(See Chapter VI for a more comprehensive discussion of the Mattin Center as an arts facility.)

Participation in co-curricular arts activities provides indispensable opportunities for Homewood students to cultivate their creativity—one of the goals of a Hopkins undergraduate education as presented in the final report of the Commission on Undergraduate Education in 2003. Involvement in student performing arts groups also permits students in both the Krieger and Whiting Schools to develop interpersonal, organizational, business, and leadership skills that will serve them well in the years to come. The autonomy given to the student groups assures that a diverse set of interests at multiple skill levels thrives at Homewood. As ambassadors of the University, members of student performing arts groups provide untold number of volunteer hours reaching out to the citizens of the Greater Baltimore area. As artists, they perform at nursing homes and act as mentors to budding musicians in grade schools—enriching the lives of others while deepening their understanding of themselves and the world. These outreach activities foster a sense of citizenship and a strong commitment to one’s community, another goal of undergraduate education at Johns Hopkins.

We also know that students who are affiliated with groups during their enrollment—that is to say, who are engaged in the life of the institution—are likely to make the greatest gains in intellectual and interpersonal development while at Hopkins. They are among the most satisfied students and most devoted alumni. Ample opportunities in the arts also help recruit students—and not just students who expect to major in the humanities.

The task force believes that the following recommendations, when implemented by Homewood Student Affairs, will strengthen the co-curricular program in the arts on the Homewood campus.

Recommendation IV-1. As enthusiasm in the arts among students grows, prepare to expand the co-curricular, self-directed opportunities for students to engage with the arts. Assure that those opportunities reflect the full range of diversity within the Johns Hopkins community. Expansion of the number of humanities majors is likely to increase the demand for co-curricular opportunities to participate in the arts that, in turn, will increase the need to expand facilities that support the arts at Homewood. (See Chapter VII for a discussion of arts facilities at Homewood.)

Recommendation IV-2. Develop a “one-stop shopping” web-enabled clearinghouse for students that provides information for student artists and arts groups as well as for patrons of student arts: on-line forms, on-line room requests, on-line calendar of all arts-related campus events, on-line application for SAC funding, and information about how to join and to support arts groups. Ideally the on-line event calendar would be such that it would allow students to submit their own events to the calendar and also to link directly with the University’s

calendaring system so that double entry is not required. (Note: The University's on-line calendaring system is available to, but not currently used by, students.) This website should also include a page devoted to a user-friendly listing of frequently used campus rooms that are available for practices or performances and how to reserve them. (See Appendix G for a listing of commonly used rooms.)

Recommendation IV-3. Develop and sustain alumni giving and other fund-raising strategies for student arts groups, working in collaboration with Johns Hopkins' Office of Annual Giving (OAG). Provide information about the annual fund to student groups every fall as part of their annual orientation program. Given that the leadership of student groups turns over each year, the continuity offered by a designated staff position with responsibility to nurture and sustain the relationship with OAG is critical.

Recommendation IV-4. Explore the possibility of establishing an endowment to support student arts groups, working with Homewood Deans and Directors, as well as Development staff.

Recommendation IV-5. Increase students' awareness of and participation in the rich arts and cultural offerings from a myriad of museums, artists' organizations, and performance arts organizations in Baltimore City. Work to increase availability of Baltimore's Colletown buses for off-campus cultural events that appeal to a diverse array of Hopkins students. Consider expanded arts programming during new student orientation and "arts excursions" similar to the Residence Hall evening at the National Aquarium. (This recommendation is cross-listed with Recommendation VI-5.)

Recommendation IV-6. Work with student theater groups and with the leadership of the Theater Arts & Studies program and Theatre Hopkins to form a "theater alliance" in order to better coordinate schedules, mediate conflicts, prevent duplication, and increase cooperation among students interested in theater.

Recommendation IV-7. Move the reporting line of Theatre Hopkins to HAP and establish HAP as the University's liaison to the Shriver Hall Concert Series. Both these moves should enable a tighter integration of the arts community, improved utilization of performance spaces, and enhanced communication and collaboration. (Elements of this recommendation are cross-listed with Recommendations V-3, V-6, and V-14.)

Recommendation IV-8. Work to increase the cooperation and collaboration between curricular and co-curricular arts activities. Increase faculty awareness and support for relevant student activity. For example, work with play writing faculty to perform student plays; work with Writing Seminars faculty to support student literary magazines; add a faculty member to the Mattin Center Advisory Panel. (Elements of this recommendation are related to Recommendation III-10.)

Recommendation IV-9. Expand the fine arts offerings of the Homewood Art Workshops (HAW). Consider creative new uses of weekday evenings and the January Intersession.

Recommendation IV-10. Look for ways to expand funding for student arts groups within the context of a review of the current (but nearly 20-year old) methodology for distributing student activities funds to all groups.

Recommendation IV-11. Consider the consolidation of all co-curricular arts programming in one HSA unit rather than having it report to two different Associate Deans. For example, assign the Digital Media Center to the Director of the Homewood Arts Programs.