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**Commission on  
Higher Education**

Rayburn Barton  
Executive Director

May 2, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Mr. Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

**From:** Ms. Dianne Chinnes, Chairman, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**Consideration of Follow-Up Report to Consultants' Evaluation of Existing Programs in Performing and Visual Arts, FY 1997: Clemson University and South Carolina State University**

**Background**

At its meeting on January 15, 2002, the Committee on Academic Affairs reviewed staff recommendations on the provisional approval status of programs in the visual and performing arts at Clemson University and South Carolina State University (please see **Attachment 1**). Staff recommendations concerned whether to remove provisional approval status from the Bachelor in Fine Arts (BFA) and Master in Fine Arts (MFA) in Visual Art at Clemson and the Bachelor of Arts in Art with a Concentration in Printmaking at South Carolina State. The staff based its recommendations on the evaluation of institutional follow-up reports submitted in response to a statewide program review of degree programs in the performing and visual arts. The program review report, written by a team of out-of-state consultants contracted by the Commission, was submitted to the agency in November 1997.

After extensive discussions at the January 15, 2002, meeting, Committee members decided to grant full approval status to the MFA in Fine Arts at Clemson while continuing the provisional approval status for the BFA at Clemson. Since no representatives from South Carolina State were present at the Committee meeting, the Committee voted to defer action on the Bachelor of Arts in Art with a Concentration in Printmaking at South Carolina State until the April 2002 Committee meeting. Subsequent to the January 15 meeting, Clemson repetedioned the Committee for consideration of removal of provisional approval status from the BFA program. Thus,

the following staff analyses refer to the BFA at Clemson University and to the Bachelor of Arts in Art at South Carolina State.

### **Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fine Arts, Clemson University**

The Commission consultant team's main concerns with the BFA at Clemson involved health and safety issues (particularly ventilation) in studio space, financial support for the program, and a need to update foundational aspects of the program's curriculum. The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), the official accrediting body for the BFA and MFA programs at Clemson, has echoed many of the same concerns lodged by CHE consultants. (At this time, neither the BFA nor the MFA has achieved accreditation through NASAD.)

In reaching its recommendation to continue provisional approval status for the BFA in January 2002, the Commission staff based its conclusions on information provided by Clemson during fall semester 2001. However, in March 2002, Clemson provided the staff with extensive information—coming in the form of a comprehensive follow-up report to NASAD—that seems to address in an adequate fashion the most significant consultant team and NASAD concerns. According to information provided to the Commission by the University, Clemson has moved the BFA into renovated space on campus that is now adequately ventilated, thus alleviating the health concerns the CHE consultant team and NASAD reviewers lodged. Likewise, Clemson has successfully hired a new faculty member to focus on foundation courses in the fine arts, a move which accompanies the University's revision of the foundation coursework for the BFA. In addition, there is evidence of private fundraising and internal reallocation of resources at Clemson in support of the program. While the University will still need to work assiduously to upgrade the overall viability and quality of the BFA, it is the Commission staff's belief, as supported by information submitted by Clemson in March 2002, that the program has made adequate strides to obtain full approval status.

### **Bachelor of Arts in Art with a Concentration in Printmaking, South Carolina State University**

The Commission's consultant team for visual and performing arts placed the Bachelor of Arts in Art with a Concentration in Printmaking on provisional approval mainly because of the severe limitations in its curriculum. With a central focus on printmaking, the consultant team felt that the program did not provide its majors or the University community with the breadth of study in the visual arts requisite for adequately preparing students. Additionally, the team cited the need for additional funding for the program, especially to underwrite arts supplies for students. The NASAD review team cited many of these same concerns in denying South Carolina State accreditation for the BA in Art.

Documents submitted to the Commission staff in February 2002 indicate that South Carolina State is making strides to address the chief problems lodged by the Commission consultant team and the NASAD team. Significantly, the University has recently filed a program planning summary with the Commission for modifying the existing curriculum of the BA in Art (printmaking) to add four additional concentrations. These new concentrations are ceramics/sculpture, digital media, drawing/painting, and photography. The expanded program would carry the title Bachelor of Arts in Studio Arts. The planning proposal outlines South Carolina State's intention to hire two additional faculty members to supplement current faculty in the program as well as new funding for equipment (\$120,000 over the first five years of implementation). There is also evidence that the University, through the Office of the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, has allocated \$2,000 per year to help defray supply costs for students enrolled in the program.

However, given that the proposed curricular modifications, which South Carolina State hopes to implement in August 2002, have yet to be approved by the Commission—the final proposal has not yet been submitted—the Commission staff believes that the Bachelor of Arts in Art with a Concentration in Printmaking should retain its provisional approval status. The staff also believes that this status should be changed to full approval contingent on the Commission's approval of the curricular modifications to the existing program outlined in South Carolina State's program planning summary, which would entail modification to a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Arts.

### **Recommendations**

1. The Committee recommends that the Commission grant full approval status for the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fine Arts at Clemson University.
2. The Committee recommends that the Commission grant the continuation of provisional approval status for the Bachelor of Arts in Art with a Concentration in Printmaking at South Carolina State University until the Commission approves the proposed expansion of the existing program, as outlined in the University's program planning summary. Upon Commission approval of the expanded program and its four new concentrations, the modified Bachelor of Arts in Studio Arts will be granted full approval status.



CAA  
01/15/02  
Agenda item 7.a

Rayburn Barton  
Executive Director

January 15, 2002

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Ms. Dianne Chinnes, Chairman, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**From:** Dr. Gail Morrison, Director of Academic Affairs and Licensing *G. Morrison*

**Consideration of Follow-up Report to Consultants' Evaluations of Existing Programs: Performing and Visual Arts Programs, FY 1997: Clemson University and South Carolina State University**

### Background

At its meeting on April 20, 1998, the Committee on Academic Affairs approved the CHE Consultants' Evaluation of Existing Programs in Visual and Performing Arts which was submitted to the Commission in November 1997. The report represented the findings of a team of four external consultants who reviewed during FY 1995 the existing programs at seven institutions.

The Commission's purposes in conducting these evaluations are:

- 1) to ensure that postsecondary opportunities of high quality are available to State residents and that the State's resources are used wisely in promotion of that end;
- 2) to improve educational effectiveness and strategic planning at the State level;
- 3) to guide the Commission and the public institutions in making decisions to continue or recommend discontinuation of existing program and in considering requests for new programs; and
- 4) to assist the Commission and the public institutions in strengthening programs to ensure that public higher education in South Carolina remains vigorous, dynamic, and capable of renewal.

This report provides a summary of actions taken by Clemson University and South Carolina State University with respect to the programs that were cited in the evaluation report as needing improvement and were granted Provisional rather than Full Approval. Provisional approval for Clemson University's Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts programs and SC State University's Bachelor of Art

program with a concentration in printmaking was granted by the Commission on May 7, 1998.

## **Clemson University's Progress Report Relating to CHE Recommendations**

### *B.F.A. in Fine Arts*

The Commission has been made aware by the University of its endeavors to attain accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). The NASAD Commission on Accreditation has twice reviewed Clemson's application (March 2000 and March 2001) and has twice deferred judgment until further information can be presented to the Commission. In its letter of May 8, 2001, the NASAD Commission commended Clemson "for the substantive progress made in bringing its programs into compliance with NASAD standards."

The CHE consultants recommended the following changes to the bachelor's program:

- Expand the mission of service to the entire university community from its more focused service to Architecture;
- Develop a university art gallery/museum;
- Expand studio space and equipment although these were deemed "adequate";
- Update outdated equipment, particularly in computers and ceramics;
- Address health and safety issues regarding studio space in particular for ventilation;
- Add faculty lines to broaden offerings in graphic design and art history;
- Allow non-art majors access to foundation studio courses and art history courses.

The NASAD Accreditation Commission correspondence with Clemson University echoes many of the same issues raised by the CHE consultants' report. In NASAD Commission's May 8, 2001, letter, there are four main areas of concerns:

- The Commission requests additional information concerning progress in strengthening the foundation courses for art majors. They requested additional evidence that the University was implementing a revised foundation curriculum and that all faculty taught in the foundation program;
- There was a request for the status of the faculty search to expand support in the foundation program;
- The Commission requested evidence that the University had completed all work to address health and safety issues in studio space used for ceramics, computer labs, painting, photography, printmaking and sculpture;
- A request for evidence that the University has the needed financial support to maintain tools and equipment. There were questions about the adequacy of the budget as it was dependent upon a variety of sources.

- The Commission requested a copy of the Department of Arts completed strategic plan.

The Department of Art is in the process of addressing its role on campus as it has developed a new mission statement and is completing a new strategic plan. Clemson has indicated that it will not have the Department of Art share courses with Architecture. In terms of a new art gallery/museum, the Friends of the Lee Gallery has been established and is working with the College of Architecture, Art, and Humanities to raise private funds for a new gallery and the department has expanded its exhibition programs.

Studio space was expanded by 5,000 square feet but renovations for health and safety issues have not been completed. The College will expand into Lowry Hall in 2005-06 once the new Textile/Civil Engineering Building is completed. However, there continues to be a shortage of space for the program, particularly with the increase in undergraduate enrollment in the program. In addition, the health and safety issues continue to be an area of great concern.

The Department of Art presented a report to the University's administration regarding the updating of equipment. The University indicated in its report to the Commission that due to a lack of funds it would not be possible to replace equipment at the rate requested by the department. The NASAD Commission letter also indicates that there is concern about the funding sources for replacement and repair of equipment.

The NASAD Commission letter of May 8, 2001, further indicates that there are remaining concerns about the foundations curriculum and faculty to support the program. In addition, it appears from this correspondence that the department is still in the process of making changes to the assessment process of its majors.

### *M.F.A. in Visual Arts*

As with the B.F.A. in Fine Arts, many of the issues raised by the CHE consultants are also raised by the NASAD Commission. The main areas of concern noted in the CHE consultants' report were as follows:

- The department of art needs to encourage greater experimentation by its graduate students and the curriculum needs more theory and criticism;
- The department needs to expand its visiting artists program to include artists outside the region;
- The library holdings needs expansion to promote critical thinking;
- Space is not adequate for graduate students and there is a particular need for larger graduate studios.

Although the May 26, 2000, report from the NASAD Commission listed five areas of concern regarding the M.F.A. program, the May 2001 report only cites two areas needing additional information:

- The department needs to provide evidence that all students meet the NASAD standard of a minimum of 15 percent of the total credit for the practice-oriented degree in academic studies concerned with visual media;
- The department was urged to examine the proposed title change for the program so that it accurately communicates what the specific content and purpose of the program is.

The University's report to the Commission indicated that graduate students are now provided with several courses that deal with both theory and practice in the visual arts and that there is more ongoing assessment of student progress. The report also noted that the department had expanded its visiting artist program to include national and international scholars, although no quantitative data were provided.

The University disputed the CHE consultants' report regarding library holdings by citing that the collection "appears to meet the minimum operational norms for accreditation by the NASAD." In terms of space, 1,000 square feet has been added in Martin Hall for graduate students in FY 2000 and an additional 5,000 square feet for graduate studios in spring 2001.

It appears from the Clemson University report and the two NASAD Accreditation reports that the Department of Art has made progress in addressing some of the concerns raised for the B.F.A. Fine Arts program. However, the most recent NASAD report indicates that there are still five areas of concern that focus on curriculum, financial support, and health and safety issues. With these issues still outstanding, particularly the health and safety concerns, and the program has not yet earned accreditation it does not appear to have resolved the issues raised in the Commission's consultants' report. The M.F.A., while still not accredited by NASAD, appears to have made greater progress in resolving the issues of the Commission's consultants' report. Compared to the NASAD's letter of May 26, 2000, which listed many of the same recommendations as the Commission's report, the May 8, 2001, letter only lists two areas of concern that deal with course taking in visual media and the name of the program. From this report, it appears that the prior issues in the graduate program have been addressed.

## South Carolina State University's Progress Report Relating to the Commission's Recommendations

### *B.A. Art concentration in Printmaking*

The CHE consultants' report made several recommendations for the B.A. in Art with a concentration in Printmaking. In addition, SCSU contracted with a consultant from NASAD to offer advice on the program as the institution moves towards seeking NASAD accreditation. Several of the same issues were raised in both reports.

The Commission's consultants' report indicated that the following areas should be addressed before provisional status could be removed:

- The department should expand to offer other areas of concentration beyond printmaking and art education. The program should carefully consider exploring mass communication design and technology;
- The department should explore inter-institutional collaborative programs, particularly with the Graphics Communication Program at Clemson University;
- The entire program should be re-structured to offer a balanced program, i.e., the focus of the program should be expanded to include areas such as graphic design, photography, painting, and sculpture;
- The University must support the program with adequate resources, especially with program expansion;
- A painting/drawing studio and a graphic design/computer studio need to be added;
- A new faculty member in graphic design/computer design should be added;
- The Stanback Museum should have a properly credentialed specialist to oversee its operation and support the art program;
- Hire female faculty to correct the gender imbalance;
- Provide funds for student art supplies;
- Develop a comprehensive recruitment program.

In September 1999, SCSU submitted a *Plan of Action* for the Art Program. In July 2000, SCSU submitted to the Commission the NASAD's consultant's report. The University indicated at that time that the Art Program would begin addressing the NASAD's report recommendations in Fall 2000. The University also committed \$30,000 for equipment for a Graphic Arts Program and financial support for student art supplies.

As with the Commission's consultants' report, there were several areas of concern noted in the NASAD's consultant's report:

- The art program is too narrowly focused and the department needs to expand into areas that would provide a critical mass of students;
- There are not enough majors to justify a successful program;

- A financial plan, both short and long-term, needs to be developed to adequately support a restructured art program;
- Expand the number of faculty to support the restructured program;
- Re-configure the structure of the new arts facility to allow for a separate woodshop area;
- Evaluate library holdings and develop an acquisitions plan. The current slide collection is well below the minimum of NASAD's standards;
- Develop promotional materials for admission and retention tools;
- Follow through with the *Plan of Action*.

Although SCSU has complete construction on its new arts building and has provided equipment support to develop a graphics communication program, the Commission has not received any program proposals to expand the art program to additional concentration areas. No Program Planning Summaries for the proposed concentrations in computer graphics, graphic design, and photography have been received. Without the expanded focus into additional concentrations, the art program at SCSU remains virtually the same as it was during the 1996 review, i.e., a program in printmaking. It is imperative that the University address the recommendations delineated in the Commission and NASAD's consultants' reports. Without expanding the focus, the program is not a viable one that will attract a sufficient number of students, nor, apparently, can it qualify for accreditation by NASAD.

### **Recommendation**

The staff recommends that that Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend to the Commission the following designations for the art programs at Clemson University and South Carolina State University:

B.F.A. Fine Arts, Clemson University	Provisional Approval Continued
M.F.A. Visual Art, Clemson University	Full Approval
B.A. Art, with a concentration in Printmaking S.C. State University	Provisional Approval Continued

As program enhancement are made, follow-up reports should be submitted to staff for re-evaluation and program approval status will be reconsidered in light of additional progress made.