



**BU Arts Initiative  
2013/2014 Annual Report  
Submitted by Ty A. Furman  
Managing Director  
August 5, 2014**

## Summary of Successes

In the first full year of its existence the BU Arts Initiative is proud to have built positive relationships with deans, directors, faculty, and staff on campus, and with arts leaders, activists, and funders off campus. The Arts Initiative secured our first grant of \$10,000 from the New England Foundation for the Arts to support the spring 2015 signature program, and we look forward to building upon the success of jazz artist Dee Dee Bridgewater's two-day residency at BU this spring. The Arts Initiative succeeded in raising the visibility, not just of our program, but of the arts in general at BU; as one faculty member noted, "It always helps our attendance when you announce in the BU Arts Initiative newsletter". Our grants program awarded more than \$23,500 to 20 different faculty, staff, and student arts projects and ten non-arts courses to add arts components, all of which engaged nearly 2,000 individuals in arts programming throughout this academic year. The Arts Initiative presented or co-presented a dozen different events, launched the new web site, and continued to increase our direct access to the BU and broader community through our weekly email and social media.

## Arts at BU by the Numbers 2013-2014

In an effort to begin to measure student arts participation, the BU Arts Initiative asked colleagues across campus to report their best estimates for participation in their programs this year. In addition, online calendars were reviewed, and data from student, colleague and Arts Initiative use of eventbrite.com and the uniscan application (used with mini iPads as students enter an event) was gathered. Below are the results. (Unless otherwise noted, these numbers can include duplicates - meaning one student attending multiple events.)

- The best estimate is that this year over **1,000** arts events, programs, and student organizations drew audiences and participants of more than **66,000** students
- Student arts programs and performances drew more than **12,500** audience members this year
- More than **21,000** students took advantage of BU memberships at the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Museum of Fine Arts, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
- More than **5,700** individual students took an arts class this year
- More than **1,900** people attended events that were partially funded by Arts Initiative grants
- Over **1,000** non-CFA students took classes in CFA
- Arts Initiative programs drew approximately **1,000** student participants
- Over **400** students participated in all campus bands

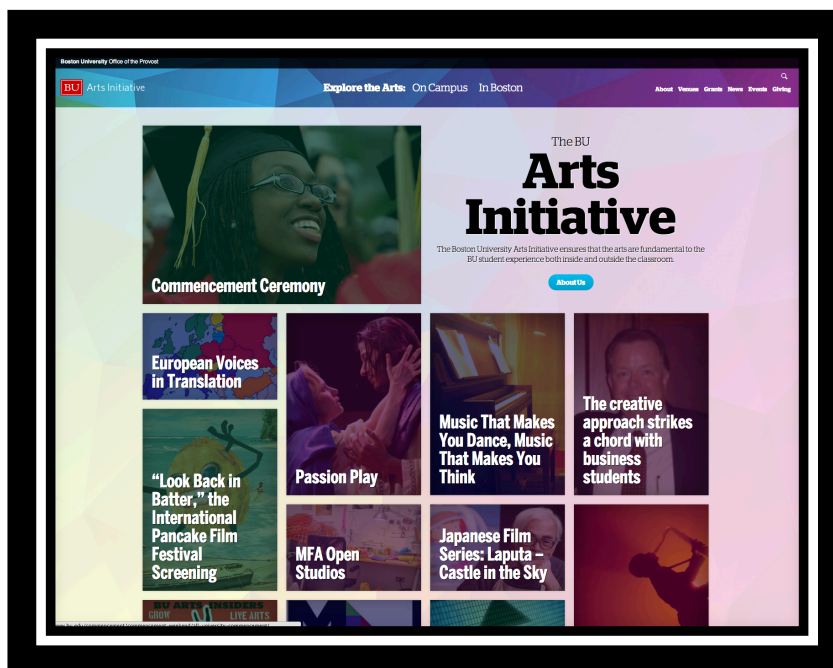
## Visibility

Throughout the year the Arts Initiative is always on the lookout for opportunities to increase the visibility of the arts and our office to the BU community. The following events, which occurred early in the academic year, provided great opportunities to connect with

students with branded items (pens, id wallets, Sharpees), Boston Symphony Orchestra Cards, and the opportunity to sign up for our weekly email:

- Orientation Receptions
- SPLASH
- First Day of Classes at GSU Plaza

Within the first few weeks of the academic year the Arts Initiative distributed more than 600 free Boston Symphony Orchestra College Cards to individual students. Packages of cards were also delivered to the College of Fine Arts, the information desk at the GSU, and all three schools on the Medical Campus. The Arts Initiative held a reception every Friday afternoon in the George Sherman Gallery during the 2013 summer orientation sessions. At that time the Arts Initiative gave away a great deal of promotional materials and Arts Initiative staff spoke to many students about the arts at BU. Our staff also had the opportunity to speak to first year classes in individual schools and other programs including Engineering, Sargent, and the West Campus Resident Assistants. In April, the Arts Initiative participated in the Admissions Open Houses by holding a reception at the Gallery in the George Sherman Union every Friday.



Our new **web site** (bu.edu/arts) launched on October 13, 2013. Since then, various pages of the site have collectively been viewed nearly 18,000 times.

Through event registrations and individual shares, our **weekly email** highlighting on campus arts events experienced steady growth throughout this academic year. The list now has over 3600 recipients.

In the spring of 2014 the Arts Initiative developed a colorful

4x8 postcard that will introduce new faculty and staff to the Arts Initiative. This card will be included in the new faculty and staff orientation packets.

Arts Initiative **social media** has more than tripled since we took over the accounts. There are now more than 1,000 followers on Facebook, more than 900 followers on Twitter, and more than 70 followers on Instagram (this account is only a couple of months old).

## Key Programs

### Arts Crawl

On Friday, September 20, 2013 the Arts Initiative organized the first ever BU Arts Crawl from 11 am to 10 pm. The Arts Crawl was designed to give academic and affiliated programs the opportunity to showcase their programming and mechanisms for student participation throughout the year. The visibility for the crawl was great. The event was covered by BU Today - <http://www.bu.edu/today/2013/performing-visual-arts-take-center-stage-today/>

And the Daily Free Press - <http://dailyfreepress.com/2013/09/23/first-ever-arts-crawl-takes-over-comm-ave-engages-students/>

The Managing Director of the BU Arts Initiative was also interviewed by WTBU, the student radio station, on the day of the event. The BU Arts Crawl went very well and according to individual event reports there were more than 300 student participants, including more than 80 who attended the after party at 808 Gallery with student band HALL OF MIRRORS.

### Grants

During the 2013-2014 academic year, in two grant cycles, the Arts Initiative gave out more than \$23,500 for projects that directly engage students in the arts either through integrating the arts into a non-arts course (\$4,950 for 10 courses) or through projects run by faculty, staff and students outside of the classroom (\$18,605 for 20 programs). Projects included the Global Lunchtime Concert Series (Ethnomusicology), Wagner in Context (Music), Performing Northern Ireland (CGS), Israeli playwright Savyon Liebrecht (Boston Playwrights' Theatre), and art with children in India (SPH). Together our grant funded projects and courses engaged more than 1,900 people in arts activity this past year.



The Arts Initiative also provided financial and organizational support to the School of Visual Arts for the laser installation by Florian Dombois during the 2013 TransCultural Exchange international conference hosted at BU on October 10-12, 2013. Press coverage for that installation and conference included BU Today, Big Red & Shiny, Boston.Com, The Metro, Boston Magazine, BostInno, Edge Boston, Sculpture.org, Artandeducation.net, The Boston Art Commission ([publicartboston.com](http://publicartboston.com)) and more.

### Signature Events

For fiscal year 2014 the BU Arts Initiative produced one Signature Event, a concert and master class with Grammy and Tony winning jazz artist **Dee Dee Bridgewater** on March 20 and 21. Ms. Bridgewater was presented as a part of a conference held by the African American Studies program entitled *African American Music in World Culture: Art as Refuge*



*& Strength in the Struggle for Freedom.* The performance and master class were both free to conference goers and the entire BU community, including alumni. BU Today published a very nice [article](#) on the day of the event. At the start of the concert there were 515 people registered (maximum capacity for the Tsai Center) and 80 on the wait list. All told, over 400 attended the concert, 82 of which were students (180 students had registered). In addition, the Arts Initiative was able to track attendance of the following: 17 BU staff members, 33 faculty members, 10 alumni, and 54 conference goers. While this represents only approximately half of the audience attendance, it is a good start for our tracking mechanisms. The master class on the 21<sup>st</sup> drew just over 30 students, faculty, staff, and conference goers.



## Partnerships

**Medical Campus** – The Arts Initiative provided financial support to the College of Fine Arts to support the position of Director of the Medical Campus Arts Outreach program. Other financial supporters included the College of Fine Arts, the School of Medicine, and the Boston University Medical Center. Throughout the year 118 College of Fine Arts students performed in the medical center and more than 100 Medical Campus students were engaged through

musical study breaks and a musical flash mob (pictured) commemorating the Boston Marathon Bombings.

**SHA** – The Arts Initiative partnered with the Dean of the School of Hospitality Administration providing them \$1000 and assistance in selecting arts events for their students to attend and an expert to have dinner with them in advance to discuss what they would see. This year they hosted three events with eight students attending each.

**CEIT** - On November 12 the Arts Initiative co-hosted a CEIT conversation with faculty on the interdisciplinary use of the School of Theatre's production of the play *MONSTER* by Neil Bell. This was an effort to showcase best practices in interdisciplinary and cross-school collaborations. Participating faculty spoke about the collaboration, which included the development of the performance, its presentation at the School of Management, its filming by the College of Communications Film and Television Department, and the presentation of the film followed by discussion at the School of Public Health. While the attendance was low (only 8 faculty participated) the conversation was lively.

**Arts Now CAS Writing Courses** – Through support from the BU Arts Initiative, the Arts Now CAS writing courses were able to increase the number of courses offered, and thus increase direct student access to the arts at BU and in Boston. Each Arts Now writing course uses a particular arts medium as the source material for writing assignments. The BU Arts Initiative supported the Arts Now writing courses by purchasing the necessary

tickets for the theatre performances, just over \$5000 worth. This year saw a 12% increase in student enrollment in Arts Now courses over last year (30 more students) 252 vs. 222. This was accomplished in part through the addition of two sections of a new course, Museums Now in the spring of 2014 that enrolled 22 students and an additional section each semester of Poetry Now that in total enrolled 38 students.

**UROP** – The BU Arts Initiative provided an arts summer research scholarship through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program. This year’s award went to Cecilia Weddel ’15, a comparative literature major, who will be doing research on films about the Mexican Revolution.

## **Other Events the Arts Initiative sponsored or co-sponsored**

- 9/27 – 10/14 Celebrity Series Street Pianos – BU hosted three (2 on the Charles River Campus and 1 on the Med Campus) of 75 artist decorated pianos that were distributed around the Boston area to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Celebrity Series of Boston
- January 18 – Martha Graham Cracker Drag Cabaret with BU Central – over 100 in attendance 92 undergraduate and graduate students
- April 4 – Senior cocktail reception at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum – 200 Seniors
- April 24 - Sustainable Art Contest with *sustainability@BU* on earth day – 8 students created art
- Arts Insiders – 29 students attended campus arts events hosted by our graduate assistant or one of our student advisory council members
- April 15 - BU Flash Mob at the Medical Campus – the Arts Initiative paid for the music (copyrighted). 50 plus students, faculty, staff and patients participated

## **Tracking Student Participation**

This year the Arts Initiative began an attempt to track student attendance at arts events on campus. Because virtually all events, except student group performances, are free to the BU community very little tracking has been done in the past. With Eventbrite.com and the uniscan app the Arts Initiative began to track student attendance at some key events this year. The Arts Initiative also now requests arts course enrollment data from the registrar’s office each semester. Through continued attention to tracking student participation, we hope to get a better picture of student engagement in the arts at BU. There are gaps in our current information which include:

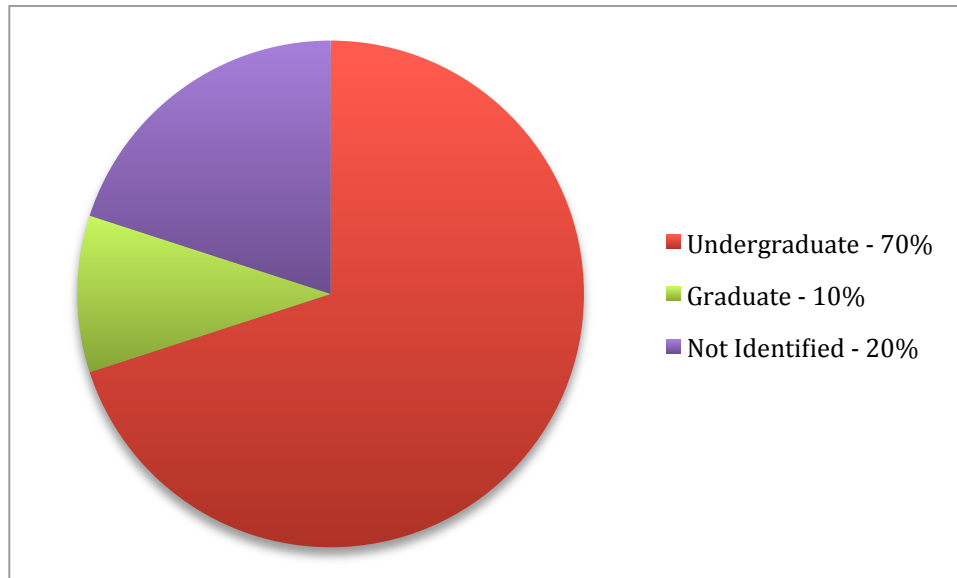
- Attendance data from a number of events, including but not limited, to those of many academic programs
- Data that does not distinguish BU students from other attendees
- Rich data that accounts for individuals engaging the arts through multiple avenues

- Student attendance not captured either because of human or application error. For instance, it is known that more students attended the BU symphony orchestra than were captured

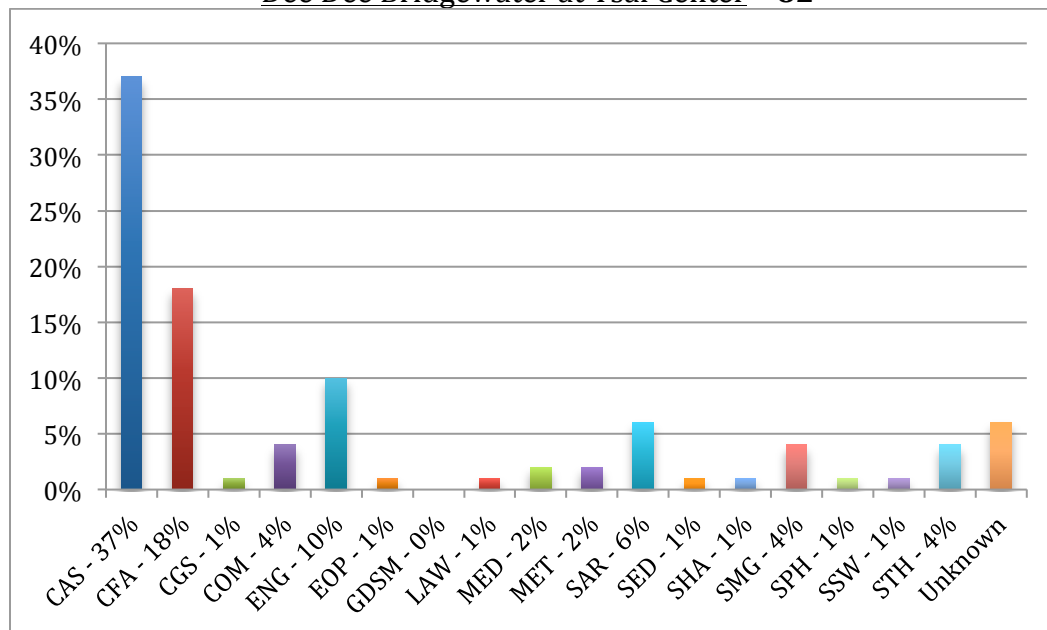
**The Arts Initiative has detailed student data for the following four events.**

For each event one graph will be shared. Additional demographic information on these events can be found in appendix A.

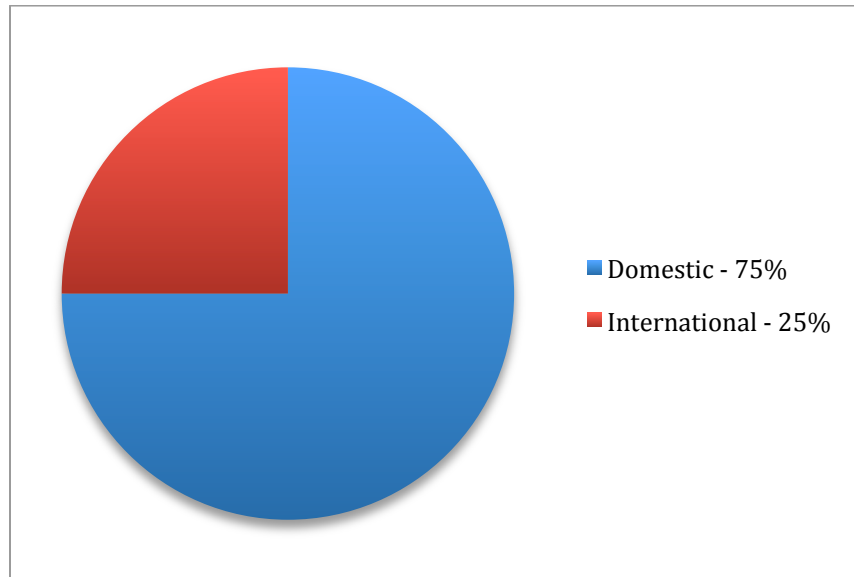
**Martha Graham Cracker – Drag Cabaret at BU Central – 92**



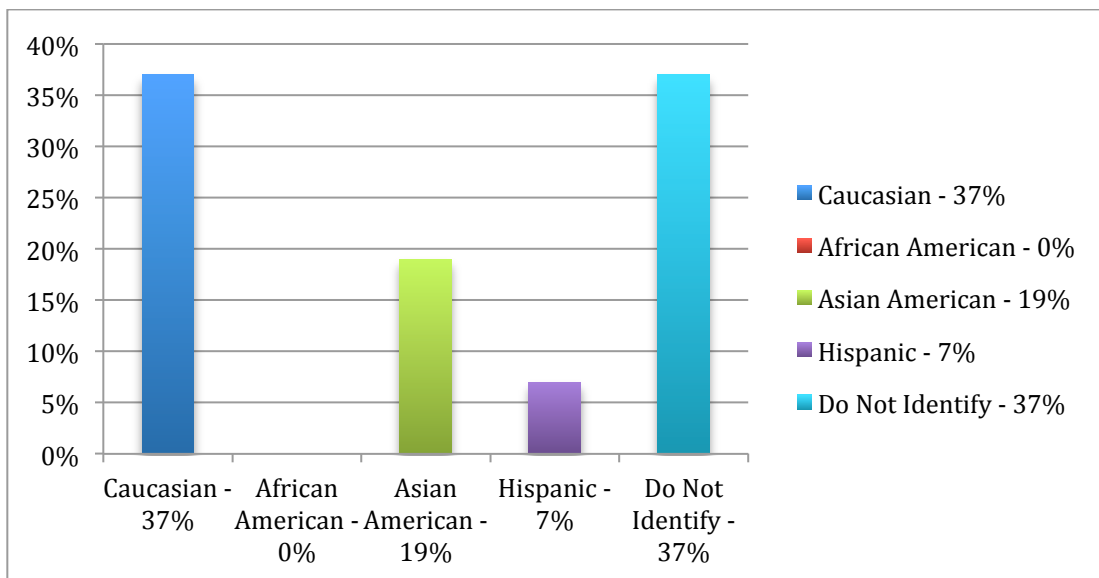
**Dee Dee Bridgewater at Tsai Center – 82**



Symphony Orchestra – Fall – 40



Symphony Orchestra – Spring – 52





**Below is a sample of other events for which the Arts Initiative have only numbers**

Dee Dee Bridgewater master class - **30**

Senior Gardner Event- **200**

Course Info – fall – **3,906** individuals

Course Info – spring – **4,392** individuals

OSA info (members and show info)

Arts Initiative Grant supported events – **1,923**

*Musical Marathon* – 60

*Bach II Funk* – 300

*Wagner in Context* – 250

*Latin America, Africa, and the Arts* – 230

*CELOP Mural* – 22

*Art Exploration* – 30

*Israeli Playwright Seminar* – 30

*Israeli Playwright Lecture* – 70

*Israeli Playwright Reading* – 125

*Herbert Gentry Exhibition* – 410

*Jose Luis Sert Exhibition* – 1

*CFA Showcase Lectures* – 36

*Tracing the Gothic* – 30

*Literary Magazine* – 25

*Music and Neuroscience Lectures* – 200

*Petrarch Poems* – 16

*Gibson House Museum Trip* – 70

*Blanchard Project* – 18

*Global Music* - 225

Arts Insiders – 29

Med Campus Arts Outreach - **118**

SHA Arts Initiative– **24**

Galleries – **1,126 (Fall 2013 info only)**

CFA numbers – **10,150**

Student Activities Arts Events – **12,585**

**BSO** – 4,200 BSO tickets were dispersed this year to BU students. In addition, the BSO distributed over 6,000 general college tickets, some of which could be BU students who did not register their cards. This year in particular the Arts Initiative asked students to register their cards when they received them so that the BSO could track when they were used. In 2012-2013 the BSO was only able to track about 500 uses of the cards.

**MFA** – 14,408 students attended the MFA this year. This is a slight drop (75) from last year.

**Gardner** – 2,825 students attended the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. For the months that the Arts Initiative have on record of fiscal year 2013 (November through April), that is a 31% increase. This means that the Arts Initiative paid the Gardner Museum approximately \$1.77 per student.

## Civic Networking

Throughout the year, Managing Director, Ty Furman had the opportunity to represent Boston University and build relationships with arts leaders throughout the Boston community. Those connections were mostly through events hosted by the Barr Foundation or MassCreative, a statewide arts advocacy organization of which the Arts Initiative is now a member. Below is a list of such events:

- Fiddlehead Theatre and Strand Press Event
- Boston mayoral candidates forum
- Barr Foundation – Cultural Planning session
- Mayor’s Town Hall – Arts meeting
- ProArts Forum - Role of Arts Colleges in the Arts Ecology of Boston (Arts Council faculty member Charles Merzbacher also attended)
- Arts Transition Team Forum at the Boston Public Library, at which I was able to speak

As a result of attending these events and networking, Furman was invited to join a panel to review grant proposals for the **Boston Public School Arts Expansion Initiative**; he met personally with San San Wong, the Arts Program Director at the **Barr Foundation** and Javier Torres at **The Boston Foundation** to discuss their foundation’s role in the arts and the role of BU in the arts landscape of the city; was invited to be part of a small team of arts leaders to meet with **independent gubernatorial candidate Jeffrey McCormick** and **democratic gubernatorial candidate Don Berwick**; met a number of times with a senior staff member for **Speakeasy Stage Company** to develop an ongoing relationship that would give BU students preferential and affordable access to their performances; and met with Ross Bresler (Director of the **ProArts Consortium**) to explore the possibility of collecting and reviewing data to help us better understand why arts students do or do not stay in Boston and what resources might increase the percentage of those who stay. These connections and conversations in addition to those of arts faculty and other BU arts leaders, Boston University continues to establish itself as a university that has prioritized the arts, and is a willing partner in the development of a cultural plan for the city, and advocating for artists and their role in Boston.

## Other Progress

### NEFA Grant

In April the Arts Initiative was notified that we received a \$10,000 grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) to support the five-day residency of the Nile Project in March of 2015. Egyptian ethnomusicologist Mina Girgis and Ethiopian American singer Meklit Hadero conceived the Nile Project in 2011. Their mission is to use music to "educate, inspire, and empower the citizens of the Nile basin to foster the sustainability of the Nile River's ecosystem." In a personal conversation with a NEFA employee, it was noted that the BU Arts Initiative application was the best application they received for that project.

**Facility Inventories**

More than 16 interviews with over 20 faculty and staff were conducted about arts space on campus. In addition, residence life staff completed a short survey about arts space in their buildings, and student arts leaders completed a survey about their space needs. The Arts Initiative expects to finish transcribing the interviews and extracting some preliminary conclusions by the end of 2014.

**Arts Council**

The Arts Council remains a key support group for the work the Arts Initiative is doing. This year they worked to solidify a vision for the future including developing more visible resources on arts courses, recommendations for advancing the integration of the arts into to the curriculum (see appendix B), and exploring ways to support arts research.

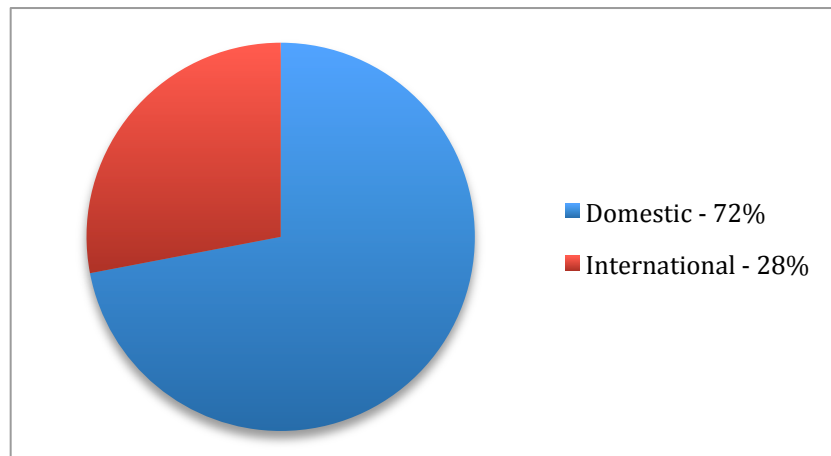
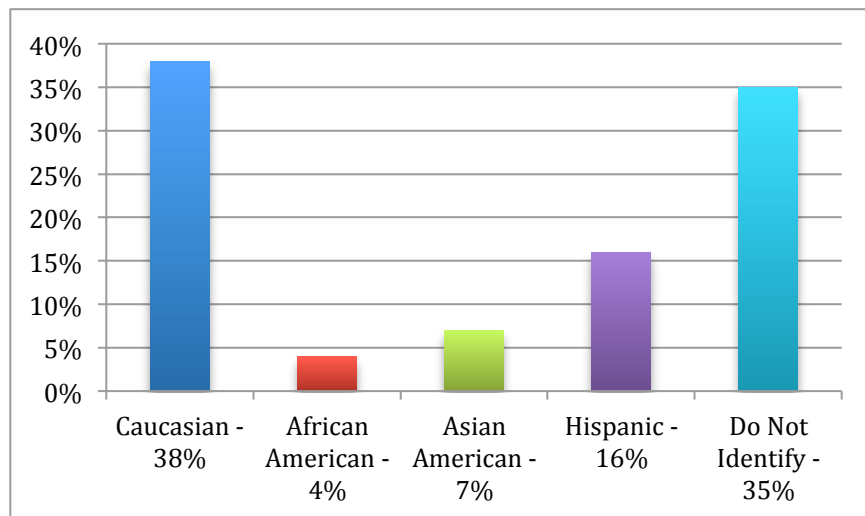
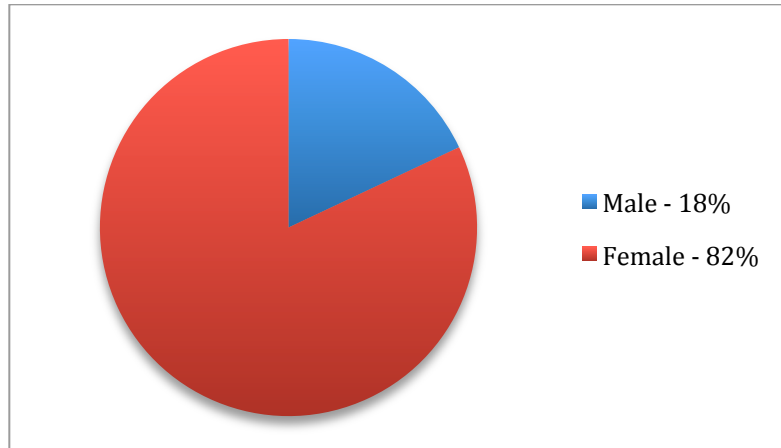
**Student Advisory Council**

Our student council, which included more than 20 graduate and undergraduate students, was somewhat successful this year. Only about eight students were actively involved, but those students were tremendously helpful in assisting us with spreading the word for events, assisting with the Arts Insiders program by planning and hosting events, assisting us at public events like the Arts Crawl and orientation receptions, and planning for a student gallery on the second floor of the GSU. In the future, the Student Advisory Council will be divided into subcommittees for specific program work, including Arts Insiders, marketing, and a possible student gallery in the GSU.

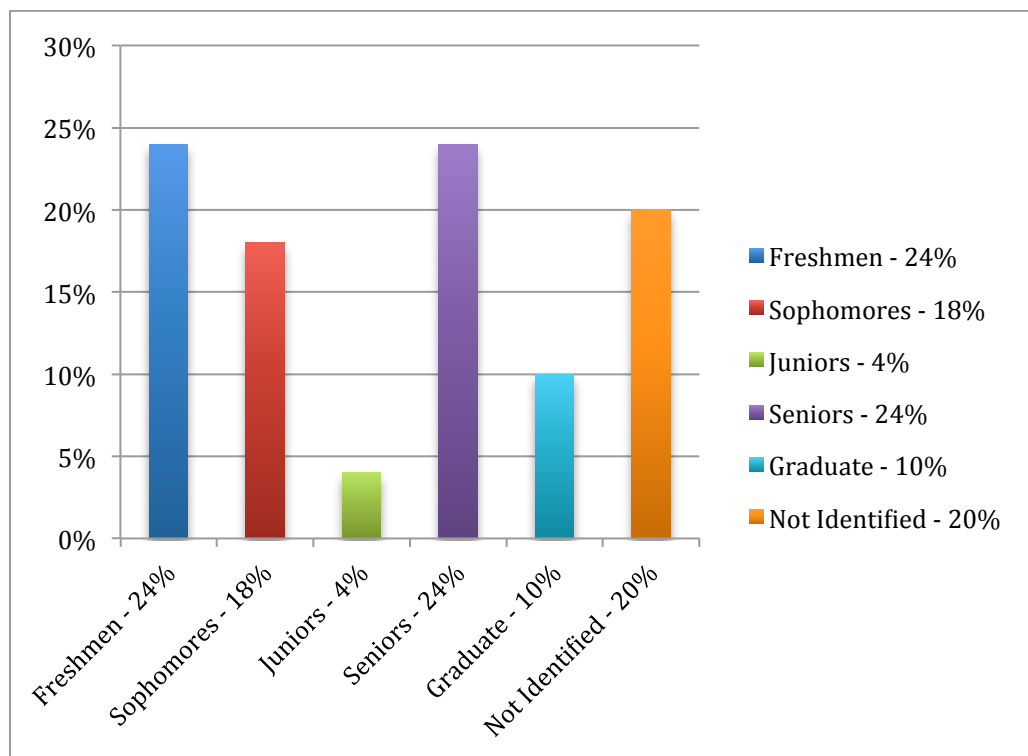
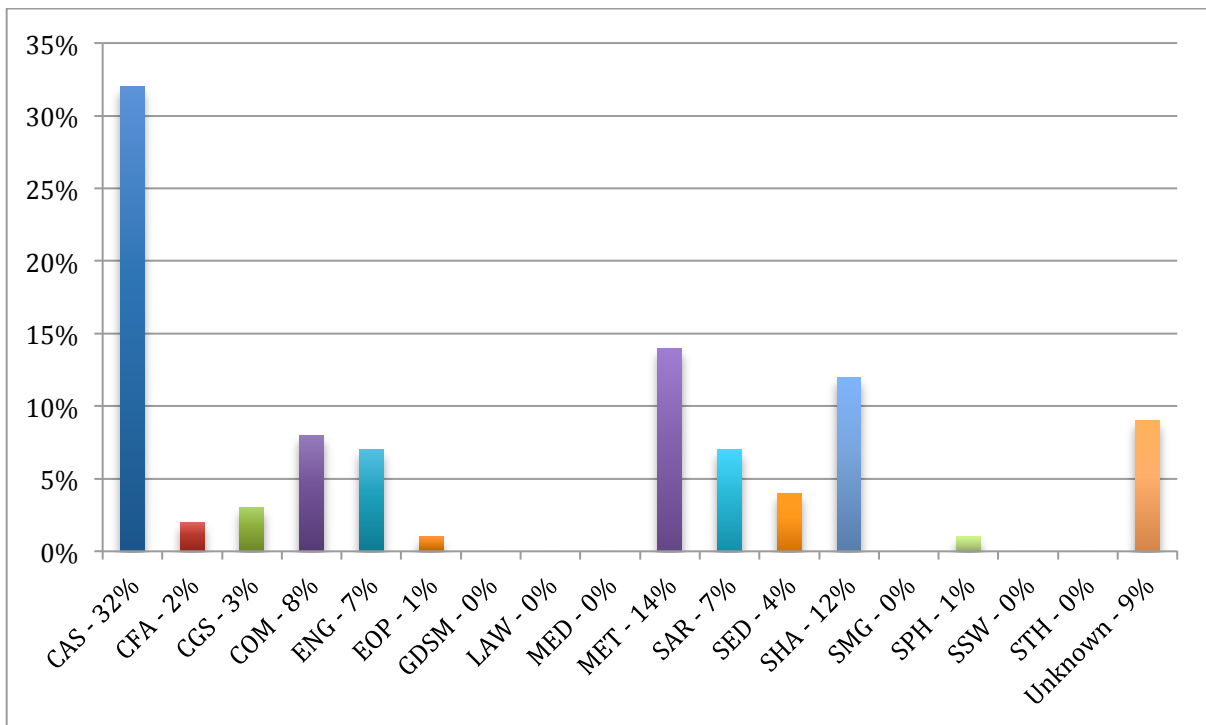
## Appendix A

Additional data from select events

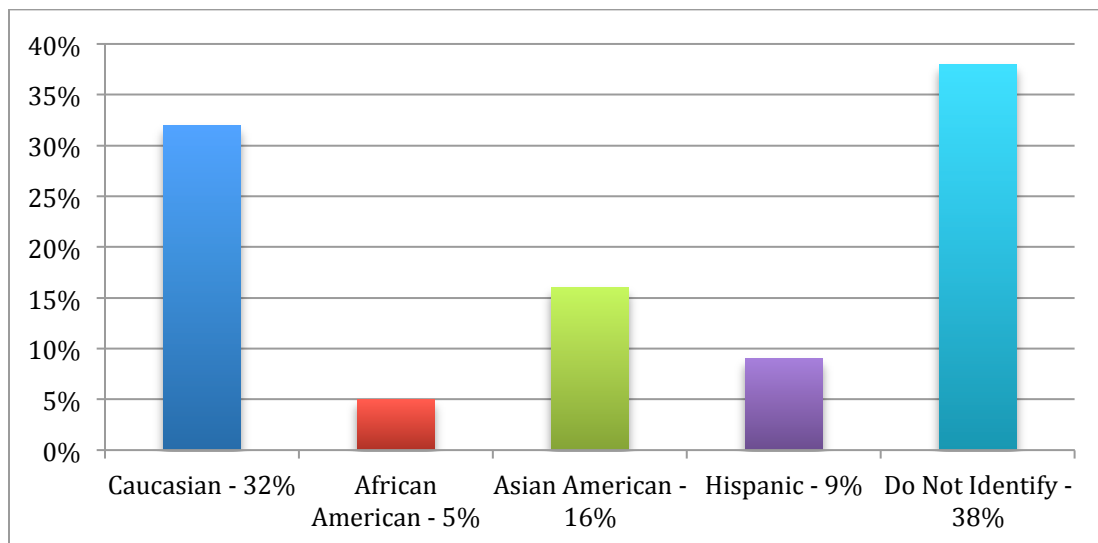
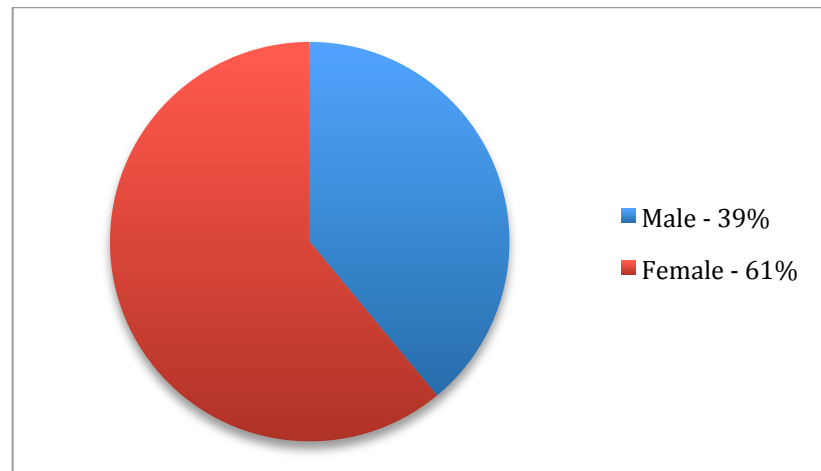
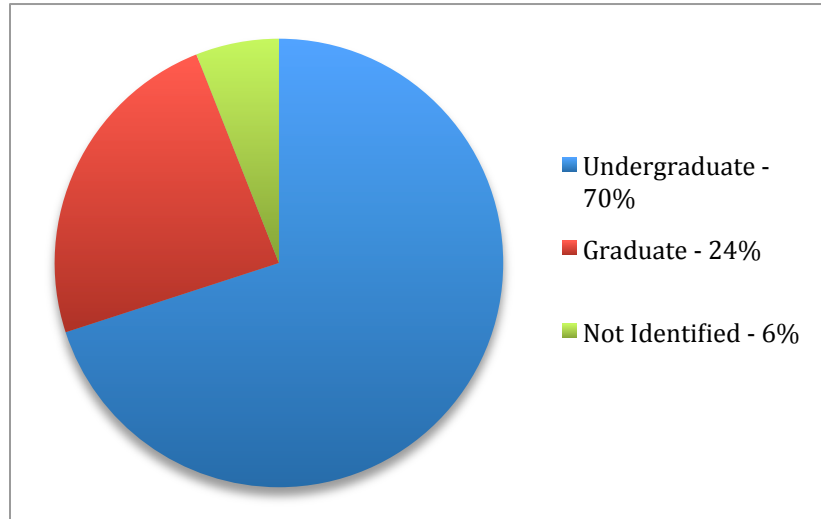
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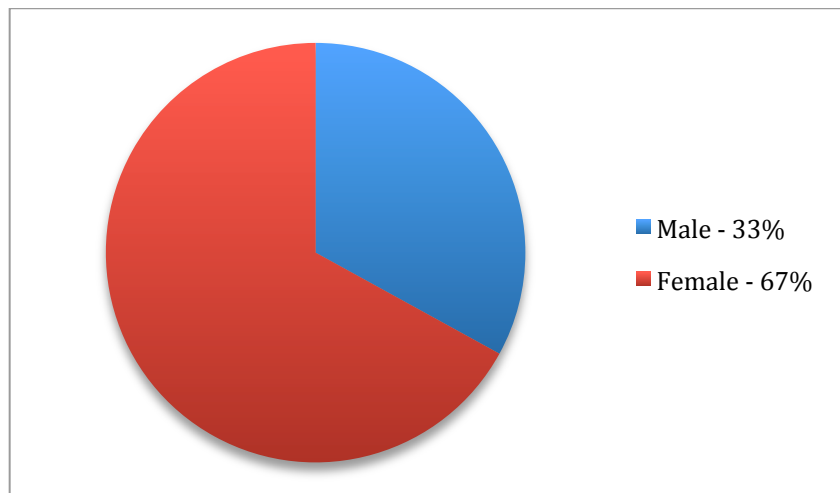
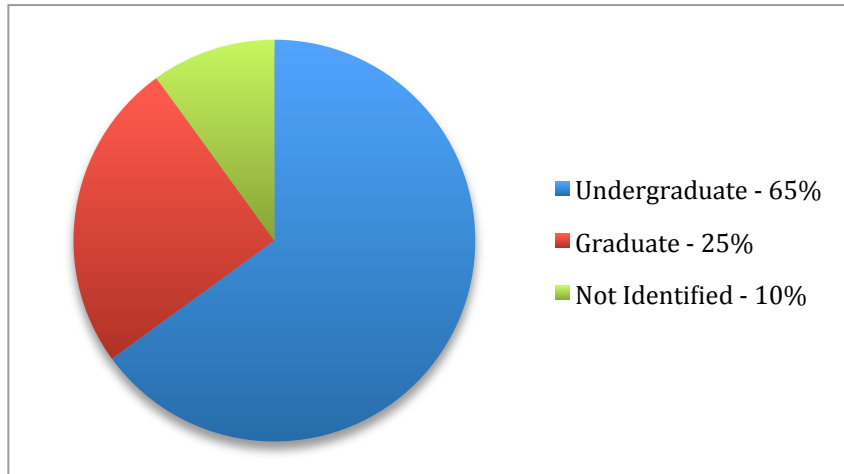


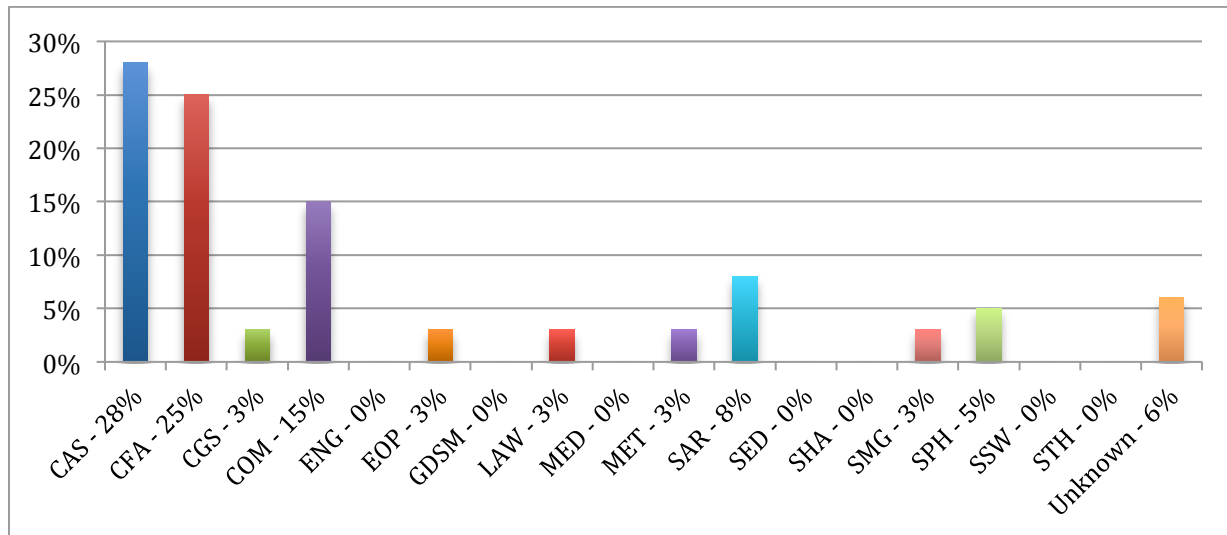
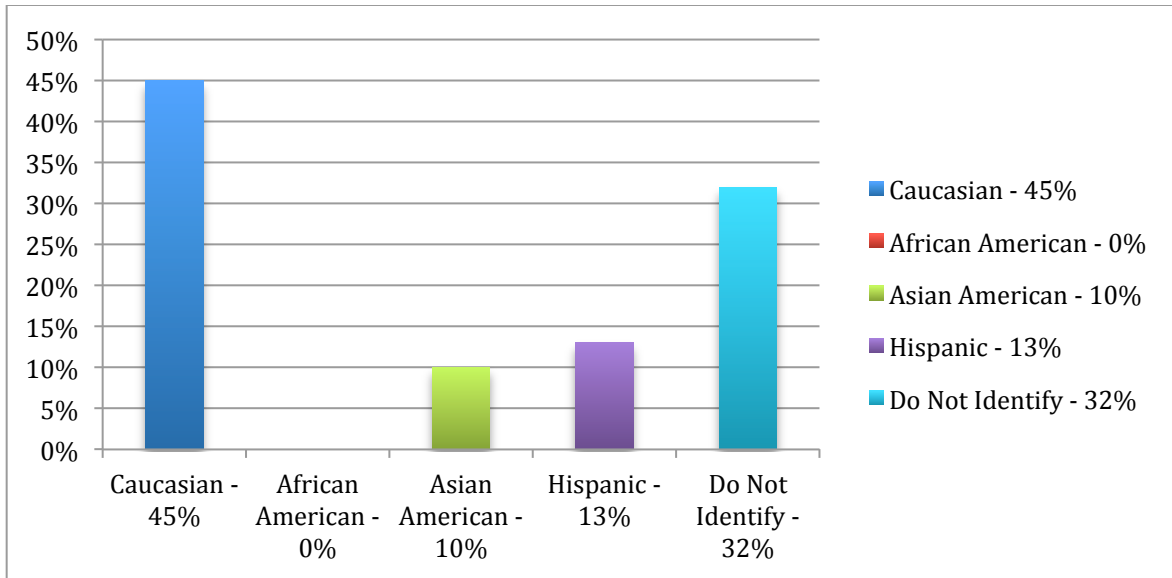


### Dee Dee Bridgewater Performance – 82 students



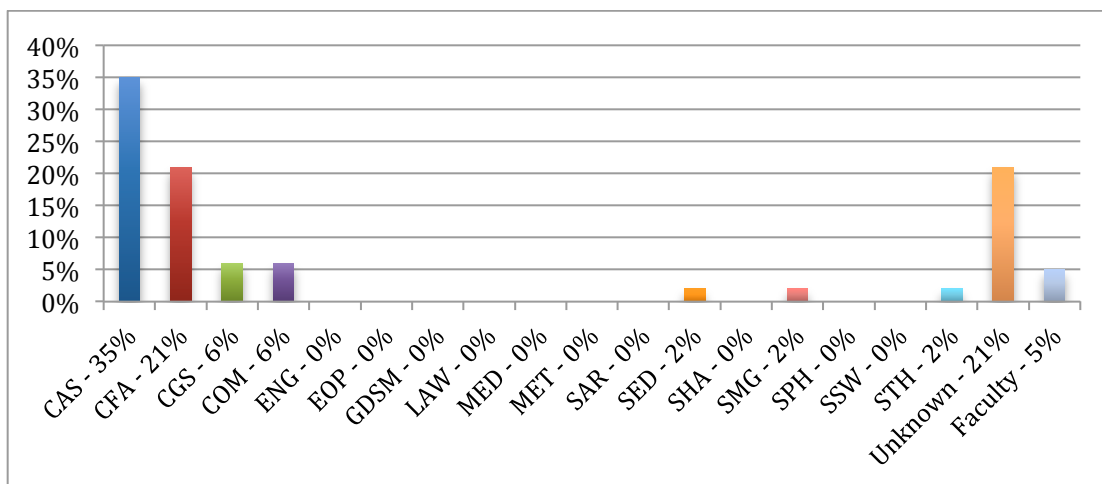
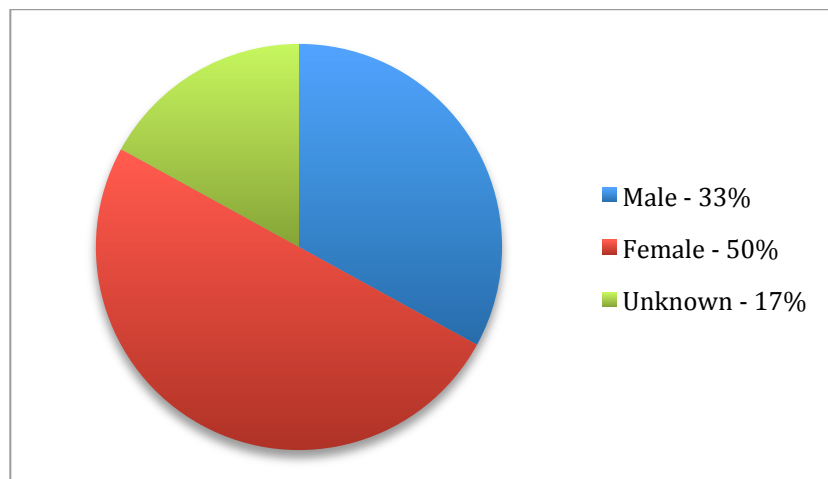
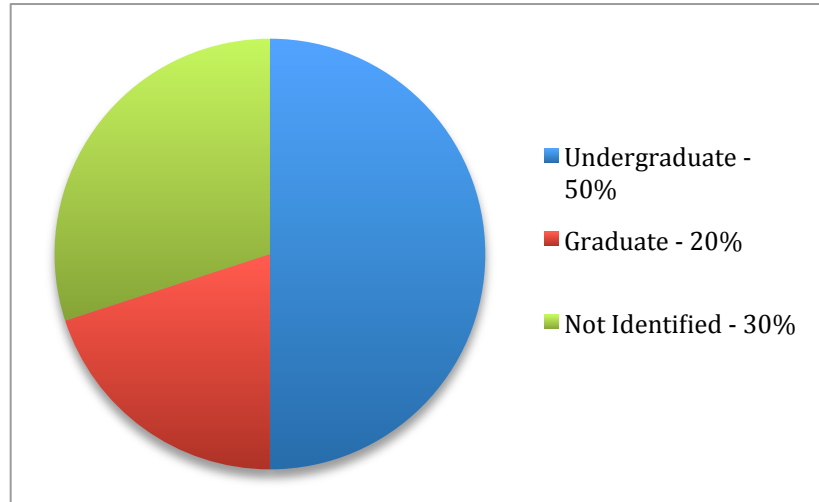
Symphony Orchestra – Fall – 40 students







### Symphony Orchestra Spring – 52 students



## Appendix B

### Arts Council - Arts in the Curriculum Subcommittee - February 14 update

1. **Create a Liaison or "Ambassador" for the arts within each BU school or college.** That person would act as a formal representative for the arts and serve as a central contact point and conduit within each school to seek out those faculty who are either already using arts in the curriculum or would be ripe candidates or to do so. This would strengthen the network of advocacy and would provide internal sponsors who are more savvy to the school-specific issues, success factors and pitfalls. These "Ambassadors" can meet semi-regularly to share ideas and make cross-campus connections and co-sponsor initiatives, and report back to their own units regarding successful projects and best practices. Current members of the Arts Council could readily serve in these roles in their respective schools and help recruit others.
2. **Ensure periodic reporting and discussion with Dean's Council to obtain/strengthen sponsorship for arts in the curriculum.** Obtain clear support from decision-makers toward which courses can be utilized within each school for arts-related initiatives. Although this is more of a "top down" strategy that, as a result, may carry some risk, active support from the Dean's offices is critical across each school or college. Prepare material, including regular reports and summaries of key arts-related curricular activities for ongoing discussion with Deans and Provost.
3. **Celebrate/reward those faculty who are leveraging the arts in their curriculum.** What gets measured and rewarded tends to get done in large institutions. There needs to be clear messaging that this is important for others to be willing to invest time, effort and pride in thinking outside their normal practice to infuse arts and creative initiatives into their courses. Consider faculty awards or grants and/or PR to acknowledge exemplars.
4. **Initiate discussion for creating a program through which undergraduates might accrue points (or credits) for attendance/participation in a cultural activity** as a requirement for graduation. Many colleges and universities (e.g., Michigan, Columbia, Fordham, etc.) have this sort of program as a means of helping students attend activities beyond the obvious options (student productions, popular shows, etc.) And, as a requirement for graduation, this sort of "Cultural Life Program" places cultural participation alongside curriculum on a transcript, proving the vitality of arts and culture in the broader liberal arts.
5. **Improve/Strengthen the Arts website and web-based resources** to highlight and describe those classroom arts initiatives that are already in place and working. This would create a central repository for the initiatives that are effective, which can stimulate other ideas and hopefully circulate "best practices" across schools faster. Consider filming short video testimonials from faculty and students about where arts infusion into the curriculum has worked and why.
6. **Additional/Future ideas include:** Discussion of better access to and use of space across campus for arts-related initiatives to ensure and enable greater exposure; Encouragement for the creation and launch of co-curricular courses across schools (e.g., CFA + SMG, etc.) where students cross-register and participate in joint interdisciplinary courses across the arts and other areas of study, and to work with the registrar and other knowledgeable resources to clarify new processes for the distribution of credits, joint teaching loads, and other issues that require agreement among participating units ; others TBD.