

ASP Films

AS Office of Assessment
Structure & Program Advisory Committee



The AS Assessment Process
2012 Board Recommendations

Introduction

AS Productions Films is a media-based programming office dedicated to providing film screenings relevant to student events, issues and tastes. The currently approved statement of purpose for the AS Productions Films office is as follows:

ASP Films hosts a number of specialized film festivals and special film related events on campus each year. The Films Coordinator is responsible for the planning and implementation of these events, including the selection of films and the securing of copyright licensing. ASP Films produces low-cost campus film events featuring recent releases, blockbuster hits, cult classics, foreign films, and documentaries in order to entertain students and to increase film appreciation on Western's campus.

Programs/Services Provided

Following the recent office restructure, AS Productions Films office currently offers 4 large-scale film events per quarter.

This has been an exceedingly successful use of student funds and resources in that as many, or *more*, students attend ASP Films' events at less expense.

ASP Films has built a track record of successful large-scale events (e.g. 1000+ at *BANFF*; 1000+ at a screening of James Cameron's *Avatar*; 660+ at Christopher Nolan's *Inception*—students having to be turned away; 900+ at *Iron Man*; 800+ at *Star Trek*; 800+ at *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*). Students love the community-building effect that these grand-scale events create much more than the isolating effect created in VU 552.

The licensing fees for showing a film even once can be very expensive (\$150 - \$1000). And it is fairly common for films shown Sunday through Wednesday in VU 552 to attract less than twenty people—sometimes less than ten. The Films program is in the position of having to compete with new entertainment services in the “home/dorm theater setting” (i.e. Netflix, illegal piracy, *bluray* quality, low-cost rentals through Redbox). These funds can be utilized for larger more memorable events.

As of now, the programming is more focused on serving more students with fewer events that generate a more “special event” feel.

Strategic Recommendations

- 1. Change the AS Films statement of purpose to suit the programming currently offered following the office's recent restructure.**

The proposed new mission statement is as follows:

AS Productions Films hosts a number of large-scale film events and film festivals in order to entertain students and strengthen their connection to the Western community.

This new mission statement succeeds in reflecting the office's scope in a manner that demonstrates economy with language, thereby easily informing students.

Previously, the Films office has followed a "Film Series" model of programming; "Film Series" in this case meaning a series of a given number of films each week being shown on campus. These series covered mainstream genres as well as more niche-market subgenres. For example, one week the Films Coordinator might have been showing all classics (*On the Waterfront*, *High Noon*, and *Gone With the Wind*, etc.,) with the next week showcasing horror films, the next comedy, the next independent, and so on. Only this past year has the AS Productions Films office diverged from that programming path toward more broad appeal/large event type programming. Essentially, the program has changed to show only four large-scale film events *per quarter* instead of four films *per week*.

The film series model was drawing only a handful (literally, in some cases) of students per event, and the office saw it more fit to use the funds towards bigger events that more of the student population could enjoy as a means of using student fees more effectively. Now, the model allows the office to book film showings of films in between the theatres and being released on DVD to create more "hype" per event.

- 2. Focus the creation of better means of assessment and data collection and standardization of practices.**

The office should seek to standardize assessment priorities, categories, and practices for better comparison from year to year in order to identify areas for improvement in the future. These policies are to be managed internally by the AS Productions Assistant Director for Marketing and Assessment, with the outside consultation of the AS Office of Assessment.

3. Forge and maintain relationships with community partners in order to better serve the diverse interests of Western students.

This can be accomplished with low or no cost to AS films, and will introduce students to independent and art films available around Bellingham. Collaborations with organizations such as local art-house cinemas, film festivals, film makers, and others build community partnerships and open up new avenues for reaching untapped student markets.

These practices and their specifics would ideally be communicated through the forum of office legacy documents. In the early stages of this programming shift, it would be beneficial for coordinators to be given comprehensive and diverse lists of potential community partners and methods of community coalition building.