

June 2015. Vol. 19, No. 2. — Growing Arts and Culture Sector Leaders through Refined Vision of Arts Management — Kim Mathie

Elizabeth Hoffman (2005) noted 10 years ago that, “anniversaries are opportunities to reflect on past experience and plan for the future” (para. 1). At the time, Hoffman was describing the [10th anniversary](#) of the Arts and Administration (AAD) Program at the University of Oregon (UO). Moving forward to the 2014-2015 academic year, AAD has been celebrating its 20th anniversary. To highlight the anniversary, the program hosted an [alumni reunion](#) during fall 2014 that brought together former and current program faculty, students, and staff for tours, celebratory parties, networking, and a symposium on “[The Arts: Making a Difference in Communities.](#)” As part of a series of events designed to celebrate this milestone, Kim Mathie, AAD 2006 alumnus, has documented the program’s continuing growth and relevance within the field of arts management. Through this issue of *CultureWork*, we invite you to learn more about the ways in which the UO’s Arts and Administration program has reaffirmed its mission as well as ways in which the program continues to branch out its dedication to educating arts and cultural sector leaders and participants.

Best regards,
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Editors

Growing Arts and Culture Sector Leaders through Refined Vision of Arts Management

[Kim Mathie](#)

Introduction

This year, the [Arts and Administration Program](#) (AAD) at the [University of Oregon](#) (UO) celebrates its 20th Anniversary. Today, it is a robust and growing program. Twenty years ago, this was hardly imaginable as its identity was yet unknown, its vulnerable seeds hidden beneath budget cuts and crisis. It is a terrain that can sound awfully familiar to arts and culture workers who are often faced with uncertain economic support and community participation. So how did a department, slated for closure and on its way to becoming a memory, instead become a growing program celebrating an important 20th anniversary milestone? In short, a commitment to its new mission and continuing relevance and need, not only as a member of the UO community, for faculty and students, but to the arts management field as a whole.

The Seeds of Change

In 1990, the Department of Art Education (ARE) at the UO faced imminent closure following the voter-passed Ballot Measure 5 that resulted in a \$153 million budget loss for Oregon University Systems schools (Hoffman, 2005).

Because Western Oregon State University was tapped by the “teacher prep campus in Oregon” (Hoffman, 2005, para. 5), education programs related to preparing teachers were vulnerable. Not surprisingly, the College of Education at UO was hit the hardest and related to it, the Department of Art Education in the School of Architecture and Allied Arts was soon slated for closure.



Alumni Nori Rice, Meredith Wong, Michelle Sinclair. Social Theory, Politics, and the Arts Conference, Seattle, WA. October 2013.

Ironically, ARE only had six students who were in the teacher certification program and, of the 18 doctoral students, not one had research interests involving public schools (Hoffman, 2005). “Only a third of the curriculum addressed art education [in public schools] at that point,” recalls Linda Ettinger (2015, personal communication), ARE faculty and the first program director of the AAD program. “Early on, we began as a group to focus on those aspects of the curriculum that extended beyond traditional art education courses, those that addressed cultural services, art in society, visual information design, and museum studies” (Ettinger, 2015, personal communication). Several of these programs already had a long history within ARE (Hoffman, 2005).

Because of this focus beyond the public school classroom, there was no doubt Ettinger and the ARE faculty would fight the closure (Hoffman, 2005). In a meeting with President Brand and two of the Provosts, Ettinger attempted to explain the department’s view of the arts, which led to something of a breakthrough. “Through my discussion of the content of our curriculum that extended beyond traditional arts education, I suspect I was trying to describe cultural services, which prompted [Provost Wessells] to ask if this was like art management” (Ettinger, 2015, personal communication). Ettinger “seized on this phrase, as one would a lifeline!” (Hoffman, 2005, para. 9).

Given just three days to propose an alternative to closing, ARE drew support from its diverse alumni, faculty colleagues, and community members. It became apparent that Ettinger’s lifeline of “arts management” could be linked philosophically with one of the abiding strengths of ARE: its community arts and cultural services focus, attributed to well-known faculty June King McFee and Vincent Lanier, which focused “on people first. . .and art products second” (Hoffman, 2005, para. 7). “The department curriculum promoted a broadly contextualized view of the arts, described well beyond the traditional art classroom setting,” says Ettinger (2015, personal communication). “We had a good base upon which to build” (Ettinger, 2015, personal communication). In this way, ARE proposed the transition from preparing arts educators to preparing arts managers.

But it would have hardly been worth considering if there was not a growing need for professional managers in the arts and cultural sector, represented by the fine arts, commercial arts, applied arts, unincorporated arts, and heritage arts (Dewey, 2004). The establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts in 1965, and the subsequent growth of local arts agencies and arts organizations themselves within this cultural sector over the next 30 years, created “a significant demand for effective management” (p. 13).

Successful in their appeal, and with only 60 days to prepare a transition plan, the faculty immersed themselves in research and discussion, site visits to existing programs, and attending arts management conferences “to better define our particular orientation to the larger field,” says Ettinger (2015, personal communication), one that included a multicultural and socio-political focus.

The State Board of Higher Education approved the new Master’s in Arts Management in May 1993. In fall of 1994, the Arts and Administration program (AAD) admitted its first cohort with ARE faculty member Linda Ettinger as the first program director.

While the AAD program would be a brand new undertaking, the legacy of ARE would live on, not surprisingly, as part of the AAD curriculum and as reflected in the new program’s mission and connection to community arts.

Taking Root

The seeds of the AAD program took root quickly within the fertile soil of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts and the UO, flourishing as only a sapling could, absorbing new information and ideas while settling into its new identity and mission to educate cultural leaders and participants to make a difference in communities.

“It [the program’s mission] infuses everything that we do,” says Patricia Dewey Lambert (2015, personal communication), current Program Director and Associate Professor. The Arts & Administration Program’s mission currently states:

We educate cultural sector leaders and participants to make a difference in communities. The Arts and Administration Program at the University of Oregon informs cultural sector administration, policy, research, and education. We prepare and inspire leaders based on the belief that professional arts managers must be familiar with the social, cultural, economic, political, technical, and ethical contexts in which the arts flourish. (Arts & Administration Program, 2015).

“We reflect on that mission continuously when we’re making decisions about strategic investments, about hiring, and also in bringing students into our program, to make sure that they are attracted to that same mission, that same goal” (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication).

In the initial years of the program, the core concentrations reflected defined areas in the cultural sector: Community Arts Management, Performing Arts Management, Museum Studies/Management, and Event and Festival Management. Coupled with the other components of this curriculum—technology, research and internship, and a terminal master’s project—this curriculum has provided students with the theoretical framework and practical tools to best meet the needs of the field and interests of students; at the same time, it has connected students to career opportunities available in the field (Blandly, personal communication, 2015).

Over the years, the program identified new areas of interest among students and noted trends in the field that were becoming more than just trends.

Branching Out

Around 2010, the AAD faculty began to notice the growing body of studies and reports documenting the rise of professional arts programs in health care settings across the country (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication). The local environment in Eugene reflected this growth with the construction of PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center University District, a state-of-the-art hospital that would offer on-going arts-based programming (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal community). As arts in healthcare programs continued growth locally and nationally, AAD recognized the need for “the professionalization of the management and policy side of the field” (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal community) to bridge the gap between patients and the healthcare system itself



AAD Program Directors. Patricia Dewey Lambert, Doug Blandly, Linda Ettinger. AAD 20th Anniversary Reunion. October 2014.



Above: Pictured on the steps of Johnson Hall are the initial 1993 faculty members, advisers, and instructors for the Arts and Administration Program: From left to right are Alice Parman, Rogena Degge, Doug Blandly, Sharon Morgan, Linda Ettinger, unidentified, Jane Maitland-Gholson, Douglas Beauchamp, Kassia Dellabough, and Peter Sears. Not pictured: Beverly Jones.

(Sonke, 2012). In fall 2012, the AAD program launched the first graduate-level degree program in which students could train to become professional managers of the arts in healthcare settings.

Recent alumni have been exploring opportunities in visual arts collections and galleries in healthcare settings and a current AAD student is developing a visual-arts based training program for medical students and residents at Oregon Health Sciences University (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication).



“We’re seeing that we’re at the forefront of the movement in terms of education and in research,” says Dewey Lambert (2015, personal communication) who oversees the Arts and Healthcare Management concentration:

It’s a new and growing field that requires a lot of entrepreneurship and program development, so while there may not be specific jobs waiting for our alumni when they graduate, there are a lot of interesting collaborative, entrepreneurial, cutting-edge programming that’s happening. (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication)

This new area of concentration has also created new research and partnership opportunities. In 2013-2014, the program received a significant seed grant from the UO Office of Research, Innovation, and Graduate Research to launch a series of research initiatives to explore the growing field of arts in healthcare management. This led to the creation of the [Oregon Arts in Healthcare Research Consortium](#), a network-based umbrella organization made up of diverse UO faculty partners and healthcare institutions in the region that communicate to the field (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication). Currently it is the only program of its kind.



The Arts: Making a Difference in Communities symposium participants. October 2014.

The consortium is housed within the [Center for Community Arts and Cultural Policy](#) (CCACP), which is based within the School of Architecture and Allied Arts, and the Arts and Administration program specifically, to promote faculty and graduate student research. Founded in 1965 as the UO Institute for Community Arts Studies (ICAS), the Institute established a renewed focus on community arts and cultural policy in 1995 and in 2005 was re-envisioned as “the Center for Community Arts and Cultural Policy (CCACP)—an interdisciplinary, regional research and development center dedicated to sustaining and strengthening the arts, culture, and heritage sectors of the West” (Blandy & Hager, 2006, pp. 31-35).



Trimming and Shaping

To make room for this new growth and avenues of research, some branches of the program needed to be pruned back.

Two areas of concentration were eliminated in their current iteration. The program dropped the Event and Festival Management concentration while keeping much of coursework within the curriculum (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication). AAD is now in the process of phasing out the New Media Management concentration in

lieu of the Graduate Certificate in New Media and Culture.

“This [Graduate Certificate in New Media and Culture](#) addresses the challenges internally in fielding enough courses on new media and culture as it relates to arts management and culture work,” says Assistant Professor John Fenn (2015, personal communication), who was initially hired to develop and lead the new concentration in Media Management and who played a part in creating this new university-wide certificate. “And it addresses the challenges for students to take courses with a multitude of instructors and professors from around campus who come at new media and culture with a different lens” (Fenn, 2015, personal communication).

These adaptations and adjustments by the AAD program illustrate the agility necessary to respond to trends making the most impact on the field or to experiment with potential growth areas and, in this way, remain relevant and contemporary (Blandy, personal communication, 2015).

Growing and Staying Tall

One very important way the AAD program has remained relevant and contemporary to its mission is through a diverse and dedicated body of faculty who contribute to the curriculum and research in the field. The program is made up of approximately 20 faculty that include tenure-track, research-oriented faculty, and career instructional faculty.

The tenure-track faculty drive curricular and program development (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication) and their contributions have been diverse.

“As a faculty, we bring an inter- or trans-disciplinary perspective, because we all have such varied backgrounds, both in our degrees and, for many of us, professional practice, life experiences,” says Fenn (2015, personal communication). “Everybody brings that together to the program and impacts trajectory of the program” (Fenn, 2015, personal communication).

This diversity of background is shown through: Dr. Patricia Dewey Lambert’s leadership in cultural policy research and advancing new core areas of concentration; Dr. Eleanora Redaelli’s experience in cultural policy and planning from an international perspective; Dr. Lori Hager co-founding and directing the E-Portfolio project to prepare student with 21st century skills needed in the field as well as scholarship around the [Prison Arts Resources Project](#); Assistant Professor John Fenn and Instructors Eric Schiff and Darrel Kau merging the long-held Information Technology, Arts Marketing, and Media Management courses into a two-course series they co-teach to provide students a holistic view of all these areas together; and Dr. Phaedra Livingstone’s focus on museum interpretation and representation issues, including social inclusion and equity in museum participation.

As a complement to the tenure-track faculty, career instructional faculty “bring their own professional practice and experience to bear within goals and dynamics of the program” (J. Voelker-Morris, 2015, personal communication) concentrating on teaching and service. Instructional faculty primarily focus on undergraduate education, which “makes it more possible to launch a successful undergraduate major,” another growth area for AAD (J. Voelker-Morris, 2015, personal communication). The program will submit a proposal for an undergraduate degree in arts management in the near future, which Program Director Dewey Lambert hopes to officially launch in the fall of 2016. In addition, AAD has seen significant growth in the newly renamed [Arts Management minor](#) (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication). “What was formally just a handful of students, about eight students, is now somewhere in the 50 to 60 range, in one year” (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication).



2015 AAD Graduates and Faculty

Beyond these developments at the undergraduate level, the program has also seen a shift in graduate education and how it is delivered, or more accurately, how interested students want and need to access this education.

“I think there is a group of professionals who have good jobs and want to keep them, but who are looking for a professional education program and/or a certificate program and are not able to or don’t wish to engage in a residential experience,” says Doug Blandy (2015, personal communication), Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and former program director for AAD.

In response, AAD hopes to meet some of these low-residency or distance learning needs through online programming and hybrid-models, shorter-term certificate programs, professional development institutes, and summer programs (Dewey Lambert, 2015, personal communication). “We’re also looking at building programs especially based out of Portland, low-residency models of professional education, executive-level education programs,” says Dewey Lambert (2015, personal communication).

Summary: Recommendations for Future Arts Management Programs

Taken together, changes and shifts in the University of Oregon’s Arts and Administration program and in the field as a whole reveal that remaining competitive in an increasingly professionalized arts and culture environment requires anchoring in a strong mission with flexibility to experiment, grow, and expand.

What’s most exciting to us [as faculty] is seeing that the mission we are so committed to, the mission to educate cultural sector leaders and participants to make a difference in communities, always has been and likely always will be, at the center of what we all believe and are committed to in education among both faculty and students. (Dewey Lambert (2015, personal communication)

The AAD program’s commitment to its mission is one of the drivers of its success. Whenever possible, the program questions its decisions in relation to its guiding mission— from curriculum and program development, to faculty hiring and student enrollment, to approaching research in the field; if it passed the mission test, it was a welcome addition.

Similar questions might help a burgeoning arts management program find its way:

- What is the defining orientation of your program, your core mission?
- What is your program’s foundation? Will your program be built upon a business model with an arts emphasis or a community arts model?
- To what extent should your program focus be theoretical and research-based and to what extent do you want it to be applied?
- What are the essential parts of the core curriculum?



International Dimensions of Arts & Administration panel. The Arts: Making a Difference in Communities Symposium. October 2014. Doug Blandy, John Fenn, Trilce Navarrette, Germaine Gamiet, Susan Appe.



University of Oregon Arts & Administration students and faculty with Robert Lynch and Abe Flores, Americans for the Arts, in Portland, OR. March 2014.

- Will you offer areas of concentration or provide a general arts management curriculum?
- How flexible do you plan to be—and are you strategically able to be—in response to changes in the field and how quickly?
- What delivery option(s) will meet the needs of your potential students: an online, face-to-face, or hybrid model of instruction?
- In looking at your community, what potential partnerships exist? What relationships will the community and arts management program have?

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