OSU may add arts overseer

By Frank Gabrenya
Dispatch Arts Reporter

Ohio State University is considering the appointment of a director to oversee a combined performing and fine arts complex.

The complex would consist of two existing campus facilities, Marshon Auditorium and Weigel Hall, and the Wexner Center for the Visual Arts, which is to be completed in the fall of 1989.

OSU President Edward Jennings has said the three facilities would form the second-largest performing and fine arts complex in the nation. Lincoln Center in New York is the largest.

Myles Brand, OSU provost and vice president for academic affairs, confirmed yesterday that an external committee of four museum directors was recently invited to assess the university’s plans for the Wexner center. The recommendation to appoint a single administrator came out of that assessment.

BRAND SAID such an appointment would simplify the reporting structures at the university and allow the three facilities to overlap on multidimensional programs. Brand said the facilities would continue to run independently.

While an official decision hasn’t been made, Brand said the university is looking favorably on the idea. A national search for a director would begin after a decision was reached.

Brand also said no decision has been made on the future of Andrew Broekema, dean of the college of the arts. Broekema suffered a heart attack in April and has been unable to resume his duties. Brand said Broekema continues to make progress in his recovery. “We’re still keeping our fingers crossed for Andy,” Brand said.

IN ANOTHER personnel move at Ohio State, Charles Harpole has been named chairman of the Department of Photography and Cinema.

Harpole, a native of Kentucky, comes to OSU from the University of Texas at Dallas, where he taught cinema history.

Harpole says the department, which recently moved from the college of engineering to the college of the arts, is “at a point to take off and grow.” He says he is particularly interested in expanding the department’s instruction in video.

In a related move, George P. Crepeau, who had been acting chairman of the cinema department, has been named acting associate dean of the college of the arts. That office has been vacant since Robert L. Arnold moved up to acting dean after Broekema’s heart attack. Crepeau, who has been at OSU since 1959, has held a variety of positions in the office of academic affairs.
OSU officials OK arts complex

Ohio State University officials have announced formal approval of a plan to combine the new Wexner Center for the Visual Arts, Mershon Auditorium and Weigel Hall as an arts complex.

According to the announcement by Myles Brand, provost and vice president for academic affairs, a search committee will soon be appointed to find an executive director to oversee the complex.

The idea of an arts complex incorporating the Wexner Center, which will be completed in 1989, came out of recommendations by an independent committee commissioned by OSU to assess planning for the center.

Under the plan, Jonathan Green, director of the University Gallery of Fine Art, will assume the duties of director of exhibitions for the Wexner. Timothy Van Leer will continue as director of Mershon, while Weigel Hall will remain under the School of Music.

The announcement also said that other directors would be named after an executive director for the complex is hired.
Plan will restructure arts areas

By RANDY JACOBS
Lantern staff writer

Under a new restructuring plan, the administration of the Wexner Center for the Visual Arts will be combined with that of Mershon Auditorium and Weigel Hall, said Myles Brand, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

The committee came to Ohio State to help assess the planning for the Wexner Center, currently under construction at the corner of 16th Avenue and High Street.

Weigel Hall will continue to be used as the primary performance facility for the School of Music under this new structure.

"We definitely think it is best to combine all three areas into one comprehensive complex," said William Studer, director of the University Libraries and coordinator for the Wexner Center. "We want to get an executive director who will play a part in overseeing all three areas and have one centralized coordinating point.

"That way we won't have two competitive events nose to nose," he said.

The executive director will be appointed as an associate dean for the College of the Arts. The director will have to report to both the provost office and the dean for the College of Arts.

This is an important factor in keeping the arts programs aimed at both the university community and a national audience, Brand said.

"We have a unique situation in that we have an excellent center developing in the Wexner Center, and it is closely tied to an academic institution like Ohio State. I can't think of any other center that has this setup," Brand said. "We want to be able to address both areas at once."

The College of the Arts had thought about combining the three areas before the committee suggested it, Brand said. The committee began their review of the planning for the Wexner Center in August, when they met with university officials and faculty members.

The visiting committee also suggested that the inaugural event for the Wexner Center be pushed back from late fall 1989 to spring 1990.

A search committee is currently being formed at Ohio State to appoint an executive director. Brand said he would like to select an executive director between July 1 and Sept. 1.

There will also be individual directors for the three arts areas who will report to the executive director. At the present time, Studer will continue his special assignment as coordinator for the Wexner Center.