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# Op-ed: A decline in the arts at a liberal arts University

Added by **Katie Davert** on March 30, 2017

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by Katie Davert

Franklin Pierce University is a liberal arts university with almost no arts.

Liberal arts is loosely defined as the academic course of instruction at a college intended to provide general knowledge and comprising the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences, as opposed to professional or technical subjects. FPU has all of these categories, including the arts but since 2014, the arts program here has been on a decline.

The university cut six majors, half of which fell under the arts, graphic communications, fine arts and art management. Theater and dance were also cut. While students may not know the answer, professors certainly do.

Before the majors were cut there was a drop in enrollment for those six majors. In reality, there was a decrease throughout the entire university in all majors. After this, the number of students in the majors and university began to rise again. Unfortunately the fall in enrollment was used as a justification for the 2014 majors cut.

There are students graduating this year in these majors. They're the last of their kind unless FPU brings back these majors. These students are not happy to be in this situation either. Tala Wilson, a senior, is a graphic communications major, one of the programs that was eliminated. "They just cut the majors without telling anyone. They shouldn't have done it in the middle of the year," said Wilson. "People think the arts are a dying career choice, but art is all around you every day."



(Photo: Katie Davert)

Here at FPU, the arts are valued but it's not always obvious. The gallery openings are highly regarded, yet this latest one featured print making, something that is only now offered as a GLE course. Since the majors were cut, some classes are no longer being offered at all. Stained glass and black and white photography were not offered in the 2017 spring semester and it is unlikely that they'll be available in the fall. Glass blowing was saved because of high level university support, even though it's one of the most expensive art classes at FPU.

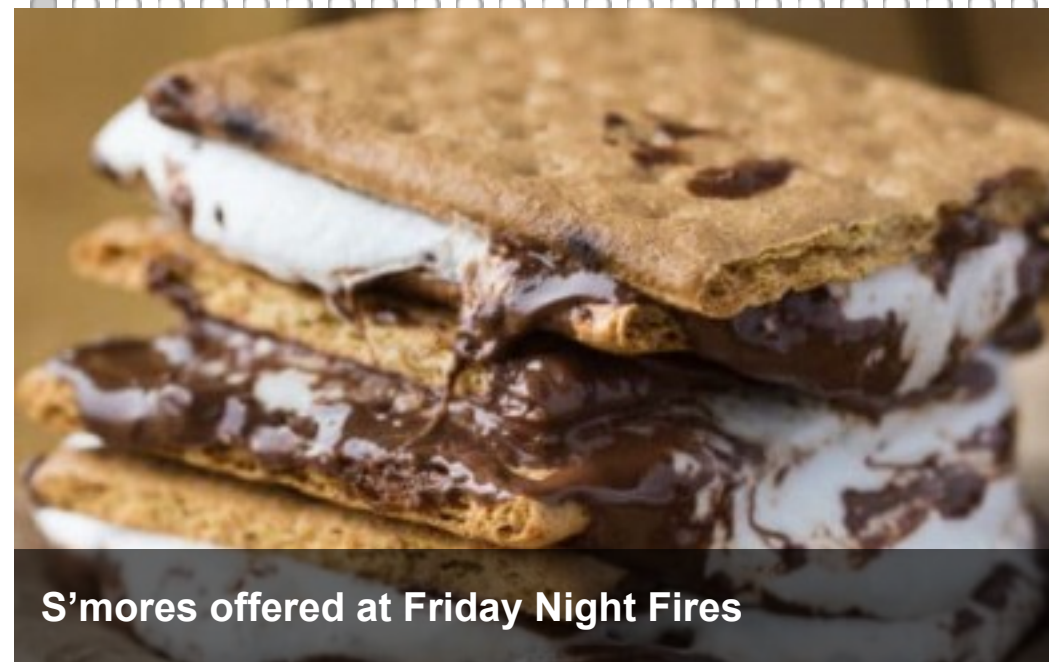


Without the three art majors at FPU the school runs the risk of turning into a health science university.

One thing that draws students to Franklin Pierce is the diversity of programs. Without the art majors this diversity shrinks. Already, there are less students interested in the art programs here than there were two years ago because it offers no majors. While there is a visual arts minor, it's not possible to establish a career with just a secondary discipline.

Bringing back the majors, even one of them, if not all, would greatly benefit students and the university as a whole. It could be done at almost no cost, according to several art professors, and the rate of student enrollment would increase because the school would be able to offer something not many others would, liberal arts – real liberal arts – and health science. If the majors are brought back, the arts will thrive at Franklin Pierce University.

## Campus News



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Campus wide trick or treat put on at Franklin Pierce University.

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