

Listening Session 4 Thematic Summary

Date and time: October 3, 2016, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Venue: Gaylord Hall, Colorado College

Attendees: 70

1. Accessibility

It is wonderful that local artists have access to perform in the FAC professional theatre company productions and to have their artwork displayed in gallery exhibitions (sometime in galleries that combine local and non-local art). The Bemis School of Arts is very accessible to locals- both children and senior citizens (as a destination for retirees). There is a fear that the class fees for Bemis will be increased as it partners with CC whose classes cost thousands. There is a fear that making the FAC too academic would decrease its accessibility to the general public. On the other hand, it would increase accessibility to make Bemis classes free for economically disadvantaged individuals. But maybe nothing in the museum should be free because whether or not people pay for access to the FAC demonstrates cultural relevance or lack thereof (“canary in the coal mine” analogy).

2. Outreach

The FAC should reach out to more diverse populations. Examples of “risk-taking” in outreach that resulted in attendance by more diverse constituencies included the hip hop performance and the Andy Warhol exhibit. The FAC should employ more creative outreach e.g. the Go Van Go program from the Dallas Art Museum taking art out into the streets. CC drama students in the past performed plays for local students- this could be an outreach strategy for the new alliance. Lastly, the FAC should be more of a community space.

3. The Importance of the FAC People - Staff and Donors

The FAC employs wonderful people who should be considered the its most valuable asset. To name numbers from last year: 87 performers, 30 musicians, and 75 designers and technicians. It is also extremely important that the FAC continues to develop deep and meaningful relationships with its donors as it continues to bear the responsibility of being a steward of so many donations. Relationship building and stewarding existing relationships with donors, patrons and other supporters is key to the future of the CSFAC at CC. There is also need to keep a focus on fundraising for the mission and the strategic initiatives that are developed in the plan.

4. Make the FAC a Destination

Colorado Springs residents don’t focus on the arts. The FAC (and the art scene in general) must move from the margins to the center of cultural relevancy. The FAC should aspire to be the #1 Trip Advisor destination in Colorado Springs. The FAC should also market itself to be more a part of downtown Colorado Springs

5. The FAC Facilities

The FAC has some very special space should be used in more innovative ways. An example is the Deco Lounge. One attendee pointed out that the Bemis School of Art needs to get new table covers.

6. Programming

The Taylor Collection of Southwest art should be given more emphasis in the museum’s galleries. The programming should be more interdisciplinary (an example is the hip hop performance).

Number of Comments: 35