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# SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

**DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS**



**FACULTY OF ARTS AND CULTURE  
EASTERN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA**

7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009

**Review Team :**

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Prof. Walter Marasinghe, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

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## CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
1. Subject Review Process	1
2. Brief History of the University, Faculty and the Dept. of Fine Arts	2
3. Aims and Learning Outcomes	4
4. Findings of the Review Team	6
4.1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review	6
4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods	7
4.3. Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements	8
4.4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback	9
4.5. Postgraduate Studies	9
4.6. Peer Observation	10
4.7. Skills Development	11
4.8. Academic Guidance and Counseling	11
5. Conclusions	13
6. Recommendations	16
7. Annexure	17

the guidance of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka for the purpose of quality assurance in the teaching and research in departments in charge of teaching various subjects in the universities in Sri Lanka. Achievement and maintenance of excellence and high quality in teaching and research undertaken by the academic staff, improvement of learning skills of the students, the outcome of teaching and learning, good practices of higher studies at university level etc. are the objectives and areas observed by the subject review team. Further the Team is expected to observe several other aspects such as whether advanced and modern teaching methods are practiced, the use of modern technology, facilities available to the students and the staff, the availability of support staff in the relevant department, infrastructural facilities, qualifications and experience of the academic staff and whether the good habits of peer observation, student evaluation and counseling are practiced.

A subject review team normally consists of three or four experienced professors/ lecturers familiar with the subjects taught in the relevant department. The Review Team appointed for the Dept. of Fine Arts in the Faculty of Arts and Culture of the Eastern University consisted of Prof. Walter Marasinghe, former Head of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies at Sri Jayawardhanapura University and Prof. Udaya Prasanta Meddegama, former Professor and Head of the Department of Sinhala at University of Peradeniya, Dr. Patrick Ratnayake, Head, The Drama and Image Arts Unit, University of Kelaniya and Mr. Susiripala Malimboda, Dean Faculty of Visual Arts, University of Visual and Performing Arts. The review team arrived at and visited the Eastern University for the first time on the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> of September, 2009. After the initial, formal meetings with the Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty and the [Acting] Head of Department and other members of the academic staff at the Vice Chancellor's Office, the Review Team then conducted the review process following the guidelines provided by the QAA Council and according to the Agenda prepared by the Department of Fine Arts. In the process, eight aspects namely [i] Curriculum Design [ii] Content and Review, [iii] Teaching, learning and Assessment Methods, [iv] Quality of Students, [v] Extent and Use of Student Feedback, [vi] Postgraduate Studies, [vii] Peer Observation and [viii]. Skills Development and Academic Guidance and Counseling were reviewed. The Review team, while observing the activities and resources of the department related to these eight aspects, carried out the process according to the agenda prepared by the Department, having made minor adjustments in it on the first day.

## **2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT**

The Eastern University was first established in 1981 under the name Batticaloa University College affiliated to the University of Peradeniya. In 1986 this university was elevated to the status of an independent university. The university college was first started in a school building in the Batticaloa district at Vantharumoolai; subsequently this school building was restructured to serve as the main administrative building [The Senate]. Although this university has functioned well and achieved admirable qualities and improvement, due to the political situation that existed in the Eastern province, it had to face a number of difficulties and challenges. From its inception, this university was obliged to manage with limited resources and funds from the state. As a result of the dedication and commitment of the academic and non-academic staff and students the Eastern University has carried out its academic and research activities under the most trying times, setting and example to other

er education. The Eastern University has been making of education at all levels, both undergraduate and of research. As the Vice Chancellor of the university has mentioned in a statement: öto increase student intake by improving and expanding degree programs both undergraduate and postgraduate, to promote research in various disciplines, to produce innovative, creative and entrepreneurial graduates equipped with requisite competencies and social skills and to make a greater contribution to the development of the region and the country at large.ö

Eastern University conducts a number of different Undergraduate and Postgraduate study programs for a student population of 5000.

**The Faculty of Arts and Culture:** The Faculty of Arts and Culture was established in 1986, which consists of eight departments of study viz. The Department of Social Sciences, Department of Languages, Department of Geography, Department of Fine Arts, Department of Islamic Studies, Department of Arabic, Department of Education and Child Care and Department of Comparative Religion and Social Harmony. The Faculty conducts General and Special Degree programs of three and four year duration respectively. The Faculty offers the following degrees and Diplomas: B.A. General, B.A. Special and B. Ed [General and Special]. In addition to these the Faculty offers Diplomas and external B.A. degrees as well as Postgraduate programs leading to M. Phil and Ph.D.

#### **The Department of Fine Arts:**

This department was established in 1991. In the beginning it offered only the B.A. general degree program. Then in 1993 the Department started the Special Degree program. Courses on Drama and Theatre Art was introduced in 2006 and developed as a subject for the Special Degree.

**Vision of the Department of Fine Arts** has been promoting studies in Fine Arts and performing Arts with a view of cultivating interest among students and lovers of fine arts in learning and researching in the field of Fine Arts focusing on the arts, crafts and theatre traditions of the region. The Department has, during its short history of existence achieved these aims to a considerable extent and it is continuously engaged in training its students and junior staff to put theory into practice and become exemplary experts and exponents of the visual and performing arts for the purpose of enhancing and enriching the culture of the region as well of the country.

### **3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Aims:** Increase the number of competent graduates with excellent skills in Fine Arts and performing Arts by improving creative skills through research and productions of the staff and students.

**Study Programs:**

1. Bachelor of Arts [General] 3 years
2. Bachelor of Arts [Special] 4 years
3. Master of Arts Taught Course] 1 year
4. Master of Philosophy 2 years
5. Doctor of Philosophy 3 years
6. Bachelor of Arts [External Degree] 3 years.

#### Fine Arts during the last five years [2003-2007]

		<b>Part II</b>	<b>Part III</b>
2004	15	02	02
2005	13	03	03
2006	04	03	03
2007	17	04	03
2008	17	04	04

#### Fine Arts ó Internal Special Students

<b>Year</b>	<b>Part I</b>	<b>Part II</b>	<b>Part III</b>
2004	10	09	09
2005	02	10	09
2006	01	02	10
2007	02	01	02
2008	08	02	01

#### Fine Arts- External Students

<b>Year</b>	<b>Part I</b>	<b>Part II</b>	<b>Part III</b>
2004	26	29	32
2005	35	26	29
2006	38	35	26
2007	41	38	35
2008	52	40	38

#### Drama and theatre ó External Degree

<b>Year</b>	<b>Part I</b>	<b>Part II</b>	<b>Part III</b>
2004	147	118	112
2005	132	146	118
2006	105	130	146
2007	81	105	130
2008	151	81	105

#### STAFF

##### Available Cadre

Associate Professor - 01

Senior Lecturer - 02

Probationary Lecturer - 02

Temporary Assistant lecturer- 07

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Date of appointment</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>
Prof. S. Maunaguru	Associate professor	15-08-1991	B.A.Hon. Ceylon, M.A. [UPDN].PGDE [UCOL] M.Phil. [UJ]
B. Sugumar	Senior Lecturer	15-08-1996	B.A. Hon.[UJ],PGDE[NIE],MA [DT]Pondichery University

	Lecturer	15-08-1996	B.A. Hon. [UJ], M. Phil, [EUSL]
		02-02-2009	B.A. Hon. EUSL, M.Phil [UJ]
K.Ravichandran	probí Lecturer- probationary	02-02-2009	B.A. Hon. [EUSL]

## 4 4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

### 4.1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review

#### Strengths /Good Practices:

The conventional system of the curriculum based on year-end exams and the two term academic calendar that was used earlier has been changed since year 2000 and the new course unit system based on the semester system has been introduced. According to the course unit system, awarding of marks is aimed at the Grade Point Average, which decides the final results of the students.

General pattern of curriculum design adopted in the university system has been followed. The Department of Fine Arts conducts courses leading to two degrees: **B.A. in Fine Arts and B.A. in Drama and Theatre**. Courses in the Fine Arts, as the Review Team observed, are mainly theory oriented. There are only two course units involving Film, which contain practical components. The courses in Fine Arts, from the First year to the third year cover the following subject areas: Technological Art, Art History, Film, Art Criticism, Film making, Acting in Films and Screen Play [writing].

Fine Arts course for the Special Degree cover the following subject areas: History of Film making, Film Make up, Costuming, Theories of Art Criticism, Documentary Film making, History of Western Music, History of Indian Music, Tamilian Dance and Music Heritage.

#### Weaknesses:

Thus it is clear that in the Fine Arts Course, emphasis is on the Film [Cinema] that attempts to cover several aspects in the Art of Cinema. There are no course units on Oriental Theories of art and fine arts such as music, dance, singing, painting, carving, sculpture, architecture etc. The Courses in fine Arts do not seem to have clear focus on Fine Arts but touching on a number of areas in Fine Arts.

**Drama and theatre Arts** stream incorporates most of the important aspects and subjects in the Discipline. Sufficient number of hours has been assigned for practical work. It would be much more comprehensive if the Department could introduce a few more courses on the Asian Theatre traditions, and the Contemporary Drama in India and Sri Lanka. Students should be encouraged to produce their own plays, to organize drama competitions among the university students and produce plays for the annual Drama Festival as well as the Annual Ballet Competition. The curriculum needs revision as it has not been revised since year 2000.

#### Suggestions:

The course units should be revised to maintain a balance between the main areas in fine Arts. The Students taking the General Degree courses will not gain any knowledge in some of the important aspects in Fine Arts. Therefore The Review Team considers it advisable if the department could introduce a few more courses on music, dance, singing, drawing and



uates skilled in both Visual and Performing aspects in

**Level of Judgment: SATISFACTORY**

## **4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods**

### **Strengths/Good Practices:**

The Department follows both conventional and modern teaching methods. Chalk and Board is normally used but in the drama and theatre course, practical exercises and related activities are used for teaching purposes. By the nature of some of the course modules, the students are not encouraged to use the library for additional information. Presentations by students are of a high and commendable standard. The lecturers are well acquainted with the use of modern technology. Teacher/student relationship is very close in practical sessions and it seemed to be a healthy arrangement for improving student's skills as well as for student feed back. The department follows a sound assessment system. Mid-semester tests, Dissertation writing and especially, the Viva-Voce exams for the special final year students can be mentioned.

The following methods are used in the process of Teaching, Learning and Assessments:

- Lectures
- Tutorials and Assignments
- Individual Presentations
- Seminars
- Directed reading and library use
- Lectures and seminars by invited guest speakers/scholars, \Independent projects/reports
- Performance activities by students

### **Assessment Methods:**

- Tutorial
- Individual and Group reports
- Mid-semester test
- Formal written Examinations
- Final year dissertation
- Viva-voce examinations

### **Weaknesses:**

Students should get more time for using the library. Developing a departmental library is an urgent need. There are no facilities for the students interested in practicing or training in art, design and sculpture.

### **Suggestions:**

The newly recruited junior staff should be made aware of their main objectives as university teachers and be more focused on improving their individual talents and areas of interest and gaining of postgraduate qualifications.

More emphasis should be placed on the use of library and assessment of practical work.

**Level of Judgment: GOOD**

## Student Progress and Achievements

Students are selected through the normal procedure, i.e. those who have offered Drama and Theatre for Advanced levels and selected by the UGC on merit and who are sent to the university under the Special Intake scheme. Despite the fact that the number of students in the department is very low, the existing students are doing well in every aspect of their academic work. They are highly motivated and committed. Most of the students in their meeting with the Review Team stated clearly what they wish to do and become in the future, upon graduation. Unlike some other undergraduates, the students of this department were not apprehensive about their future. By the third year, as the Team noticed, the students had already developed presentation skills and training in acting and handling of technical equipment.

The teachers have developed good rapport with students and the students already possess a vision for their future.

### Weaknesses:

No obvious weakness in this aspect. As stated by students they need more time to use the library and more new reading material in the library. Students are in urgent need of some basic facilities such as filters for drinking water, washrooms and changing rooms

### Suggestions:

Students need at least one water filter at the department for drinking purposes. Further it should be considered as an urgent need to provide the students with changing rooms and washrooms. This is very important as in the Drama practical sessions the students have to change often, put on and wash make up after practical classes etc.

**Level of Judgment: GOOD**

## 4.4. Extent and Use of Students Feedback

### Strengths/Good Practices:

The Department considers students' feedback as essential for the quality assurance and maintaining high academic standards. Hence the department follows several methods of collecting student feedback as follows:

[A] Senior staff obtains formal student feedback.

[b] Informal feedback is collected with the help of temporary assistant lecturers, tutors and senior students.

[c] Personal interaction with the students- friendly and diplomatic discussions help gather feedback from students, which has been accepted as a highly effective and fruitful method.

### Weaknesses:

The department has used a form for collecting evaluation of teachers by students. However this did not seem to be a common and widely used system. Non-involvement of the academic staff in welfare activities seemed to be necessary in relation to obtain student feedback.

**Level of Judgment: GOOD**



M.A. Taught Courses in Fine Arts, M. Phil and Ph.D. programs are available according to the Self Evaluation Report of the Department. However due to lack of sufficient and qualified staff postgraduate courses are not conducted at present. According to the Self Evaluation report of the Department 27 students are registered for M.A. Course units approved for the M.A. and M. Phil degrees seem to be adequate, and all the courses are of 3 credit value.

**Weaknesses:**

No evidence of postgraduate teaching was found. The only qualified instructor for postgraduate teaching, Prof. S. Maunaguru is retired. The number of courses offered for postgraduate students is 25 including the common core courses, the Seminar presentation, project and the Viva. The number of courses to be taught by the department is about 19. This is a very high an unrealistic work load for one professor to handle. Therefore the Review Team feels that the Department, when it resumes postgraduate teaching must obtain the service of visiting professors. However during the discussion of this matter with the staff, it became clear that in the Eastern Province it is impossible to find suitably qualified and experienced teachers to teach these courses.

**Suggestions:**

University should help this department to implement the postgraduate lectures/ courses by recruiting experienced teachers, if possible, one or two senior lecturers or professors and by arranging to obtain the service of visiting professors.

***Level of Judgment: UNSATISFACTORY***

**4.6. Peer Observation**

**Strengths/Good Practices:**

Formal peer Observation as expected by the UGC is not practiced. However, the senior staff members always supervise the work, especially teaching, preparation of lesson material, practical classes and carry on the academic work through mutual supervision and understanding. Moderation of question papers is done by the senior members as well as by experienced teachers outside the department.

**Weaknesses:**

Absence of continued and systematic peer observation may be mentioned as a weakness. One set of forms to prove peer observation was examined by the Review Team. This Good Practice needs to be continued.

**Suggestions:**

Peer observation must be carried out along the guidelines of the UGC, using the standard forms for recording. It is advisable that all professors and lecturers in every academic department must be involved in student welfare activities and, especially, in the extracurricular activities of the students.

***Level of Judgment: SATISFACTORY***

The Department of Fine Arts has implemented several methods for skills development of the students. The main focus has been on the presentation skills of students. The Review Team observed with pleasure a few student presentations, which were of very high standards. The staff seemed to have guided and trained the students in the writing of their papers based on research and making power point presentations. Students could present most of the facts and examples by memory even without the aid of multi media. They could maintain good rapport with the audience, and the members [students] in the audience had no hesitation in raising questions which were well answered by the presenters.

The department helps students develop other skills such as creative work, acting and dancing etc.

**Weaknesses:**

The development of language skills [English or another international language] and computer literacy has not been paid sufficient attention.

**Suggestions:**

In addition to the development of presentation skills, the students should be encouraged to develop their language skills, to gain competence in all three national languages and to be more familiar and skilled in the use of IT. For these purposes the students need more guidance in making the best use of the available facilities more effectively.

***Level of Judgment: GOOD***

**4.8. Academic Guidance and Counseling**

**Strengths/Good Practices:**

The new entrants receive academic guidance during the orientation program and counseling through the general counseling service of the university. The handbook distributed among the students contains information on the course units and the grading system.

The Department of Fine Arts, through constant, cordial contacts with their students provide them with necessary guidance on academic matters. Further, the teachers guide and advise students on their final year projects and supervise their research work.

The open-door policy of the department allows students to freely meet their teachers and instructors for consultation on academic and personal matters. Staff members interact closely with students as there are number of practical sessions, workshops and activities such as Street Drama rehearsals and shows organized by the department. Further the Department of Fine Arts take students to seminars and cultural events in and out of the district. Involvement of Drama and Theatre students in serving the community using their skills and knowledge was seen in the Street Drama they had produced on creating awareness on the Dengue menace.

**Weaknesses:**

More guidance is needed in the fields of Art and Sculpture. The course units available are mainly on theory. There are students keen on developing their skills in these fields but they do not have the support of an experienced instructor and necessary facilities.

The library for Fine Arts, sufficiently stocked in general with reading material on the subject, nevertheless, seem to lack new books and publications. The Review Team gathered from

some of the books much in demand are not sufficient. If a book is borrowed by a teacher then the students have to

**Suggestions:**

Each student must be assigned to a lecturer/ professor for academic guidance. For the purpose of developing interest in the subject of Fine Arts an Association of fine Arts students could be formed to present cultural shows, awareness programs and exhibitions in the university as well as in the region.

The staff could, with the support of the Dean and the Vice Chancellor, organize exchange programs for students and staff with other universities where Fine Arts is taught.

A personal library for the department of fine Arts could be established with the help of the university and the public.

***Level of Judgment: SATISFACTORY***

Based on the observations made during the visit by the review team and discussed above, the eight aspects were judged as follows:

Aspect Reviewed	Judgment
Curriculum Design, Content and Review	Satisfactory
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods	Good
Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements	Good
Extent and Use of Student feedback, Qualitative and Quantitative	Good
Postgraduate Studies	Unsatisfactory
Peer Observation	Satisfactory
Skills Development	Good
Academic Guidance and Counselling	Satisfactory

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The Review Team arrived at the following judgments on the eight aspects under review based on the good practices, strengths and weaknesses. Given the restrictions, difficulties, the small number of students and insufficient number of qualified teachers in the Department of Fine Arts, the Review Team was satisfied and happy with the performance of the department and the support extended to them throughout the entire period of reviewing.

### 1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review

**Strengths/ Good Practices:**

Fine Arts and Drama and theatre courses cover a wide range of subjects. Fine Arts Courses are more theory oriented while Drama and theatre courses are more practice oriented.

the Arts consists of too many course units on Film. History of art and art appreciation is an obvious weakness.

## **2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods**

### **Strengths/Good Practices:**

Teaching is praiseworthy. Modern methods of teaching with the help of technology are practiced. End-semester and mid-semester exams are held. Good rapport with students is maintained by the lecturers.

### **Weaknesses:**

Assessment of practical work is not adequately or properly done. Infrastructural facilities to enhance quality of teaching are insufficient.

## **3. Quality of Students, including Student Progress and Achievement**

### **Strengths/Good practices:**

Responsibility of student intake lies with the UGC. Teacher/student interaction is impressive. Students are well motivated and dedicated to learning by the skills and talents of the academic staff. Students have already developed individual visions for their future.

### **Weaknesses:**

No noteworthy weakness was found in this aspect.

## **4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback**

### **Strengths/Good Practices:**

Several methods are adopted for gathering student evaluation and feedback. Due to the nature of most of the courses students can associate teachers closely and amicably unlike in the conventional teaching based on lecturing and note-taking.

### **Weaknesses:**

More direct and systematic methods to obtain student feedback are needed.

## **5. Postgraduate Studies**

### **Strengths/Good Practices:**

Postgraduate study program has not been operative in recent years due to the unstable situation in the province in the recent past and due to lack of qualified teachers.

### **Weaknesses:**

Lack of qualified and experienced teachers and guides. Inadequate awareness of the junior staff members is not familiar with the funds and scholarships available to them.

Peer observation is practiced to some extent. Constant contact with senior lecturers makes it easy for the junior lecturers to get feedback from them and improve the quality of their teaching.

**Weaknesses:**

Standard forms for peer observation must be used for observation by peers as stipulated in the UGC guidelines.

## **7. Skills Development**

**Strengths/Good Practices:**

Several methods have been adopted for skills development. Presentation skills of students are of very high standards.

**Weaknesses:**

Not much emphasis or focus on developing language and IT skills.

## **8. Academic Guidance and Counseling**

**Strengths/ Good practices:**

Common orientation program for first year students is the main forum where guidance on academic matters and welfare activities are given. In their day-to-day interaction and contact with students the teachers provide guidance and counseling. Students have free access to their teachers for discussions on academic as well as private problems.

**Weaknesses:**

No obvious weakness in this aspect.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Fine Arts: The Department of Fine Arts should be developed as an independent department and Visual Arts and Sculpture should be developed as separate subjects.
2. Technological Arts too must be developed as a separate subject and given more prominence in the Department curriculum.
3. The above mentioned arts should be developed as separate streams in order to rectify the existing shortcomings in teaching of those subjects. Strengthening the teaching of Cinema and Television new courses should be introduced considering the significance of those media in the modern world.
4. The current course units on Drama and Theatre must be further developed with more modern and innovative course units. By doing so, through 'Core' and 'Optional' course units the area of study could be expanded to cover the local and regional Arts and crafts and Folk Art traditions.

local ñkuttuø and other dance forms will be a valuable and dramatic studies in the entire country and a rich area for universities.

6. There seems to be some inconsistency in the current system of Grading and Grade Point Average, which should be revised to be consistent with the accepted, standard system in the national universities. In revising the curriculum, attention should be paid to remove the inconsistent nature in the main course units taught by the department of Fine Arts.
7. Curriculum should be revised and improved clearly stating the minimum number of course units and Grade points to be earned from the main subject etc.
8. The academic staff of the Department of Fine Arts should be strengthened by adding a few more cadre positions, at least one professor, one associate professor and two senior lecturers.
9. Elective/ optional courses or subjects the students of Fine Arts could offer must be specified. The Department of Fine Arts should open its course units for the students specializing in other subjects.
10. Subjects of IT and English should be taught in all three or four years, as at present these subjects are taught only in the first two years.
11. Serious attention should be paid to enhance the capacity of the academic staff. The Department and the Faculty should identify the young talent among the junior teachers and encouraged them to gain higher qualifications and experience and made them permanent.
12. Headship of the Department should be filled. It is advisable that a senior lecturer or professor of Fine Arts should hold the position of Head.
13. Workshop system in the Drama and Theatre as well as visual Arts should be included in the syllabus.
14. Infrastructural facilities in the department should be improved. A filter for drinking water for the students must be provided. Arrangements must be made to provide changing rooms with basic facilities for the use of students.
15. In order to develop teaching of the Art of Cinema, necessary facilities and equipment such as new Cine cameras, Cam coders, editing machines, and for the theatre studies, a new stage lighting system, store room, more musical instruments etc. should be provided.



The Vice Chancellor  
The Dean of the Faculty  
Acting head of Fine Arts and staff  
The Support Staff of the Department.  
The Librarian of the University  
Two Teaching sessions observed  
Four Students' presentations observed  
Two workshops on Acting and folk dancing observed.  
Facilities of the department.  
i. The instrument room with musical instruments  
ii. Computer with internet connection  
iii. Multi media facilities  
iv. Classroom cum rehearsal room

Documents of the Department: Subject and course unit syllabi, minutes of staff meetings, staff attendance register, past papers, marking schemes, student attendance sheets, mark sheets, CVs of the staff, etc. were observed.