

Dance, Department of

Increase Recruitment Of Exceptionally Well-Qualified Students

Goal Description:

Through targeted recruitment of students from fine arts high schools and studios identified as providing high quality training, we will increase enrollment of very well prepared and talented students. Without increasing total enrollment in the BFA program, we will continue to raise the bar on admission standards.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Develop Camp For High School Students

Performance Objective Description:

Offer a two-week summer intensive camp for students aged 13-18. Students will study with SHSU dance faculty while experiencing the college atmosphere. Undergraduate and graduate SHSU dance majors will be chaperones and rehearsal directors. The workshop will culminate with a fully produced concert in our dance theater. The camp will create the kind of personal connections we have found most important in successful recruitment.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Students Subsequently Audition For The BFA In Dance At SHSU

KPI Description:

High school students attending our summer camp will have increased interest in our BFA program. We will track the number of camp attendees who audition.

Results Description:

16 students participated in the two week Summer Dance Intensive in June of 2015. They ranged in age from 13-18. Of those students, four were seniors in high school. All four auditioned for the BFA in regularly scheduled auditions in the academic year. Three were admitted.

In June of 2016, the department conducted the camp again, this time enrolling 26 campers. This year, we used the May audition for the summer camp to also admit for the BFA. Four campers were admitted, one was not. Of those, three have been admitted to SHSU, and two have already been advised for the fall semester.

Considering that relatively few of the campers were seniors either year, there was a very high success rate in terms of recruiting students. Informal conversations with the dancers and their families indicated a high degree of enthusiasm about the camp itself, the dance faculty they got to work with, and the beautiful facilities. Many expressed desire to audition for the program when they are seniors. The department intends to continue offering the camp and will track whether future BFA students were campers in earlier years.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Track audition/admission to BFA

Action Description:

We will track applications, auditions, and admissions to the BFA program. The most efficient means appears to be to add items to the on-line application form filled out by all auditioning students:

Did you attend the department's Summer Dance Intensive?

If so, in which year(s)?

This information can then be compiled by a staff member, along with records of those auditioning and attending the camps. Since the camp serves ages 13-18, the data should be clear regarding year at which the individual student would be applying for college.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Faculty Will Actively Recruit Students
Performance Objective Description:

Faculty will pursue opportunities to teach master classes and create choreography at identified high schools and studios. They will also follow up by contacting, through email and phone calls, students we wish to recruit.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Increased Enrollment By Students From Fine Arts High Schools And/or Identified Studios
KPI Description:

Audition forms indicate students' high school and dance training. In the fall 2015 semester, we will review the records of those students enrolled and determine how many are from the targeted schools. Over the last decade, we have successfully recruited on average 1-2 students from these "elite" schools each year. Some increase in enrollment would justify continuing to expend resources targeting elite schools.

Results Description:

The department admitted 26 students from three recruitment trips to Booker T Washington School for Performing and Visual Arts, (Dallas), Houston School for Performing and Visual Arts, and the National High School Dance Festival (held in Miami). Of those, 11 applied for admission to SHSU, with 4 enrolling.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Review strategies for effective recruitment
Action Description:

The faculty considered reasons for relatively poor recruitment outcome in our target population of students. A major issue appears to be that we were competing with nationally renowned schools such as Julliard, Boston Conservatory and California Institute of the Arts for elite students. This year, we committed to investing our efforts and offers to dancers at a "second tier" level. As of June 30, 2016, we admitted 47 students from performing arts schools, of which 11 have been admitted for fall.

The department will also shift to a different strategy for distributing scholarship awards. Our practice has been to award scholarships in the range of \$1,000-\$2,000 per academic year for gifted students. For a very few students, the award has been \$3,000. This level of support is not sufficient to attract many of the elite or even "second tier" students. This year, we will review students on our list for scholarship consideration, and select the top one-three for scholarships at a significantly higher level, even though we will then be able to award fewer total scholarships.

Promote Regional, National And International Creative Activities For Faculty And Students In The Department
Goal Description:

The Department will continue to encourage and support the creative projects of faculty and students in reputable venues, whether those be in the local community, in the region, on the national level, and internationally.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Support Logistics Of Travel For Faculty And Students
Performance Objective Description:

Dance faculty frequently create choreography using students of the department for part or all of the cast. Travel expenses are thus incurred not only for the faculty but for the students as well. We have supported faculty and students to present their work in New York, Dallas, Houston, and Washington, D.C., among other cities. The department is committed to securing funds to support such endeavors.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Fund Faculty Research
KPI Description:

Faculty submit their research plans for the academic year. The department establishes budgets for on-campus production expenses, and estimates expenses to be incurred for travel. All faculty and graduate students are eligible for funding, depending on the projects proposed and the financial resources available.

Results Description:

In 2015-16, the department provided supported the following faculty research:

Dance Spectrum, Fall and Spring concerts: funded costume and set design for original works performed at the Gaertner Performing Arts Center Dance Theater choreographed by Professor Dana Nicolay; Associate Professors Jennifer Pontius and Andy Noble; Assistant Professors Dionne Noble, Erin Reck, and Elijah Gibson; and Visiting Assistant Professor David Deveau.

American College Dance Association South-Central Region Conference (hosted by West Texas A&M in Canyon, Texas): funded travel for choreographer Elijah Gibson and cast of "We Are Greenwood" for adjudication.

ACDA National Conference at The Kennedy Center: Assistant Professor Gibson's work from the regional conference was selected for national presentation

Jacobs Pillow (Becket, MA): presentation of Gibson's work, selected with three other works from the National conference for inclusion on the Inside/Out program in August.

Supported Andy and Dionne Noble and David Deveau in their concert at Houston's Hobby Center by hiring guests to cover classes for two days in August.

Provided minimal funding plus space for Texas Dance Improv Festival, coordinated by Erin Reck. Reck also performed in the concert.

Supported Andy and Dionne Noble in their project for ABC's American Crime in October by hiring guest artists to cover classes in their absence.

Provided support through loan of costumes and equipment to Dana Nicolay for his company, Nicolay Danceworks, to perform an original, site specific version of The Nutcracker at the Wynne Home.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Improve plans for funding faculty

Action Description:

Researching opportunities and then applying for appropriate grants and external funding will become a standard expectation for faculty seeking support from the department. Faculty would not necessarily be denied departmental funding if they were not successful in receiving a grant.

Encourage faculty to collaborate with graduate students in projects so that they may be eligible for funding from the office of graduate studies.

Once department's AY16 budget from the college is known, compare to expenditures in AYs 14 and 15 across categories of scholarships, production expenses, advertising, etc., and determine whether some expenses might be pruned in order to provide more funds for faculty.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Direct, personal and ongoing contact with members of the dance faculty appears to be the most significant factor in recruitment for our program. Whether this comes from taking a master class from one of our faculty, or watching a performance featuring our students, these personal contacts are key to recruiting qualified and enthusiastic students to our programs. We will continue to support faculty travel for research and teaching and attempt to increase funding available for those projects. We believe the summer camp model will grow from its modest first year, and that this will be an excellent tool for recruitment--as well as for financing faculty and student endeavors throughout the year.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

In order to refine our recruitment efforts, we investigated how students learned about our program. An item was added in 2015 to the BFA audition form asking students how they heard about the dance department. Of 269 responses, 77 indicated "personal contact", with additional comments ranging from "teacher" (12), "friend/another student/alumni" (30). Other responses cited the website (109), audition flyers at their school (21); there was no mention of the advertisements the department places in Dance Magazine, though we recognize those ads may be more a factor for dance teachers for whom the ads may reinforce a positive impression of our program, leading to more referrals of their students to us. The other significant grouping of responses identified seeing dancers from SHSU in performance both on campus and at American College Dance Association (12). Our recruitment trips to high schools resulted in auditions by only 22 students, not including the twelve students who were offered admission directly at the events in Pittsburgh, Houston, and Dallas.

The faculty discussed the small number of students we recruited from fine arts high schools and the high school dance festival who followed through in seeking admission to SHSU. We identified the level of dance excellence that we can successfully recruit and will focus efforts on this group.

The growth of the Summer Dance Intensive from the first year (16 participants) to this summer (26) is a very satisfying development for recruitment. Getting students on campus to see what they can expect as college students appears to be a potent motivator.

Closing Summary

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Plans for AY16 informed by results from AY15 findings:

1. CONTINUE SUMMER CAMPS

Continue to invest resources in the Summer Dance Intensive Camp. After a second successful year of running the summer camps, the following benefits are confirmed:

A. Camps generated significant funds for scholarships and other departmental activities

In AY15, the camps netted \$6,000. In AY16, \$10,000. Goal for AY17 is at least \$10,000 after expenses.

B. Camps are potentially an excellent recruitment vehicle

We will track applications, auditions, and admissions to determine how many former campers apply for admission to the BFA program. We will add items to the on-line application form filled out by all auditioning students:

*Did you attend the department's Summer Dance Intensive?

*If so, in which year(s)?

This information can then be compiled by a staff member, along with records of those auditioning and attending the camps. Since the camp serves ages 13-18, the data must provide clear data regarding year at which the individual student would be applying for college.

2. TARGET "SECOND TIER" GROUP FOR RECRUITMENT

In AY15, we put more effort into recruiting the "second tier" students from elite schools. As of June 30, 2016, 47 students from performing arts schools were admitted to the department, of which 11 have gained admission to SHSU for fall. Final numbers of recruited students who will enroll in our department are not confirmed. After the fall semester begins, and we know what the true enrollment is, the faculty will assess whether the "second tier" strategy was successful.

3. DEVELOP RECRUITMENT PLAN FOR MFA PROGRAM

The department's focus on graduate recruitment has not been included in the assessment reports in recent years, largely due to success in consistently full cohorts of MFA candidates. Spurred by recommendations from a review of the graduate program by external reviewers conducted in Spring of 2016, the department will review recruitment for the MFA, with the goal of increasing enrollment of students receiving undergraduate education from schools other than SHSU, and students who have been out of school and in the profession for some period of time. Performances in off-campus venues appear to be effective recruitment largely at the graduate level. Students auditioning for the MFA cited seeing our students (current and alum) in performances and choreography by SHSU faculty and students as a primary reason they auditioned for our program. We have relied on these events, as well as personal contact with faculty and networking with faculty from other undergraduate institutions, to drive recruitment. We will examine the effectiveness of these strategies and determine how we can diversify our graduate student base.

4. REVISE SCHOLARSHIP DISBURSEMENT POLICY

The department will attempt to shift to a different strategy for distributing scholarship awards. Rather than award the majority of scholarships in the range of \$1,000-\$2,000, award 1-2 scholarships at a level of approximately \$4,000. This will likely result in fewer students receiving scholarships, and may thus create unintended negative consequences.

5. IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR FACULTY TRAVEL AND RESEARCH

- A. Establish the expectation that faculty seek out and apply for appropriate grants and external funding to fund travel and projects. Faculty will not necessarily be denied departmental funding if they are not successful in receiving a grant.
- B. Encourage faculty to collaborate with graduate students in projects so that they may be eligible for funding from the office of graduate studies.
- C. Continue to request support from the college, student services, graduate studies, etc, for prestigious opportunities for faculty and students.
- D. Once the department's AY16 budget from the college is known, compare to expenditures in AYs 14 and 15 across categories of scholarships, production expenses, advertising, etc., and determine whether some expenses might be pruned in order to provide more funds for faculty.

The data strongly indicate that personal contacts are the primary mode for successful recruitment of high quality dance students. Although we do not foresee increasing the total number of students in either the BFA or MFA programs, we have succeeded in recruiting students with greater skills, from a broader geographical base, and with a higher chance of achievement in the field.

The department will continue to fund faculty travel to fine arts schools in Dallas and Houston, giving those faculty authority to offer scholarships at the venue. McCallum High School in Austin has recently been identified as having an excellent dance program; contact has been initiated with staff there with plans for recruitment.

We will also continue to encourage faculty to accept residencies teaching master classes and creating choreography at these schools.

RELATED ITEMS
