

SWOT Analysis: University Art Museum

Objective: The museum has goals to support university initiatives and student learning across the curriculum, engage the surrounding community, create dialogue generated by diverse art collections, maintain those collections, provide a welcoming atmosphere, and enhance the museum’s reputation as a leading university art museum.

The following assessment examines factors that affect the goals of the museum.

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Florida environmental and significant UF alumni and faculty photo and contemporary African collections are unique resources.▪ Collections align closely with campus research centers (European, Asian, African Studies).▪ Foremost scholars in diverse areas offer many free programs and classes to teachers, students, and public.▪ Large university provides excellent interns from art history, museum studies, business areas; fresh and educated stream of ideas each semester.▪ Curator of Asian art has recent bestseller on Chinese art; great knowledge base and publicity.▪ Huge exhibition space; 32,311 sq. ft.; 22,000 sq. ft. Asian art wing under construction.▪ Large number of family programs offered to reach out to community; kid-friendly.▪ Traveling exhibitions and targeted marketing brings diverse audience; inspiration for class and community discussions.▪ Coordination of collection objects with Florida Museum of Natural History (paintings with bugs and native wildlife).▪ Clearly and thoroughly present abstract or complex ideas in exhibition label copy; highly accessible.	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Evaluation of programs and exhibitions is superficial; attendance numbers are often exaggerated.▪ Animosity over resource allocation means reduced collaboration between departments.▪ Open hours are best for staff and budget, but not convenient for visitors.▪ Location on campus edge; few bus lines means students have trouble getting to museum, public avoids campus area.▪ Poor web presence; few items in collection are digitized so access for researchers and staff is inadequate.▪ Low salaries and high turnover across departments in past two years has left program and responsibility holes.▪ Spotty customer service; sometimes friendly, other times overly solicitous.▪ Volunteers are inconsistent in tours; sometimes present questionable information.▪ Limited space to accommodate educational offerings; no teaching gallery space.▪ Many objects in African collection require conservation; limited staff expertise in that area.
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Opportunities:

- Diverse community may be interested in diversity of collections; co-programming of readings, film festivals, events.
- General interest in Asian art is rising; evidenced by increased viewership and auction sales.
- Many well-traveled faculty and collectors means there are unique collections locally for possible exhibition.
- Campus-wide collaborative initiatives (Common Reading Program) offer opportunities to attract students.
- Web development, social networking, virtual museum could increase museum use and recognition locally and nationally.
- Many campus research centers offer small grants for programs that relate to specific areas.
- Museum Studies program faculty have some expertise in conservation, could recommend treatments.
- Research trips abroad by art history faculty offer opportunities for commissioning works by contemporary African and Asian artists; no shipping cost on smaller pieces.
- Museum-generated exhibitions could be marketed as traveling exhibitions to create a revenue source.
- More exhibition-related publications could enhance museum/curator reputations.

Threats:

- College students have other entertainment options such as bars, movies, and parties.
- Massive state aid cuts to university two years in a row; most cuts affect “peripheral” units.
- Public K-12 school field trip budgets disappearing; reduced attendance.
- High dollar value of collections could result in university selling art to fundraise.
- Large museums offer interactive web content, virtual museums, digital resources.
- Many competing programs and museums on campus; overlapping times, excess amount of program information for people to remember
- Community sees art museums as elitist and boring; other types of museums can be more flexible with exhibitions and changes.
- Provenance issues and legal actions are on the rise; collections lose value when pieces are returned to countries and/or original owners.
- Many donors want to dictate widespread policies in exchange for their donations.
- Research level collections are difficult and expensive to preserve, especially with photographs and textiles.