

Services & Activities Fee Annual Program Review

Program Name: Museum of Culture and Environment
Program Manager: Lynn Bethke, Hope Amason
Fiscal Year: 2022

1. In what ways does your program support CWU students? Please be specific, yet concise.

The Museum of Culture and Environment (MCE) provides opportunities for informal education by providing 3-6 exhibits per year. Additionally, the MCE offers a wide range of programming from lectures by experts to hands-on activities to appeal to a broad range of students. The MCE also supports the Museum Studies minor by offering opportunities for internships that develop essential practical and professional museum skills.

2. What are your specific program goals or learning/operational objectives? How are you assessing the effectiveness of your program in achieving those targets?

The MCE seeks to provide exhibits and programs that create opportunities for lifelong learning and foster self-discovery, global citizenship, and environmental stewardship. We assess effectiveness through visitation numbers, qualitative feedback, and an annual community survey administered each spring.

3. What is the overall purpose of your program and what service(s) does your program provide?
 - a. Are there overlaps or intersections with other university programs who have a similar purpose or service?

The purpose of the MCE is to create opportunities for lifelong learning that foster self-discovery, global citizenship, and environmental stewardship by offering a variety of exhibits and programs throughout the academic year. The MCE provides an informal learning environment where students and community members can engage with a variety of topics. The MCE intersects and collaborates with several university programs, including the Sarah Spurgeon Gallery, the Diversity and Equity Center, academic departments, student clubs and organizations, and off-campus community partners (such as APOYO and Gallery-one).

4. How does your program align with the purpose of S&A funding? *“Supporting cocurricular and extracurricular activities and programs participated in by students in the furtherance of their education.”*

The MCE is highly aligned with the purpose of S&A funding. We provide exhibits and programs for all learners which challenge and enrich the educational experience. For example, in Spring 2021, we collaborated with the Muslim Student Association to host an event that discussed the importance of American Muslim food traditions, specifically the bean pie. In Fall 2021, we worked with the Diversity and Equity Center and NASU to develop an exhibit to accompany activism surrounding the tragic losses of Indigenous women and girls. In Spring 2022, we plan to work with Gallery One to co-host their quarterly PechaKucha, an event that brings together diverse community members for storytelling. Gallery One specifically reached out to the MCE in order to develop better connections with CWU

6. Please provide detailed information regarding who utilizes your program? (*Students, faculty, staff, community? Specific demographic information? Class standing, gender, ethnicity, transfer, campus location, etc.*)

The MCE has an annual visitation of approximately 3500 people. Visitors include students, staff, and faculty from across the university. The museum also has visitors from the community including seniors and families with school age children.

7. How many unique CWU students utilize your program or services?
- a. How do you gather these metrics?
 - b. If you do not, what is preventing you from getting that data and how are you determining usage by CWU students?

We do not have data on how many unique CWU students utilize the museum. While we keep track of visitors hourly and daily, we don't have a way to track repeat visitors or to differentiate between a student and a community member. Anecdotally, about 2/3 of our visitors are CWU students. We are prevented from getting exact data because it would be disruptive to the museum experience to ask every visitor if they are a student. We do record when a faculty member brings their class to the museum, or when we become aware that a faculty member has assigned a museum visit. In this way we can make some educated guesses.

8. Are there any current vacant positions in your program?

No.

9. Given the budget reductions taking place and continuing for the remainder of the funding cycle, please tell us what specific impacts those reductions have had on your program compared to what was originally planned and including in your initial base funding request.

The budget reductions require the MCE to think more strategically about our use of resources. While we are still able to fulfill our primary goal of employing students, our ability to create dynamic exhibits and programming may be impacted. At this time, we have been able to absorb the cuts with minimal impact.

10. Are there any circumstances or challenges that are currently impacting your ability to use your base funding allocation this year?

No.

11. What growth or increases would you like to see in your program in the future?

There are many potential areas for growth at the MCE. We recently participated in the American Alliance for Museum's Museum Assessment Program for organizational success, which is designed to help museums transition to more effective models for serving their communities. This entailed a visit from a museum peer reviewer during Fall 2021, who interviewed faculty, staff, and students about their interactions with the MCE. Among the recommendations from our peer reviewer is expanded staffing, as we currently have 1 full time staff member, a part-time staff member (in the form of faculty workload release), and 2 part-time front-desk/docents. The peer reviewer noted that, while the MCE is making a good effort towards fulfilling our mission, the current staff are overwhelmed with day-to-day operations that they are not able to strategically plan for the future. And, given the many transitions occurring at CWU during 2021- 2022, the need for better planning has become of prime importance.

At the MCE, we are guided by a Museum Advisory Council (MAC), a group comprised of students, faculty, staff, and community members. This group is responsible for advising on our exhibits and collections acquisitions as well as broader structural concerns (policies, bylaws, etc.) Thus, the MAC is central to future planning. However, we have had a difficult time having sustained and diverse student involvement due to the many demands on students' time. We would like to expand student involvement with the MAC (perhaps creating a distinct student committee). And we recognize that this would be most successful if we were able to compensate students involved with the MAC with a stipend, in hopes that this more equitably accounts for their labor and insights.

Overall, one of our goals is to develop more equitable structures for student involvement at the MCE, that would involve compensating individual students as well as student clubs and organizations who provide curatorial consultation, planning for exhibits, or collaborations on programs.