

MAKING IT HAPPEN

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University

Why Change?

1. FULFILL THE UNIVERSITY MISSION

Mission of WestConn:

“to serve as an accessible, responsive, and creative intellectual resource for the people and institutions of Connecticut”

Why Change?

2. BUILD ON STRENGTHS

- WestConn offers the only MFA in CSU system
- NASM accreditation in Music
- Theatre production chosen for Kennedy Center competition
- Location—only about an hour away from major arts resources in New York City

Why Change?

3. MEET UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Increase visibility of arts programs
- Make arts more available to students and the
community
- Extend creative thinking beyond the arts

Challenges – Always There

- Academic history
 - Arts historically divided (2 schools)
 - Little precedent for collaboration
- University structure
 - Three schools (100 years)
 - Historic turf battles
- Comfort level

Learning from Experience

Five years ago . . .

Project Breakthrough

- Administrative idea
- Administrators/some faculty on committee
- Attempts at administrative implementation
- Early replacement by faculty counterproposal

Early Arts Planning at WestConn

- 1972 Planned move to new Westside campus,
including Arts complex
(Abandoned for lack of funding)
- 1995 Campus Master Plan recommendation
for Arts building on Westside
(Legislative approval but no funding)

Center for the Arts Planning Team 1999-2000

8-member team: 6 Arts faculty, 2 deans

Objectives: *Programs, Collaboration,
Outreach*

(no school – no building)

Features: Board of Directors, Events,
Fundraising

Proposal completed but not carried forward
(lacked campus support)

New Context: Strategic Planning Initiative 2000-2003

SWAT competitive analysis of Arts programs
Evidence of regional needs
Evidence of program strength
and opportunity at WestConn

Task Force on the Arts 2002-2004

12 member task force: 5 faculty, 5 directors,
1 dean, 1 Assoc. V.P.

Objectives: *Enrollment, Collaboration,
Outreach*

(3-5 year plan)

Recommendations:

- Establish School of Visual and Performing Arts
- Construct the long-anticipated Arts

New Context: Values and Vision at WestConn 2004-06

Presidential Planning Initiative Dr. James Schmutter

- 78 structured conversations with stakeholders
- 650+ individual participants
- Stakeholders Conference, March 2005

School of the Arts Action Team

2005-2006

- 9-member team: 6 faculty, 2 deans, 1 Assoc VP
- Objective: Formal proposal for new school
- Proposal completed January 2006

New school – 3 departments, 1 dean

Restructure university to include 4 schools

Renew advocacy for an Arts building

Commitment for implementation

SUCCESS!

June 15, 2006

CSU Board of Trustees approves a
School of Visual and Performing Arts
at Western Connecticut State University

Getting the School Started -- Fall 2006

- *Appointment of Founding Dean*
 - Assoc. V.P. who had chaired the Planning Team, the Task Force, and the Action Team
- *Appointment of Transition Team*
 - Same faculty as on Action Team:
Chair
 - plus additional member from each

Issues – First Year

- Representation on standing committees of the Senate.
- Budgets – Unchanged except for modest allocation to support the Dean's office.
- Arts building – Still unfunded.
Departments
still physically separated.

Outcomes – First Year

ART

Four major exhibitions—BA and MFA
(two in New York)

Outcomes – First Year

MUSIC

- More than 30 concerts and recitals
- 2 Operas
- 12th Annual Jazz Festival
- Exchange with SIAS University, China

Outcomes – First Year

THEATRE ARTS

- Three major productions – one at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Scotland
- New York Showcase – invitational for agents, producers

Assessment and Accreditation

First Year

- Assessment of student learning outcomes in
 - in every department (report to NEASC)
- CSU grant to Theatre for competitive assessment proposal
- Draft self-study for NASM reaccreditation completed by Music
- Art and Theatre begin preparation for NASAD and NAST accreditation

In the Wings . . .

- Community Advisory Board
- Partnerships with schools
- Collaborative programs with museums
- Collaboration with community organizations in the arts
- Workshops on creativity

BREAKTHROUGH!

November 13, 2007

Governor signs *CSUS 2020*

Major funding bill for CSU System

Top priority at WestConn
given to the long-awaited
Center for the Arts

What Worked?

- Rationale – Strategy – Support
- University governance
- Don't “break all the rules”
(Make the rules work for you)

HAPPY ENDING

IT CAN HAPPEN

PERSISTENCE – PERSISTENCE --
PERSISTENCE