



**Northern Illinois University
College of Visual and Performing Arts
Strategic Planning 2007-2008**

College of Visual and Performing Arts – Mission

The College of Visual and Performing Arts at NIU is a vibrant and active arts community consisting of a faculty of arts scholars and practitioners of national and international stature who engage a focused undergraduate and graduate student body recruited and retained for their capacities to explore, inquire, create, learn and take maximum advantage of faculty expertise. Together, faculty and students form a diverse and vibrant community dedicated to life-long learning whose collective activities accomplish the following through creation of, analysis of, and reflection on the arts:

For Arts Students

The pursuit and development of student strengths through curricular and co-curricular experiences built upon an understanding of both process and impact and guided by the needs of the arts professions

For Arts Students and Faculty

Creation, over time, of a summative body of work whose impact is recognized at the highest levels of the profession

For Arts Faculty

Exploration of diverse concepts and applications of the arts through individual effort and collegial interaction across the arts and other disciplines that elicits new modes of inquiry and practice

For All Students

Exploration and appreciation of the arts, especially their centrality and capacity to communicate the diversity of the human experience in unique ways through curricular and co-curricular experiences

For the Community at large

Partnering and programming at the local, regional, national and international level that enhances active student learning and faculty scholarship and artistry, resulting in outreach activities that enrich the lives of all citizens while showcasing the college and university.

Goal 1

**The College of Visual and Performing Arts will increase the capacity of its student body at all levels to explore, create, learn and take advantage of faculty expertise over the next five years.
(Imperative 1, CVPA Mission-Arts Students)**

The College of Visual and Performing Arts will, with the engagement of administration, faculty and staff, design and coordinate efforts to recruit and maintain a student body within the College that is increasingly more prepared to succeed academically and creatively. Each of the three Schools will embark on planning and implementation of workable and active recruiting programs and student-friendly yet vigorous and accountable advising programs to maximize retention and graduation rates. A broad spectrum of administrators, faculty and staff members will be responsible for specific roles in either or both of these programs.

Northern Illinois University continues to be strongly populated by students that often may be placed into one or more of the following categories: they are first-generation college students, they are transfer students, and/or their family home is likely in the Chicago metropolitan area. By concentrating recruitment efforts and specializing in advising procedures known to be successful to these populations, the College of Visual and Performing Arts will be well-positioned to succeed in this goal.

Additionally, the College of Visual and Performing Arts benefits from an active and strong out-of-state student population. These students come to us from throughout the United States and throughout the world. By utilizing personal and professional contacts already formed with faculty members and administrators in the College, we will initiate and engage in a more systematic approach to recruitment of students from throughout the world who will build on the vibrancy and academic successes of their predecessors.

National data are very clear on successful retention strategies, and one of the most significant is that students with greater academic success in high school will likely achieve greater academic success in college. While it is true the CVPA seeks to enroll students who demonstrate aptitude, experience and potential to develop their talents in the arts, it will be crucial to begin to consider admission of students by including academic achievement in the admission/audition/interview profile.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts has a long history of recruiting students, and we are proud of many of our accomplishments in this area. However, recent changes in the economy coupled with increased recruiting efforts by institutions with whom we compete for students make now the ideal time to reevaluate our recruiting and advising processes to continue to position the NIU CVPA as the regional and national leader it has been.

Nationally, enrollment in fine arts schools and colleges is flat or declining, including some institutions that enjoy greater general public awareness and/or operating budgets. Several notable Chicago-area institutions have greatly increased their recruiting budgets and efforts in recent years. At the same time, as an institution, Northern Illinois University has experienced a drop in graduation rates. Because of the recruiting programs the CVPA already has in place, and because of the advising programs we already employ, we are well-poised to make pertinent changes and updates in order to attract and enroll students with a greater likelihood of success and to assist those students more frequently and thoroughly as they progress through their academic career at NIU.

Goal 1 Champions: CVPA Dean and School Directors, specific college and school staff members, and several faculty members from each school

This will be a broad program of recruitment and advising that engages a majority of employees in the College. The strength of the programs lies in the basic tenet that our students will excel to their fullest if we recruit and enroll students who demonstrate the most potential for success and then work together as a community to assist those students, not only in the classroom, in fulfilling their artistic and academic goals, dreams and visions.

The recruiting portion of the goal will require that a large number of faculty members become and remain actively engaged in visitations to public schools, community colleges, other senior institutions, significant conferences in the field and recruitment fairs. The College of Visual and Performing Arts has utilized these recruiting methods for decades. However, participation has been restricted to a small number of administrators and faculty. With more administrators and faculty actively recruiting, the College will become even more of an invaluable resource to public school and community colleges in our region. As has been proven with prior recruiting visitations, this "friend-raising" will translate to more students who are interested in our programs and thus a student body that is more prepared to excel and take advantage of faculty expertise.

It will also be imperative that our faculty actively seek engagements at other senior institutions, not only to support their own creative and scholarly pursuits, but also to recruit graduate students. When undergraduates at other institutions become aware of the high level of excellence that our faculty members possess, they will be more likely to consider NIU for their graduate work.

In order to coordinate the recruitment visitations by the faculty, a staff member in the college will be hired whose primary responsibility will be to determine which schools, institutions and related events are most likely to prove fruitful to our efforts in enrolling students with the highest potential for artistic and academic excellence.

The advising portion of the program will be designed to provide more complete services to our students, retain more students at critical points and increase graduation rates. This will require additional advising staff be hired in order to institute a mandatory advising policy for students at all levels. The university's current advising practices and policies enable far too many students to avoid meeting with an advisor. Unfortunately, many of these students will not complete their degree in as timely a fashion as possible, and many will not complete their degree at all. In addition, we know that students with personal, academic and/or creative difficulties are likely to attempt to proceed through their college career while avoiding meeting with an advisor. Studies repeated show that early intervention reaps positive benefits. By requiring students to meet with trained advisors, we will be better able to identify students in need earlier in their time at NIU and refer them to the appropriate campus service(s) for the assistance they need.

The institution of the new PeopleSoft Student Information System provides us with the necessary technology to require all students to meet with an advisor before they are able to enroll in courses for the upcoming term. These advising sessions will be our opportunity to not only provide students with the best information possible regarding progression through their chosen curriculum, but also to identify, when necessary, which students need assistance and services through other NIU offices and departments.

In addition to these advising meetings, the College of Visual and Performing Arts faculty will provide additional services to our students relative to advising for careers. Several faculty members in our schools provide this service now, but it is not as widespread or complete a practice as it can and needs to be. Each school will produce a series of workshops, presented by NIU CVPA faculty members, designed to: aid students in choosing the degree program that is best suited to them; provide information about non-academic yet related activities that will serve the student well both during the college years as well as beyond; and inform students about resume and vita construction, career prospects, and the like.

Evaluations will be undertaken with the input of all students, staff, faculty and administrators involved in the program. As data and information become available via evaluation methods, The Dean and Directors will be responsible for analyzing data, communicating results with the faculty and staff, and making adjustments and changes to the programs when necessary.

Goal 1, Imperatives: The new College of Visual and Performing Arts recruiting and advising program will make a positive impact by advancing three of the four stated Strategic Planning Imperatives.

Preserve, strengthen, and extend NIU's teaching and learning environment

The new advising program will be designed to meet many needs of students outside of standard classroom practices. We believe our students will be well-served and better able to excel when they are exposed more frequently to staff and faculty. As many of the degree programs in the arts are not specifically a "job track" degree, there is a great deal of information our faculty and staff will better provide to our students to enable them to reach excellence creatively, academically, personally and professionally.

Strengthen and extend NIU's regional and global impact

By providing faculty visits to schools and institutions, our faculty will have the opportunity to present workshops and clinics to students throughout the region, the nation and the world. We believe that our faculty is not only as strong as, but stronger than faculty at institutions to whom NIU is frequently compared. Through the systematic and frequent placement of our faculty in schools and other higher education institutions to provide workshops, the CVPA will be truly extending its reputation and impact and that of the university.

Make NIU and institution of "First Choice" for faculty, students and staff

With faculty, staff and administrators engaged more frequently in both recruiting and advising practices, students will excel more frequently and in broader terms. As these students graduate, word of the strength of our faculty and staff will spread, thereby increasing the notoriety of the schools and the college, which will make NIU a first-choice institution for all. Prospective faculty will be interested in joining us because of the strong faculty-student engagement and level of student excellence, staff will want to be employed and retained because of the helpful atmosphere in the college and schools, and students will want to earn their degree at NIU due to the high-level of faculty and staff involvement.

Goal 1, Strategy 1: Create a college-wide unified recruitment program

a) Action steps:

The School of Music and the School of Theatre and Dance have employed active and successful recruiting programs for decades. The School of Art has curtailed its recruiting efforts in the past 8 years and is excited about the possibility of increasing its efforts and regaining its edge among institutions with whom we compete for students.

While the Schools of Music and Theatre and Dance have a long history of active student recruitment, the CVPA believes that more coordination and use of newer strategies and technologies will infuse needed vitality into our recruiting program and efforts, resulting in a student body that is better able to achieve high degrees of success both academically and creatively. The implementation of the new PeopleSoft Student Information System and accompanying admissions modules and mass email software programs allow for 21st-Century technology to be incorporated into any plan the CVPA designs.

The CVPA anticipates engaging a full-time staff member to coordinate and lead recruiting efforts for the entire college. In addition to the need for personnel funds to secure this position, funds for travel to high schools, colleges and universities, recruitment fairs and noted conferences as well as fund for the design, printing, producing and dissemination of print and electronic promotional materials will be required in order for the program to reach its full potential.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts envisions a program that is active through: faculty visits to high schools with noted arts programs to recruit first-year students, faculty visits to community colleges with noted arts programs to recruit transfer students, and faculty visits to universities and colleges with noted arts programs to recruit graduate students; faculty and staff exhibit booth representation at noted arts conferences; more active and assertive use of public relations methods to spread the word of the national and international successes of our faculty, alumni and students; electronic dissemination of news and noteworthy items to alumni, friends of the CVPA and all applicants to NIU who notate an intended degree in the arts; and support for faculty travel to more conferences of national and international prominence for attendees to witness first-hand the high quality of our faculty.

It is important to note that the College of Visual and Performing Arts is committed, through this strategy and others, to strengthening and maintaining the level and breadth of diversity of our student body. To that end, significant factors in designing a comprehensive recruiting program will be to target potential student populations as well as engage specific recruiting techniques that will enable the CVPA to ultimately attract, enroll, retain and graduate students that represent a truly diverse set of cultures and backgrounds.

b) Timeline:

Securing funding and hiring of a staff member to coordinate the recruiting processes will both be immediate. The Dean will be responsible for hiring the appropriate staff member. It is also imperative that we begin the study and discussion of the program's facets immediately. Within one year, the college and the schools will have succeeded in gaining faculty support and engagement in order for the program to reach its potential. Within 13 months we will have initiated the program.

c) Requisites:

In order for the program to succeed, the College of Visual and Performing Arts will require staff support, both in the form of a new employee to coordinate the program as well as one current staff member in each of the schools to take on the added responsibility of working with the program's coordinator. The program will require funding: to hire an additional full-time staff member, to support our efforts through electronic and print media, and to support faculty travel to distant institutions and conferences.

Meetings, both individually and in groups, will be conducted to gain faculty buy-in and input regarding the design

of the program. The level of faculty participation could be phased in over time.

It will be necessary during the study stage to conduct market research to determine from which schools prospective students will likely come. Additionally, the schools will need to identify their optimal student population by degree program, total size, and by creative, cultural, age and other diversity factors.

d) Rationale:

In order to increase the capacity of our student body to take full advantage of what our faculty has to offer, it is first necessary to recruit and enroll a student body that has demonstrated their ability to excel in this environment. In the words of Jim Collins in his landmark book “Good to Great,” we will be engaging in getting “the right people on the bus.” Regardless of the quality of our degree programs or faculty members, if we do not recruit students who are capable of high degrees of engagement and achievement we will not be as successful as our potential may be.

Goal 1, Strategy 2: The CVPA will increase its freshman to sophomore retention rate by 20%

a) Action steps:

As an institution, Northern Illinois University remains concerned about its retention rates. To this end, the university has engaged Retention Task Forces and Steering Committees over the years. Much of the data and information learned via the work of these groups leads the CVPA to believe a more pro-active approach to student advising coupled with an increase in student participation and engagement in university and college non-academic professional organizations will reap the desired benefits.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts endorses an advising program that is led by Undergraduate and Graduate Advisors in each of the three Schools, and supported by the work of Assistant Directors and Peer Advisors. Because of staffing changes over the years, it is necessary for the CVPA to increase the size of its advising staff to meet student demand and to increase the number of hours available for students to meet with an advisor. In addition, through a study of enrollment trends and initiation of best-practice advising methods, the CVPA plans to utilize a more pro-active approach to meeting regularly with students.

Numerous studies have shown that student participation in non-academic organizations is directly related to student satisfaction and retention. The CVPA will actively encourage students to participate more fully in student organizations as well as create additional opportunities for student engagement.

All too often students are not meeting with their assigned advisor, and increasingly students are viewing such appointments as merely to discuss their course work for the upcoming term. We know that more regular meetings with advisors enables students to identify potential academic, personal and health concerns earlier and thus university and professional services can be provided to students in need in a more regular and timely fashion.

b) Timeline:

The College of Visual and Performing Arts will achieve a 4% increase in retention per year for five years; we will need to increase the size of our advising staff within one year. The Dean, the Associate Dean, the school Directors and Assistant Directors will be responsible for overseeing advising staff, procedures and policies.

c) Requisites:

Review of enrollment trends, review of available student organizations, implementation of needed improvements to advising program, expected addition of advising staff member(s).

d) Rationale:

Once the student body has been recruited and enrolled, in order for them to be able to excel we must provide excellent services to them. Most importantly, this is done through academic advising and more frequent contact

with faculty members. By raising the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate, the CVPA will be creating an atmosphere more conducive to student success, thus enabling more students to reach their full potential.

Goal 1, Strategy 3: The CVPA will increase its five year graduation rate by 20%

a) Action steps:

In conjunction with advising processes and practices initiated which will aid in greater freshman to sophomore retention, similar steps are necessary to increase the College of Visual and Performing Arts graduation rate.

The three Schools within the CVPA traditionally have graduation rates at the nationwide norm. However, we firmly believe that our faculty members are above the national norm in terms of quality of teaching, service to the university and the profession, and creative and scholarly achievements. Through enacting a program in which faculty serve a more active role in advising and career guidance for our sophomore through upper division and graduate students, coupled with the changes we make to the academic advising structure of the College, we believe raising the graduation rate of the College is a realistic and attainable goal.

Nationally, the most common point in an undergraduate career for students in the arts to leave their native institution is following their sophomore year. At that point, students have been through, depending upon their discipline, a portfolio review, a sophomore competency, and/or other evaluative measures. Students who are not progressing as the faculty and program requirements demand will likely leave their native institution in search of another institution in which they can continue to major in their chosen field in the arts. While it is true that some students will change majors out of the arts and into, for example, a humanities or science major, the majority of arts students wish to remain in the arts. If they are not able to continue at their native institution, they will most likely seek enrollment elsewhere.

This presents a particular set of challenges to the CVPA. Certainly there will be students who continue to not meet expectations and degree requirements regardless of changes made to advising, curriculum, guidance, experiences, and so on. Regardless, the College of Visual and Performing Arts is dedicated to designing and implementing a program of direct faculty and staff “intervention” with such students before the end of the sophomore year and at any other time it’s believed necessary.

By engaging in early and frequent conversations with students in need of assistance, our faculty and staff will be providing an unusual level of service to our student body. While some students will continue to leave CVPA programs after the sophomore year, many others will have received the assistance they need in order to remain enrolled in their desired degree program at NIU.

b) Timeline:

The College of Visual and Performing Arts will achieve a 4% increase in graduation rates per year for five years, following the 3rd year of having implemented new recruiting and advising procedures. The Dean, the Associate Dean, the school Directors and Assistant Directors will be responsible for overseeing advising staff, procedures and policies.

c) Requisites:

The College will undertake a review of student retention data, and correlate retention practices with recruitment practices. In order to best serve the full student body there is potential for faculty or staff expansion or release time, both of which will impact budgeting.

d) Rationale:

Once the student body has been recruited and enrolled, in order for them to be able to excel we must provide excellent services to them. These services do not conclude after the sophomore year, and in fact, may expand during the student's final two years. Most importantly, this is done through academic advising and more frequent contact with faculty members. By raising the College's graduation rate, the CVPA will be creating a long-lasting identity which will help continue the cycle of enrolling students who are able to take advantage of faculty expertise to the fullest, helping them remain enrolled as our students, and helping them graduate with the degree of their choice, which helps our public relations efforts in recruiting more students.

Goal 1 Diversity

As noted earlier, it is important to note that the College of Visual and Performing Arts is committed, through these strategies and others, to strengthening and maintaining the level and breadth of diversity of our student body. To that end, significant factors in designing a comprehensive recruiting program will be to target potential student populations as well as engage specific recruiting techniques that will enable the CVPA to ultimately attract, enroll, retain and graduate students that represent a truly diverse set of cultures and backgrounds.

Goal 1 Evaluation Plan

a. Milestones:

Within three months the College will have hired a full-time staff member to coordinate our recruiting efforts. Within one year the College will have added additional advising staff and completed the design of the recruiting and advising processes. Within one year the college will have identified the optimal student enrollments in all of its disciplines and sub-specialties. Within two years the college will have implemented measures to achieve those optimal enrollments where they are not already met.

b. Performance Indicators:

Within 15 months the College will have initiated a program in which at least 6 faculty visits per school per semester have been made to public schools and community colleges. Within two years the College will have initiated a program in which at least 4 faculty visits per school per semester have been made to senior institutions nationally and internationally. Within three years the College will have achieved 50% progress toward full faculty engagement in both recruiting and advising. Within three years of the new advising program's initiation, the College will have achieved its first 4% increase in freshman-to-sophomore retention and graduation rate.

c. Summary Process:

The College will undertake a comparison of actual quantitative change with targeted change. We will also proceed with an evaluation by multiple faculty members of the qualitative improvement in the student body at all levels, as exhibited by individual and collective student curricular performance. In addition, we will conduct an evaluation by multiple faculty members of the qualitative improvement of required culminating experiences (performances, portfolios, student teaching, etc.). Finally, all students will evaluate the advising program annually. The Dean and Directors will be responsible for implementing program changes when necessary and possible.

Goal 1, Strategies 1 and 2, priority: Immediate

Goal 2

The College of Visual and Performing Arts will create a first choice environment for all members of the Northern Illinois University community, and for the public beyond the university campus. (CVPA mission – all students and the community at large and all imperatives with a focus on imperative 4)

The College of Visual and Performing Arts and its five units (the Schools of Art, Music, Theatre and Dance, the NIU Art Museum and the Office of External Programs which includes the Community School of the Arts) comprise a complex of arts programming and facilities that engages multiple communities in the arts. With an extensive array of performances, exhibitions, and learning opportunities, the college attracts members of the NIU community, DeKalb/Sycamore and the larger region. While having already established its impact on the quality of life for these multiple communities, the College seeks to find a more integrated and meaningful role with those communities for the future.

Research has shown that the arts have a positive impact both on perceived quality of life and on the economies in which they exist. The College believes that by establishing better integration of the activities generated by its component parts, it can increase its level of perceived and therefore real impact on the various communities it serves. The college has historically competed with major arts organizations in Chicago for audiences. This will likely continue in the future although the cost of commuting may become a factor in the decision people make as to where to spend their arts time. Integration can be improved in two ways: One, a more coordinated and focused approach to programming and marketing could likely improve communication with the public; and Two, a consideration of the artistic process as a consumable deliverable arts product beyond traditional learning environments should be considered. This could lead to a consideration of an overall framework that might color the college's arts output in any given academic year.

As a result, the college could begin to be seen as an "arts center" in concept if not physically. Achieving this goal would enhance the arts as a brand leader for NIU. Such a posture would include reviewing the barriers to constituencies engaging with the arts both on- and off-campus.

Goal 2 Champions: CVPA Dean and Senate members, all CVPA faculty and staff

All arts organizations have a need to communicate their activities to various audiences. The college is no exception and high quality public relations activities are generated by various staff from all units of the college. While these activities should continue, providing college level coordination would help realize the goal outlined above. Such coordination can at least be started within existing resources. The Dean and the college senate are the appropriate persons to provide such coordination. Communication with college faculty and staff concerning a coordinated approach to programming and public relations will be essential for success.

Goal 2 Imperatives

This goal most directly addresses imperative 4, but impacts all four imperatives.

Preserve, strengthen, and extend NIU's teaching and learning environment: The teaching and learning environment at NIU will be improved in many ways by the establishment of NIU as a first-class environment. An arts center approach by the College can offer integrated curricular and co-curricular activities both within the arts and with non-arts disciplines. Such activities have the potential to expand active learning and scholarly opportunities and make the institution more attractive to faculty generally.

Develop a strategy for investing in multidisciplinary scholarship and artistic clusters that complements NIU's focus on individual scholarly and artistic achievement: As stated above, an "arts center" focus holds great

potential to generate interdisciplinary work across multiple disciplines. While this work will likely not result in the establishment of clusters, it is in the spirit of the imperative.

Strengthen and extend NIU's regional and global impact: The college already enjoys "first choice" status in certain areas of its collective endeavors. An "arts center" programmatic focus has the potential to achieve economies of scale in both perception and reality within the region; that region being recognized as global in impact. Making the college and its programs the first choice for arts consumers will positively impact the first choice qualities of the institution generally.

Make NIU an institution of "first choice" for faculty, students, and staff: An "arts center" becomes a magnet for prospective faculty, students, and staff. When looking at an academic institution as a potential place to work or study, or looking at a community as a place to live, individuals will consider many factors, including the richness of the cultural offerings. The College and NIU stand to benefit by making this goal a reality.

Goal 2, Strategy 1 – The College of Visual and Performing Arts will foster interdisciplinary collaboration by faculty in their teaching and by faculty and students in related research/artistry activities. Such activities by their nature can best be realized by joining the methods and conceptual resources of the disciplines involved in the collaborative efforts.

Efforts such as these would involve individual faculty members collaborating with colleagues from other schools within the college or from departments beyond the college on specific projects. This could be a composer and a choreographer, a sculptor and a lighting designer, or a pianist and a historian creating scholarship that may be disseminated on multiple levels. The projects would ideally involve students and serve as an examination of the creative and scholarly processes involved, thereby enhancing the education and training of the students, and stretching the artistic boundaries of the faculty. THE COLLEGE STANDS READY TO COLLABORATE WITH THE TASK FORCE ON CURRICULAR INOVATION CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A THEMED YEAR CONCEPT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY, SPECIFICALLY AS SUCH COLLABORATION MIGHT IMPACT GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE OFFERINGS. ADDITIONALLY, THE COLLEGE STANDS READY TO COLLABORATE WITH THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES AND OTHER UNIVERSITY UNITS TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS IN THE AREA OF MEDIA STUDIES.

a) Action Steps:

Four interested representatives from each School (two faculty and two students) would initially participate in creating projects with the goal of increasing the participation by 400% over the following five years.

b) Timeline:

Five years

c) Requisites:

It is essential that, if a project of this nature is to flourish, the faculty and student accomplishments should be rewarded. For faculty this should include, but not be limited to, the annual evaluation process for merit and promotion and tenure. Students should be rewarded either by receiving academic credit for their participation, or specifically designated fellowships, scholarships or other mechanisms.

d) Rationale:

Completion of this strategy will help realize the Arts Center concept.

Goal 2, Strategy 1, Evaluation Plan

a. Milestones

Milestones would include: changes to bylaws in individual Schools to reflect the importance of these projects in

the annual personnel evaluation process, completion of a first group of programmatic initiatives that yield positive assessment results, especially as they might be tied to institutional themed-year initiatives.

b. Performance Indicators

The number of projects and, more specifically, the number of participants in these projects is the most quantifiable way to measure success. The expectation is for a 400% growth in the number of participants over the course of five years, with the original number of 12 (four from each School) growing to 48 by the fifth year. Additionally, a rubric must be created to assess the impact of interdisciplinary work on the overall goal of increasing the “first choice” reality through an “arts center” focus. Performance indicators might include audience growth, increased ticket revenue, increased donor support, and other indicators of heightened engagement with various constituencies.

c. Summary Process

At the conclusion of five years, the actual number of participants and the overall impact of their activities on the larger goal would be compared to the original plan. If results do not meet expectations, a reevaluation should take place in order to reexamine the strategy and the goal.

Goal 2, Strategy 1, Priority: Immediate

Goal 2, Strategy 2: *The CVPA faculty will establish or participate in a biennial curricular theme (e.g. social and political issues and the arts, spirituality and the arts) around which cross-disciplinary activities in engaged learning are oriented. This activity will be coordinated with any university-wide effort of a themed nature (see strategy 1 above).*

a) Action steps:

An Interdisciplinary Events Committee would be formed, selected by the Directors in consultation with the Dean from among interested faculty. The committee would be comprised of two members from each School, with staggered membership terms.

b) Timeline:

Year One: During the first year, the Committee would establish the subject for the first theme assuring that CVPA students and faculty have input. The Committee would identify themed event/s, organizational structure, and resource requirements for implementation.

Year Two: The College will implement the organizational structure designed in year 1. This might include but not be limited to engaging guest artists, preparing curricular materials, and developing thematically related programming.

Year Three –The first annual theme-driven events will occur, involving but not restricted to lectures, classes, plays, gallery shows, musical performances and dance productions. At the same time, the committee will meet to establish the next biennial theme.

Year Four: The cycle continues.

c) Requisites:

In order for the themed events to be meaningful to students, they should be integrated with classes. Curricular adjustments will be required. Additionally, gallery exhibitions, concerts, opera(s), plays, musicals, and lectures, would be coordinated with the annual theme. A budget will need to be developed and funded for the various curricular and co-curricular activities generated by such an effort.

d) Rationale:

Completion of this strategy will help realize the Arts Center concept.

Goal 2, Strategy 2, Evaluation Plan

a. Milestones

Year One: Successful creation of the six person faculty committee from Schools by end of fall semester of year one. By the end of the first year, the theme and plan will be agreed on.

b. Performance indicators

Attendance records, new curricular activities generated, research and creative activity generated, evidence through an established rubric of positive impact on the larger goal of establishing “first choice.”

Year Two: Implementation of planning begins and a schedule for year three is developed and disseminated

Year Three: The thematic events occur and are assessed.

Year Four: Assuming a successful outcome from year three, a new theme is established and the cycle continues.

c. Summary Process

At the close of the semester or year in which the themed event takes place, a team appointed by the Dean, including one member from each School in the CVPA, as well as two members from outside the College, will convene to evaluate the event/s. They will consider during their deliberations such factors as class enrollment, event attendance, public relations impact, opinions of participants and attendees, and other measures they may deem useful to evaluate the process and event. Their report will consider not only quantifiable data such as attendance and media coverage, but will evaluate the substance and quality of the entire event and its constituent parts.

Goal 2, Strategy 2, Priority: High. Strategy 2 requires a considerable level of time, effort, and funding.

Goal 2, Strategy 3: Creating an informational forum for cultural activities to facilitate university student and community knowledge of and participation as audience members in a diverse array of public presentations of the arts at NIU.

Any university invariably functions as a community. A university’s mission goes beyond teaching its students the specific information and skills associated with individual disciplines. That mission includes the nurturing of productive, vital, and responsible citizens and future leaders. No community is complete without a vital and vibrant arts presence. NIU’s arts offerings are substantial in both scope and depth. Creating an informational forum for cultural activities to facilitate university community knowledge of and participation as audience members in a diverse array of public presentations in the arts at NIU enhances the probability that the extensive arts offerings reach their intended audience.

a) Action steps:

Year One: Add coordinated publicity activities for all CVPA public presentations to the already substantial promotional actions undertaken by each of the academic and non-academic units within CVPA. The basic tools involved should include, but not be limited to, websites, traditional press releases, and unified ticketing systems. During the following four years, the marketing activities would grow and build on using the latest techniques and practices employed by the leading arts marketers in the country.

b) Timeline: Five years.

c) Requisites:

A project such as this would require some staffing support, possible graduate assistants, who can serve as both webmasters, copy editors, and – in the instance of online ticketing systems – box office personnel. Establishment of multiple box office locations around campus and the city of DeKalb would involve additional investments in infrastructure (computers, printers, etc.) and cooperation of host venues that would need to allow the presence of such stations.

d) Rationale:

Completion of this strategy will help realize the Arts Center concept.

Goal 2, Strategy 3, Evaluation Plan

a. Milestones

Completion of the requisites within two years. Preliminary evidence of positive impact through identified performance indicators.

b. Performance Indicators

Performance indicators include: an increase in the size of audience representation from both university community and the community at large, and a positive impact on “first choice” indicators.

c. Summary process

Both quantifiable and qualitative results will be examined. These include growth in audience size including overall numbers as well as sub-group representation, regular audience surveys designed to learn which communication methods achieve the greatest results and which prove ineffective, and impact on “first choice” indicators. Ongoing assessment of these activities would lead to continuous improvement to the marketing practices.

Goal 2, Strategy 3, Priority: Immediate

Goal 2, Strategy 4: Develop and promote campus and community outreach to create an arts/ life environment.

Faculty should be encouraged to participate in existing outreach opportunities, working to synthesize and strengthen programs that are in place. Outreach activities should become more deeply embedded in the culture of the College. Increased outreach activity in combination with increased interdisciplinary activity has the potential to create new expectations for arts programming and a heightened awareness of the contribution of the arts to overall community quality.

a) Action steps:

The college will develop, over a five year period, a process to expand its outreach by fifty percent with an expectation of 10 percent growth per year.

b) Timeline: Five years.

c) Requisites:

The following would need to be considered in order to effect a change in outreach:

1. The establishment of a baseline of current faculty outreach activities,
2. An inventory of faculty willing to become engaged
3. The creation of a reward system to provide incentives for faculty work that significantly benefits our communities.
4. The identification of activities/services being sought by the community
5. The establishment of a process for coordinating activities

d) Rationale:

Completion of this goal will help realize the Arts Center concept.

Goal 2, Strategy 4, Evaluation Plan

- a. Milestones: Milestones will include the completion of requisites and initiation of new activities on a pilot basis.
- b. Performance indicators: Performance indicators include: percentage increases in outreach activities, creation of incentives for faculty outreach activity, and a positive correlation between outreach activities and identified "first choice" indicators.
- c. Summary process
Both quantifiable and qualitative results will be examined to assess the strategy as to its impact on overall progress toward achieving "first choice" indicators.

Goal 2, Strategy 4 priority: High

Goal 2, Strategy 5: The College of Visual and Performing Arts will establish an exchange program for faculty and students with selected foreign educational institutions and cultural centers.

The exchange program envisioned in this strategy would identify specific educational or cultural institutions of similar size and complexity to the College of Visual & Performing Arts, in international locations, with which faculty and students from programs in the College could profitably be exchanged.

a) Action Steps:

Year One: Develop a process for identifying potential institutions. Investigate potential benchmark programs for best practices.

Year Two: Create a plan for implementation including funding. Assuming successful completion of year one actions, implement a pilot exchange. Assess the pilot exchange and decide next steps.

Year Three: The program expands or is suspended based on the results of year two.

b) Timeline: Three years.

c) Requisites:

Faculty and student time to undertake the identification of potential exchange sites and benchmark programs. Identification of funding sources.

d) Rationale:

Completion of this strategy will help realize the Arts Center concept.

Goal 2, Strategy 5, Evaluation Plan

a. Milestones:

1. The emergence of a critical mass of faculty and students willing to invest time on this strategy in year one.
2. Identification of funding.

b. Performance Indicators:

1. Faculty and student willingness to volunteer time
2. Success in identifying potential exchange sites and benchmark programs
3. Pilot exchange
4. Correlation of the above with "First Choice" indicators

c. Summary Process:

Assuming success, feedback data from participants would be compared with feedback from more focused, pre-existing exchange programs to assess cost/benefit and value added components. Survey data would also be gathered on "First Choice" indicators.

Goal 2, Strategy 5, Priority: High

Goal 2 Diversity

The NIU arts community does a superb job of bringing diversity of style, content and cultures, and historical and social perspectives. This is true both in terms of work produced and exhibited as well as the artists, in the broadest sense of the term, represented by that work. By achieving Goal 2, the College believes it can expand and enrich its contribution to the diversity of the community at large.

Supporting Documentation

The following are the individuals and units who have been made aware of the goals and strategies of this proposal and who commit to contribute to them in the manner indicated, and have considered the implications of their support: Dean Harold Kafer, and the members of the College Senate: associate dean Rich Holly, school directors Paul Bauer, Alex Gelman and Doug Boughton, museum director Jo Burke, and external programs director Deborah Booth.

Goal 3

Goal 3: The College will raise the profile of its faculty within the profession and society (CVPA mission, all imperatives)

Excellence in the arts is promoted by communities of artists and performers who work in dynamic and productive relationships. Typically high performing individuals with leadership skills can serve as a catalyst to generate exceptional contributions of artistry and research from colleagues working closely with them. These individuals model exemplary practice and directly instruct or mentor others from experience gained from a long history of well grounded research. The field of arts education is replete with examples of schools and communities of artists who have been galvanized by the leadership of outstanding intellectuals, researchers, or performers. The Bauhaus is one example from the visual arts founded by Walter Gropius who worked with gifted artists and designers to develop a coherent philosophy reflecting a new conception of the field.

The College believes that the effort to raise the profile of NIU faculty capable of producing world recognized research and artistry will require a coordinated strategy involving strategic hires and institutionalized mentoring programs. Establishment of NIU as an institution of first choice cannot occur without specific attention to the profile of its faculty. In a postmodern context the notion of discipline has been redefined such that traditional discipline boundaries have blurred. Contemporary artists and scholars need to be able to transcend the limits of their fields both in research and performance. Such individuals who work in interdisciplinary ways possess relatively rare epistemological insights and can offer significant contributions that can help move the arts at NIU to the forefront of research in the arts.

Specifically, the strategies discussed by the task force to improve its faculty profile include strategic hires, faculty mentoring, expansion of existing opportunities in a single arts discipline, across multiple arts disciplines, and expansion of guest artist activities.

Goal 3 Champions: CVPA Dean, School Directors, and CVPA faculty.

The Dean and School Directors will develop hiring priorities. Analysis of the strengths of faculty will be undertaken to determine the most appropriate profile for strategic hires. Consultation with faculty is also crucial to gain best input into the current state of research and performance in the arts.

Goal 3 Imperatives

This goal addresses all four imperatives with particular focus on imperatives 3 and 4.

Preserve, strengthen, and extend NIU's teaching and learning environment: The teaching and learning environment at NIU will be greatly strengthened by the addition of high performing artists and scholars to its faculty. The contribution of national and world leaders in several disciplines within the College of Visual and Performing Arts will offer learners new opportunities that would not otherwise be available to them. The network of academic and artistic contacts brought to the campus by these high performing faculty will expand learning and scholarly opportunities for both students and faculty.

Develop a strategy for investing in multidisciplinary scholarship and artistic clusters that complements NIU's focus on individual scholarly and artistic achievement: As stated above, artists and scholars who possess experience and insight sufficient to work effectively across disciplines are rare individuals. Without such faculty members to lead new initiatives the development of multidisciplinary scholarship is not likely to develop effectively.

Strengthen and extend NIU's regional and global impact. The College of Visual and Performing Arts already boasts some individual faculty with international reputations. Strategic hires will provide opportunities for individuals to work together in research teams and maximize their potential to contribute to their disciplines at a world-class level.

Make NIU an institution of "first choice" for faculty, students, and staff: It goes without saying that the reputation of an institution is built upon the reputation of its faculty. Scholars with international reputations attract attention from academics and students around the world. Any effort to enhance the reputation of faculty will increase its attractiveness for students and faculty alike.

Goal 3, Strategy 1: The CVPA will target high profile strategic faculty appointments (Leaders in the Discipline). Such appointments will be made with a view to establish or strengthen areas of academic excellence and to maximize the research/artistry potential of existing faculty.

a) Action steps:

All three schools within the College of Visual and Performing Arts boast some faculty who are making substantial and important contributions to their various fields. These individuals tend to work independently rather than in research/performance communities and systematic mentoring has not been institutionalized. The opportunity to generate a more coherent research/performance community likely to capture national and international attention will be greatly enhanced by targeted appointments who are qualified and committed to the development of such communities.

b) Timeline:

One such faculty hire in each of the three schools in the College of Visual and Performing Arts within three years

c) Requisites:

1. Faculty support of concept
2. Identification of individual school needs in relation to such a hire. Analysis of the research profiles of existing faculty who may benefit from these hires.
3. Funding support for competitive salaries. One possible strategy is to seek endowed chairs from benefactors.
4. Identification of high profile faculty hires who will commit to promoting NIU and mentoring colleagues.

d) Rationale:

While there is not as strong a tradition of coordinated and collaborative research in the arts as there is in the sciences, some excellent models can be found. Project Zero at Harvard, for example, demonstrates the potential of systematic arts-based research that can sustain over many years. While it is not the College's ambition to emulate the scale of Project Zero, the model could serve as the crucible to activate existing faculty potential.

Goal 3, Strategy 1, Evaluation Plan:

a. Milestones:

Within three years such hires will have been made for each of the three schools in the College of Visual and Performing Arts.

b. Performance Indicators:

1. Recognition of research and artistry activities of such hires. Documentation of the productivity of faculty hires and their mentees at the national and international level.
2. NIU recognized as a source of research and artistry activities of significance in the discipline. Documentation of consultancies and invited exhibitions, performances, and major presentations.
3. Recognition of research and artistry activities of NIU colleagues and students mentored by such hires. Increases in student recruitment from outside traditional feeder areas for the university.

c. Summary process:

Within five years research and artistry centers of significance will have attracted students, research grants, and consultancies or invited performances/exhibition/lectures nationally and overseas.

Quantitative analysis of recognition achieved at least in part due to the research and artistry and mentoring activities of such hires

Goal 3, Strategy 1, Priority: High

Goal 3, Strategy 2: Strategic hires will be selected not only on the basis of their anticipated continued high level individual contributions to their respective fields, but also for their potential mentorship for promising faculty. The CVPA will initiate formal mentoring programs for faculty.

a) Action Steps:

Mentoring strategies will be established within the college to guide the process of fostering interested faculty who wish to undertake collaborative work with key scholars hired for this purpose.

b) Timeline:

Immediate formation of a CVPA research and artistry mentoring council. Mentoring programs continued with annually reviewed activities through five years.

c) Requisites:

The success of this strategy will be dependent upon the development of effective mentoring structures that match mentors and mentees, and implementation of systematic oversight of the mentoring process within each school to ensure continued progress for participants. The following requisites should enable the implementation of an effective mentoring program.

1. Formation of CVPA research and artistry mentoring council, comprised of School Directors, the most professionally prominent and active faculty from all three CVPA schools, mentors (strategic hires)
2. Identification, by the mentoring council, of appropriate faculty to be mentored (both probationary and volunteers)

d) Rationale:

Successful mentoring will enhance overall faculty productivity and thus enhance collective faculty profile.

Goal 3, Strategy 2, Evaluation Plan

a. Milestones:

Within five years CVPA will realize higher research and artistry ratings on annual merit evaluation of mentored faculty and an increase in the number of significant activities for probationary faculty as a class, as well as the volunteers

b. Performance Indicators:

1. External recognition of research and artistry activities by mentored faculty. It is expected that mentored faculty would demonstrate increased research/artistic activity and success in obtaining research grants and other support
2. Positive impact on annual merit evaluation for participation by mentors on council

c. Summary process:

Examination of actual quantitative change in research and artistry ratings on annual merit evaluation of mentored faculty and the number of significant activities for probationary faculty as a class, as well as the volunteers

Goal 3, Strategy 2, Priority: High

Goal 3, Strategy 3: The CVPA will establish interstate and international partnerships with high profile institutions in the visual and performing arts.

a) Action steps:

Identify existing relationships within the college units and consider expansion. Establish criteria for identifying new partnerships.

b) Timeline:

Immediate inquiries/outreach and continuing with annually reviewed activities over five years

c) Requisites:

1. Formation of a committee comprised of the most professionally prominent and active faculty from each of the three schools in the College of Visual and Performing Arts
2. Identification of NIU faculty whose research and artistry activities would be of greatest interest to potential collaborators
3. Identification of potential collaborators at high profile institutions
4. Resource support for collaboration – travel, materials, event hosting, etc.
5. Positive impact on annual merit evaluation for participation by mentors on the committee

d) Rationale:

Establishing focused partnerships built on mutual strength will enhance profile and positively affect all other college goals.

Goal 3, Strategy 3, Evaluation Plan

a. Milestones:

Within five years each of the three schools in the CVPA will recognize multiple annual inter-institutional research and artistry activities of significance

b. Performance Indicators:

Increase in inter-institutional research and artistry activities of significance

c. Summary process:

Examination of actual quantitative change in significance and number inter-institutional research and artistry activities in each of the three schools in the CVPA

Goal 3, Strategy 3, Priority: High

Priority: one-time funding requests for 2008-2009

To begin the implementation of its strategic plan, the College of Visual and Performing Arts requests funding for the following initial projects to be undertaken during the 2008-2009 academic year:

- **Development of a college-wide student recruitment model** – the college proposed assembling a three person team representative of the three academic schools in the college to undertake the development of a comprehensive student recruitment model for both undergraduate and graduate students. The team would examine both internal best practice and external benchmark programs to produce a set of recommended activities by late spring 2009. The team, coordinated by the associate dean, could be comprised of faculty, staff, or alumni each of whom would require either release time or stipend, and travel support.

Estimated budget

Course release/stipend for the academic year for a team of 3	\$21,000
Travel support	\$15,000
Total	\$36,000

- **Investigation of benchmark themed-year programs with a special emphasis on general education** – The College proposes appointing a faculty member familiar with university structure in general, and general education in specific, to investigate benchmark themed-year programs during the 2008-2009 academic year. The purpose of this investigation would be to identify and codify successful programs as to their systems and processes, historical development, funding and assessments. A report and recommendations for next steps would be produced by late spring 2009. This faculty member could function independently or in conjunction with any larger effort undertaken by the task force on curricular innovation. The faculty member would require release time or a stipend and travel support.

Estimated budget

Course release/stipend for the academic year	\$ 7,000
Travel support	\$ 5,000
Total	\$12,000

- **Investigate the reinstatement of a “Fine Arts Series” at NIU** – the college proposes to investigate the reasons leading to the demise of the “Fine Arts Series” at NIU, examine successful programs at institutions similar to NIU both in size and scope and geographic location, and recommend strategies for reinstating such a series at NIU. This will require course release and/or stipend support for a faculty member.

Estimated budget

Course release/stipend for the academic year	\$ 7,000
Total	\$ 7,000