

Dear Arts Faculty and Academic Affairs Colleagues,

I write to provide an update on SFAI@USF and to thank those of you who have been helping explore the possibilities for integration with SFAI. I recognize the significant investment of time and energy many of you have made on top of a very demanding semester. Throughout this period of discernment, I have been moved by your compelling articulation of the values of art education within a Jesuit liberal arts framework, the depth of your commitment to academic freedom and self-expression, and your hospitality and graceful approach with SFAI colleagues.

The past few weeks have been a very challenging time for the SFAI community. SFAI leadership announced in early May that they do not have the financial resources to continue to operate and, therefore, are preparing to cease operations on June 30. I know firsthand how heartbreaking this process can be and have a great deal of empathy for their students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

In light of this news, which has resulted in some inaccurate information being shared on social media, I wanted to update you on the steps we are taking to support SFAI students and to continue to explore the potential of an integrated vision of the arts:

- We recognize the distinctive value and history of SFAI and its community of faculty, staff, students, and alumni and continue to pursue our vision of creating SFAI@USF as an arts flagship within USF's College of Arts and Sciences.
- We are working closely with SFAI and our accreditors to develop pathways to degree completion for SFAI's current and admitted students. We have submitted proposals that, if approved, will allow us to teach out their current BFA and MFA students and may allow us to offer a pathway for their recently admitted students who are eager to begin their arts education in the fall. We have drafted a transfer articulation agreement to facilitate the pathway for current SFAI students who choose to come to USF. We are committed to providing a financial aid package for these students that is sensitive to need and takes into account the out-of-pocket cost anticipated when they enrolled at SFAI.
- The financial and legal due diligence process is ongoing and USF is awaiting critical documentation necessary to move forward. Since signing the letter of intent, we have received additional information from SFAI about short- and medium-term enrollment prospects, financial viability, and legal considerations that will impact the size, scope, and lead time required to build SFAI@USF. We continue to work closely with colleagues at SFAI on curriculum and enrollment prospects, while USF's legal team is working on options to allow us to continue the exciting and mission-aligned work of building SFAI@USF. While there is no guaranteed outcome, we will continue to work to identify a path forward that aligns with our strategic priorities and initiatives.
- We are reviewing academic staffing needs and beginning discussions with current SFAI faculty about employment opportunities that may become available, subject to the result of the due diligence and ongoing discussions with SFAI leadership.
- As part of the due diligence, our facilities team is working with a team of architects to assess the condition of the physical plant and infrastructure at SFAI's 800 Chestnut Street campus. This will help us understand which spaces could continue to be used and what investments are required to bring the rest of the facilities into compliance with seismic standards, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other regulations.

Our efforts continue to be animated by the opportunity to create a flagship arts program with SFAI, reimagine Jesuit education through potentially transformative investments in the arts and sciences, and preserve SFAI's legacy and invaluable resources for education, creative expression, experimentation, and cultural equity. The need for a newly invigorated strategic vision for the arts, social justice, and community outreach is as critical as ever. Our efforts are being met with external resources and interest from partners in the philanthropic community who are dedicated to the long-term future of the arts in the San Francisco Bay Area.

I look forward to our continued efforts on this significant initiative in the arts and will continue to keep you up to date.

Warmly,



Chinyere Oparah
Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

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