



Campus Visit Summary
North Carolina School of the Arts

Campus Visit Date: May 22, 2007

Brief Overview

Established by the 1963 General Assembly as a residential public institution for training in the performing arts, the North Carolina School of the Arts trains talented students from high school to graduate school for professional careers in the performing, visual, and film and television arts. Students are admitted by audition or interview to the Schools of Dance, Design & Production, Drama, Filmmaking, and Music. Students study with resident master teachers who have had successful careers in the arts and who remain active in their professions. The association of gifted students and artist-teachers creates a diverse and challenging environment for study and performance. The arts and academic curricula culminate in a high school diploma with arts concentration in dance, drama, music, and visual arts; the arts diploma at the college level in dance, design & production, drama, and music; baccalaureate degrees in dance, design & production, drama, filmmaking, and music; master's degrees in design & production, film music composition, and music; and the Professional Artists Certificate in music. The North Carolina School of the Arts is committed to equality of educational opportunity.

NCSA is situated between the two I-40s, at the apex of the Southeast Gateway on sixty-seven acres in southeastern Winston-Salem (population: 191,000), a city with a growing technology and medical sector, nationally recognized for its support of the arts.

- Total Enrollment Fall 2006: 1136
- High School Enrollment Fall 2006: 291
 - 210 in-state / 81 out-state
 - 89% White, 5% Black, 4% Hispanic, 2% Asian
 - 63.5% female / 36.5% male
- Undergraduate Enrollment Fall 2006: 727
 - 324 in-state / 403 out-state
 - 82% White, 8% Black, 3% Asian, 7% other
 - 42% female, 58% male
- Graduate Enrollment Fall 2006: 118
 - 57 in-state / 61 out-state
 - 77% White, 3% Black, 3% Hispanic, 3% Asian, 14% other
 - 48% female / 52% male

Campus' definition of its "region"

Given its unique mission as a performing arts conservatory, the NCSA has a statewide focus; a number of its artistic performances positively impact the Piedmont Triad region and other regions of the state.

Current responses to regional and statewide needs

The campus highlighted the following programs and initiatives as representative of its efforts to meet regional and state wide needs:

- School of Design and Production – provides “real world” training for students in performing arts design and production (stage management, scene design, lighting design, sound design, costuming and wig making, make-up, etc.). Programs are constantly adapted to respond to current industry trends.
 - *Masters in Fine Arts* graduate programs – new Performing Arts Management program educates students in management, leadership, finance, legal issues, producing, advertising, and other areas related to high-level management in the arts and entertainment industry (D.H. Pink wrote in an article entitled “Breakthrough Ideas for 2004” in the February 2004 edition of the Harvard Business Review that “the MFA is the new MBA” because of its emphasis on soft skills.). Other Design and Production MFA programs include Stage Automation, Costume Design, Costume Technology, Set Design, Technical Direction, Stage Properties, Scenic Painting, Wig and Makeup Design, and Sound Design. The NCSA School of Filmmaking offers a MFA in Film Music Composition and the School of Music offers Masters of Music with concentrations in composition and performance.
 - 95% to 99% job placement rate before students graduate from both undergraduate and graduate tracks in the School of Design and Production

- Community Performances – NCSA conducts a number of touring performances and community outreach programs, including:
 - *Touring programs* in instrumental music, opera, dance, and dramatic performances
 - *Open Dream Ensemble* made up of NCSA alumni performs in 46 public schools in the region (reaching 14,000 students)
 - *Artists Reaching Children in the Hospital (ARCH)* program involves NCSA high school residential students performing for and interacting with children patients at Brenner Children’s Hospital
 - *NC Thespian Society Annual Conference* is sponsored by NCSA to bring 300-350 dance and drama students and teachers to the campus for workshops and performances
 - *Roanoke Island Summer Performances* – 70 performances each season at Roanoke Island Festival Park, reaching approx. 13,300 audience members
 - *Magnolia Baroque Festival* is community festival linked with Old Salem and Salem College, attracting 1200 audience members
 - *Women and the Arts Conference* (focusing on women artists) had 200 participants
 - *Kenan Writers Encounters* draws average audience of 300

- *In-school music programs* – students and faculty visit 20-30 public and private schools providing music programs
 - *Community Music School* – offers private and group music classes
 - *PLUCK Project* – student-directed modern dance program performs for community audiences
 - *Fletcher Opera Institute* – provides education and introduction to opera by visiting 30 elementary schools per year
 - *Preparatory Dance Program* – dance classes offered to elementary and middle school students in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools
 - *Wonderful Wednesdays* – NCSA high school students visit Special Children’s School weekly to incorporate arts education in education of 120 special needs children
 - *Stevens Center* – NCSA’s performing arts center is the primary performing arts venue in Winston-Salem, and is home to the Winston-Salem Symphony, Piedmont Opera Theatre, and the NC Shakespeare Festival’s annual “A Christmas Carol”.
- *Economic Development* – A new UNC interinstitutional center established in 2005, the Center for Design Innovation (CDI) is being developed jointly with Winston-Salem State University and Forsyth Technical Community College. The CDI will involve interdisciplinary research, entrepreneurship, and educational programming related to design and innovation.

The Center aims to accelerate the growth of creative industries in the Piedmont Triad by developing new businesses, creating new jobs, and helping to educate the knowledge-economy workforce. CDI contributors will use and create advance computer technologies for entertainment, education, the life and health sciences, and product design and marketing. Industry people will partner with academic researchers to develop the ideas and projects.

The schools are working with architects to design a 33,000 sq ft State-funded permanent facility, scheduled to open in 2009 in the Piedmont Triad Research Park. The building will include specialized facilities for motion capture, computer animation, large-scale photography, and rapid prototyping.

With support from the Golden Leaf Foundation, collaborators are developing initial programs in an interim facility in downtown Winston-Salem. The efforts include various grant proposals and a weekly discussion forum of design-related topics ranging broadly across disciplines and sectors.

- Kenan Institute for the Arts – the Institute supports a number of outreach programs, including:
 - *Open Dream Ensemble* (described above in Community Performances section)

- *Performing Arts Fellowships* – provide opportunities for recent graduates and emerging artists to work and study at world class arts organizations (Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Penland School of Crafts) to further refine their artistic and business skills in preparation for successful careers in the arts.
- *Magnolia Baroque Festival* (described above in Community Performances section)
- *Digital Arts Symposium and Exposition* – The symposium is designed to build awareness in the Triad and demonstrate the economic development and entrepreneurial potential of the arts and design. It exposes attendees to leading-edge exploration at the intersection of the arts and science and to diverse collaborations that yield innovative ideas. The symposium’s target audiences are artists, designers, students, faculty, and business leaders.
- *Internet2 Performing Arts Forum* – internet based real-time audio/visual interaction between NCSA School of Music and other music schools (Manhattan School of Music, New World Symphony, North Western University, and University of Michigan)

Methods of identifying and incorporating regional and statewide needs into academic mission

- The “real world” educational approach of the school drives need for community performances to enhance academic instruction, thus producing outreach opportunities.
- NCSA leadership learn of community cultural enrichment needs and respond through performance and programs in response to stated needs – examples of such programs include the Community Music School, Kenan Writers Encounter, Magnolia Baroque Festival, and the Women and the Arts Conference (*there appears to be only a limited non-comprehensive method for identifying such needs and opportunities*).
- Chancellor has launched “Vision: 2020” long-range strategic planning process, through which additional input on needs can be received and incorporated into the School’s programs.

Teaching Innovations (soft skills development, experiential learning, etc.)

- NCSA’s original mission is to meet the changing needs of both the professional arts world and the cultural needs of the Piedmont Region, the state of North Carolina, the US and even the world.

- “Vision 2020” – Chancellor Mauceri’s plan for the University, stresses the concept of developing the whole artist.
- Thus, NCSA seeks to be responsive to the need for change in the professional arts and the entertainment industry by continually assessing its programs, determining what changes are needed to existing curricula and ascertaining what new programs will better enable the school to fulfill its mission.
- Through service and experiential learning, many NCSA students actually provide the soft skills development to middle and high school students across the state of North Carolina.
 - NCSA sponsors a number of programs that bring performances in the arts to schools and other venues. NCSA’s touring programs reach several thousand students each year, including instrumental music, opera, dance and dramatic performances.
- NCSA programs generally:
 - Operate in a simulated real-world working environment
 - Facilities and equipment parallel state-of-the-art, real world conditions
 - Adapt and respond to real-world industry trends
 - Include opportunities for professional internships for students recruited early for their talents
 - Provide international experience
 - Prague Quadrennial – world’s largest scenographic exhibition

Enrollment growth – General/Special Populations

The North Carolina School of the Arts recognizes its need to expand both its in-state enrollment and its minority enrollment. One of the major barriers they encounter is the lack of arts background and training in many of North Carolina’s public schools. NCSA is a conservatory and admission is determined by audition and interview. Increasingly the school finds that while students in some regions of the state have the necessary background training to audition successfully, there are other regions of the state in which students gain the necessary training only if their parents can afford it. This in turn creates and perpetuates a situation in which both the arts and NCSA are seen as out of reach and out of touch.

- Reaching out to young students in minority and rural schools through K-12 interactive program to both instill passion for the arts and to create a new pipeline that may not currently exist.

Faculty Issues

- Faculty hired are often accomplished artists and industry professionals – this presents a need for professional development to assist artists and professionals in

transitioning into academic setting (developing curriculum, teaching skills, assessment techniques, etc.); NCSA currently has no funding to develop a teaching and learning center for faculty.

- In order to maintain credibility among peers, faculty must continue professional artistic work, which presents challenges in time management while faculty also fulfill academic and service duties (there is no funding or system for sabbaticals for faculty to continue professional development).

External Communications

- Beyond traditional advertising of NCSA performances and advertising for recruitment of students, there is no comprehensive communications program designed to raise awareness of the NCSA and to educate the public on the school's benefits to the region and state.

Barriers and Challenges facing the campus

- *Declining k-12 emphasis on arts in NC public schools* – results in less North Carolina students being qualified for admission to NCSA; NCSA recognizes the need to increase in-state enrollment, but must also maintain excellence in student quality given its mission (admission is determined by audition and interview).
- *Minority student enrollment* – due to lack of scholarships, highly talented minority students are recruited successfully by competing conservatories (NCSA undergraduate student body is 8% African American, 3% Asian, 7% other and 82% non-minority); NCSA recognizes the need to increase minority student enrollment; the Open Dream Ensemble and other outreach programs provide an opportunity to generate minority student recruitment.
- *Limited alumni communications and outreach* – the campus recently began efforts to build an alumni database; lack of a comprehensive alumni program hinders opportunities for fundraising and increased awareness of and support for the School's programs.
- *Lack of funding for new degree programs* – because of NCSA's small student population, it has difficulty establishing new degree programs through funding models based on enrollment.
- *Retention* – student internships in the industry can become full-time job offers and do tempt a few students to leave NCSA prior to graduation.
- *Limited funding for graduate fellowships and assistantships* – Over 25 percent of terminal degree students in the School of Design and Production (75+ students) do not receive fellowship or assistantship funding. The many universities that

compete with the NCSA offer full tuition and fee waivers with large stipends. Because of this, some of the best talent does not participate in NCSA terminal degree programs.

Opportunities

- *Increased outreach in K-12* – with declining emphasis in arts education in North Carolina public schools, NCSA has an opportunity to increase outreach providing K-12 arts programs; Internet2 program could be expanded to include K-12 schools with comparable internet capability (or access to such).
- *Relevance of arts education* – increased need among employers for workers with soft skills (communication, creativity, critical thinking, teamwork and collaboration, problem solving, etc.) provides opportunity for NCSA to highlight relevance of performing arts and arts education in developing soft skills among students.
- *Assisting arts organizations in North Carolina* – Components of NCSA’s MFA Performing Arts Management program could be offered as workshops, master classes or online to nonprofits and regional theaters/performing arts organizations to increase artistic, technology, management, and leadership skills of the staff of such organizations.
- *Telling our story* – Developing a comprehensive communications program will help the school build support among legislators, the business community, and the general public especially outside of Winston-Salem. It will also help the NCSA connect with alumni, potential new students, potential new faculty, and new audience members, with a special emphasis on reaching minorities.