

Save OCAC, Inc.
PO Box 19745
Portland, OR 97280



March 1, 2019

To the Oregon College of Art and Craft Board of Trustees,

We, Save OCAC, Inc. represent many alumni, current students, and community members of the Oregon College of Art and Craft. Thank you for meeting with a few representatives of the Friends of OCAC on February 23. That meeting did not yield the information we, and many other interested individuals, were hoping to receive regarding the current financial situation of OCAC.

Except for that tightly managed February 23 meeting, the OCAC Board has had a history of a lack of transparency. While the board has held “strategizing retreats” and worked with corporations, donors, and professional strategists, your efforts to restructure have fallen short of what would be necessary to create a sustainable business model for OCAC. What you have NOT done is involve OCAC students, alumni or the larger OCAC community. This failure belies either a shocking level of hubris or a deep cynicism about the talents, capacities, and will of the very people who have entrusted this institution with their education, their savings, and their futures.

OCAC announced the board’s decision to terminate degree programs on Friday, February 8. It simultaneously announced that it had already retained a commercial real estate broker to sell the campus. The very next week, we got word that multiple bids were already on the table and that the board would be making its decision in short order. This exceptionally short timeline proves that the board decided to forestall any chance that the OCAC community could coalesce and form a “feasible plan” to save the campus and potentially the degree programs. Our calls for transparency stem directly from this set of facts.

We are not asking for the precise details of the bids that are on the table. Rather, we want our ideas and concerns to be heard and taken into account. We want enough time to put our own “feasible plans” together, to secure financing and donations, and to present them in an organized fashion. If you value OCAC’s current students and staff, if you believe in the education that OCAC’s alumni received, if you believe in the strength, diversity, and will of OCAC’s larger community, then you should allow us to gather together, to stand before you, to listen and be heard, and to formulate a creative solution that serves the mission and future of OCAC.

We respectfully ask that the Board:

1. Delay the sale of the College until all interested parties have time to form reasonable offers and submit them to the bidding process. A public declaration of a deadline for submission will ensure the greatest variety and quality of offers. Ideally, this deadline would fall after commencement so that current students are not further embroiled in unnecessary drama.
2. Hold a meeting to hear directly from students, alumni, and the larger OCAC community about their experiences and personal responses to the decisions being made by the Board of Trustees.

It is not too late, OCAC can be saved and must be saved. We are convinced that with new leadership, our community will rise and help this 112 year College not only survive, but thrive in years to come.