1 April, 2018

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW BOARD

FOLLOW-UP TO 2013-2014 REVIEW OF THE CLAIRE TREVOR SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Per your request, here is a brief, item-by-item follow-up to the 2014 APRB Review of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts. Your letter of 15 February requests highlighted attention to four issues cited in the Review:

1. Deficits in staffing, maintenance, and facilities
2. Over-reliance on private funding
3. Inadequate graduate student funding
4. Lack of transparency in departmental funding formulas

Though in my original response of October, 2014, I listed a number (16) of concerns, a number of them overlapped: I consider your short list a good summary of those more detailed issues. I wish, therefore, to address these four here.

1. **Deficits in staffing, maintenance, and facilities**

   **Staff:** At the time of the Review, many CTSA staff had been let go or reduced as a result of the Recession. This reduction resulted in significant negative impacts on the School’s research and pedagogical missions and so became a top priority. As of the present I have restored all of the staff positions previously reduced or lost—though this means that School staff are now at 2008 levels, though the ambitions, and the faculty, of the Trevor School have both expanded significantly. That is, the “deficit,” though of a different nature now, continues to impact faculty and student work. The departments and the dean’s office continue to see staffing needs as a top priority.

   **Maintenance:** This issue was never properly clarified in the original Review, meaning that now, as then, it is difficult to respond to. Because many of our activities are potentially dangerous in nature, we pay particularly
close attention to safety issues and insist on the most stringent compliance with training procedures. I confidently report that no dangerous conditions pertain in the School.

Facilities: This remains an ongoing, chronic issue in the School. CTSA consists of extensive spaces many of which are of 1970s construction. We continue to apply for Small Cap support and have used the Tech funding options available to us but are perpetually concerned about upgrades (physical and technical) and facilities maintenance issues that remain in large part unaccomplished. Our new Advancement team and consider facilities enhancement a major goal.

2. Over-reliance on private funding

I assume that this item refers to Numbers 7 and 8 in my original response ( “Too-great reliance on ‘new private funding’ ” and “Unrealistic expectations for greater development within CTSA without new development resources” ). You will note in my response my bafflement at the language of the Review, which had only grown since then. What else are we to rely on for support, given the ever-reducing State support for UC (disproportionately for Arts and Humanities). It is only to private sources that we can turn to fulfill our mission. Toward this reality, CTSA has in recent months renewed its development team, with the support of Brian Hervey, Vice Chancellor for Advancement. In my double role at UCI (Dean of the Arts, Executive Director of the UCI Institute and Museum for California Art) I have been assigned a major development officer, Salvador Rivas, who is now also working with me to enhance support for the Trevor School. In addition, during the fall term, 2017, I let our previous development office go and have hired a new director of Development, Jana Cain, who has already (along with Sal Rivas) remade our development strategy and our public presentation portfolio. We have already begun to see positive results of this change. In addition, I have worked to re-define the Dean’s Arts Council, our premier leadership team, to ensure maximum involvement and support; this effort has also resulted in positive outcomes. We will continue to explore every avenue available to us to find the resources required to accomplish our goals.

3. Inadequate graduate student funding
This remains one of our most serious issues. The graduate student population in our four departments is very stable: its numbers increase or decrease by no more than one or two per year, given that each program taking graduate students has a clear set of goals, a minimum cohort for effective work, and required mentorship opportunities. Ironically, reduction in Arts undergraduate numbers since the Recession has meant that our undergrad class sizes have not significantly increased; thus, our current graduate student population is adequate to the task.

On the other hand, recent statistical calculations by Graduate Division indicate clearly that the Trevor School offers the lowest compensation to graduate students of any arts department or area in the UC system (by a margin). I am working with Grad Division and the Provost’s office to take steps to ameliorate this unacceptable situation. Despite this, however, the Trevor School continues to attract top students in Art, Dance, Drama, and Music from across the country—students eager to work with Arts faculty despite the financial hardship. The fact remains that each year we lose one or more top choices to programs able to support them appropriately. “Student Support” is a top priority for the near future.

4. Lack of transparency in departmental funding formulas

In the intervening period we have adopted a “full-disclosure” budgetary policy based on an agreed-upon formula of numbers and departmental, dean’s office, and campuswide priorities. Though support continues at this point to fall short of our desires and aspirations, it is no longer a topic of debate and potential discord.

One of the strategies I have adopted to correct the former concern is a program of bi-weekly one-on-one meetings with department chairs, and an added, more intimate “Academic Council” (dean and chairs only) meeting following our bi-weekly “Dean’s (Administrative) Council” (dean, chairs, associate and assistant dean, equity advisors) meeting, allowing department chairs the opportunity to discuss candidly all departmental issues, including budget, and to exchange information and suggestions regarding problem-solving and best practices.

This response includes relevant input from the departments and students. I am happy to report that some issues have moved forward since the review but distressed to report that some more chronic problems...
continue to plague the Arts. I will continue to give them my closest attention. Thank you for the opportunity to update the Board on Trevor School activities.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

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Claire Trevor Professor and Dean