

## **School of Art Assessment Inventory**

### **Mission and Goals Statement –**

The mission of the School of Art parallels that of the College of Fine Arts and is stated in the University Academic Plan for 2002-2007.

The mission of the College of Fine Arts is to educate students as artists, as teachers in the arts (elementary, secondary, and higher education), as arts researchers, and as life-long audience members who are able to respond to and appreciate the arts. The departments of the College create and produce studio and performing arts works as well as research in order to support this mission. (Academic Plan, p. 8.)

As stated in the Academic Plan, the University recognizes that this mission is "central to the overriding mission of Illinois State University" (p. 8).

The goals of the School of Art are:

1. To maintain an educational program in the visual arts that provides a professional education in the studio arts, art education, graphic design, and art history.
2. To provide art-based instruction for the University's General Education program and, therefore, for the general student population, and selected course work in art production for non-art majors interested in the studio disciplines.
3. To recruit and/or retain a faculty and staff with strong academic and professional credentials, who are committed to teaching, to their own creative/scholarly work, and to participation in academic shared governance.
4. To provide and maintain physical facilities and resources adequate to the educational mission and goals of the School.
5. To recruit and retain students who are committed to acquiring a professional-level art education within the liberal arts environment of the University.

Goals 1 and 2 are directly related to fulfilling the overall mission of the School of Art, the College of Fine Arts, and the University. Goals 3 and 4 address the human and material resources necessary to accomplishing goals 1 and 2. The accomplishment of goal 5 is largely dependent on the accomplishment of goals 1, 2 and 3.

In addition, the School of Art has an overriding goal of being and being recognized as one of the leading art programs in the state and the region.

## **B.A./B.S. in Art – Studio Arts Sequence**

### **Objectives**

1. To prepare students for professional careers as artists, designers and art educators
2. To prepare students for graduate level study in studio art, design, art history and teacher education.

The B.S./B.A. degree programs are the primary programs by which these mission objectives are accomplished.

### **Learning Objectives for Foundations Program (common to B.A./B.S. and B.F.A. degrees in studio arts, graphic design, and art education)**

1. Students will demonstrate a mastery of fundamental principles, formal strategies and skills in a variety of drawing media, as well as an understanding of relevant traditional and contemporary conceptual issues in the visual arts.
2. Students will demonstrate a mastery of fundamental principles, formal strategies and skills in a variety of two-dimensional media, as well as an understanding of relevant traditional and contemporary conceptual issues in the visual arts.
3. Students will demonstrate a mastery of fundamental principles, formal strategies and skills in a variety of three-dimensional media, as well as an understanding of relevant traditional and contemporary conceptual issues in the visual arts.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the major monuments and periods in the history of art from pre-historic times to the end of the medieval period, circa 1400.
5. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the major monuments and periods in the history of art from the early Renaissance, circa 1400, to the end of the Baroque period, circa 1775.

### **Learning Objectives for the B.A./B.S. Degree**

#### **Studio Arts**

1. Students will demonstrate formal and conceptual competence in at least one discipline in the studio arts.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the major issues in contemporary art and of these issues' relationship to their own art work.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the major monuments and periods in the history of art from the Romantic period, circa 1775, to the end of the Modern period, circa 1970.

4. Students will demonstrate the ability to complete a research project in a specific subject in art history.

### **General Assessment of the B.A./B.S.**

Although the development of skills and concepts are emphasized throughout the curriculum, the need for students to synthesize all the elements of their education in art and design is understood. Emphasis is put on our ability to assess the degree to which BA/BS art majors are able to do this and success is tracked in a variety of ways, from the completion of Foundation and Core requirements through to graduation. The first level of assessment involves the successful mastering of the material and content of these basic courses. To continue, students must achieve at least a C in every School of Art course and maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA in the major. By the end of the sophomore year all BA/BS students must apply to one of the four sequences that make up the art program - Graphic Design, Studio, Art Education, or Art History. In all classes, students undergo continuous critiques and evaluation of their work. This is done in addition to the grading of individual projects and is designed to be an assessment strategy, evaluating the progress students are making and their ability to synthesize their knowledge, skills, problem-solving ability and critical and analytical judgment. As they progress, the students are expected to work more independently, to develop their own projects, and to form a conceptual framework for their artwork.

Students in the Teacher Education Sequence are required to take Art 309, a professional-preparation course, which involves pre-student teaching clinical experiences. The work done in this class helps prepare the students for their capstone student teaching experience through a combination of curriculum creation exercises and a required component of Saturday morning art classes conducted by the students for children from the community. These Saturday morning classes are an important part of assessing the readiness of Teacher Education students to do full scale student teaching.

### **Assessment Systems Used to Measure Learning Outcomes (by degree program and linked to learning objectives by parallel numbers)**

#### **B.A./B.S. and B.F.A.**

##### **Foundations Program**

(1) All art majors, except for art history majors, are required to take Art 104, Visual Thinking: Drawing Fundamentals. They receive instruction in drawing principles, formal strategies, and skills and the results are evaluated on an ongoing, individual, one-on-one basis by the instructor and through group critique sessions involving other students and the instructor. As the drawing work itself demonstrates outcomes in mastery of the principles and skills, the critiques demonstrate the degree to which students can explain and analyze both their own and others' work in relation to traditional and contemporary art concepts.

(2) All art majors, except for art history majors, are required to take Art 103, Visual Thinking: 2D Fundamentals. They receive instruction in two-dimensional media principles, formal strategies, and skills and the results are evaluated on an ongoing, individual, one-on-one basis by the instructor and through group critique sessions involving other students and the instructor. As the 2D work itself demonstrates outcomes in mastery of the principles and skills, the critiques demonstrate the degree to which students can explain and analyze both their own and others' work in relation to traditional and contemporary art concepts.

(3) All art majors, except for art history majors, are required to take Art 109, Visual Thinking: 3D Fundamentals. They receive instruction in three-dimensional media principles, formal strategies, and skills and the results are evaluated on an ongoing, individual, one-on-one basis by the instructor and through group critique sessions involving other students and the instructor. As the 3D work itself demonstrates outcomes in mastery of the principles and skills, the critiques demonstrate the degree to which students can explain and analyze both their own and others' work in relation to traditional and contemporary art concepts.

(4) All art majors are required to take Survey of Art I, which covers the period indicated. They demonstrate their knowledge of the monuments and periods through testing that includes identification of relevant slide and digital images.

(5) All art majors are required to take Survey of Art II, which covers the period indicated. They demonstrate their knowledge of the monuments and periods through testing that includes identification of relevant slide and digital images.

## **B.A./B.S.**

### **Studio Arts**

(1) In addition to the sequence of required courses in a discipline that students take and the one-on-one supervision of them within the studio environment, students also participate in regular critique sessions, involving both faculty and other students, that require them to analyze and explain their work, both formally and conceptually.

(2) Students are required to relate their artwork to contemporary art practice. This is done through ongoing discussion with the instructor during one-on-one class mentoring and within the group during class critiques. All B.A./B.S. students are also required to take coursework in either modern art or contemporary art, which assesses learning outcomes through testing and written assignments research and analysis.

(3) All art majors are required to take Survey of Art III, which covers the period indicated. They demonstrate their knowledge of the monuments and periods through testing that includes identification of relevant slide and digital images.

(4) All art majors are required to take at least two advanced level art history courses. Normally, these courses are seminars, which require significant research and writing components. These projects are closely monitored and evaluated by art history faculty members well-trained in this kind of assignment.

### **How Results of Assessment Are Being Used to Lead to Program Improvement (Linked to Degree Programs and Sequences)**

#### **B.A./B.S.**

##### **Foundations**

Given the importance of the mastery of fundamental principles, formal strategies, and skills to the development of the visual artist and to success in discipline specific coursework, Foundations was revised under the leadership of a Foundations Coordinator. The curriculum was made more rigorous and consistent, and the courses were more clearly established as prerequisites to all subsequent courses. The result has been better-prepared students and greater success in upper division courses. This improvement has been clear to faculty and has been affirmed by them.

##### **Sequences (Studio Arts, Graphic Design, Art Education)**

Assessment of student performance indicated that too many students were not including advanced level coursework in their study for the degree. This was largely due to the existence of the General Art Sequence, which allowed students so much breadth of choice and required an insufficient number of credits in the major that many students could graduate without ever going beyond 200-level art courses in studio work. Consequently, the school embarked on a major revision of the undergraduate curriculum to correct the perceived weaknesses in the B.A./B.S. program. The General Art Sequence was abolished, and all students, by the end of the sophomore year must now choose either the Studio, Art Education, Art History, or Graphic Design Sequence, all of which require advanced level work. In addition, GPA standards were raised, requiring a minimum grade of C in all major courses, and a 2.8 minimum GPA, along with a portfolio review and interview for admission to the Art Education Sequence. Required coursework for each sequence and for individual studio disciplines was tightened to provide a better-structured education in all programs.

Assessment also indicated that art students needed more training in critical thinking, theory, and analysis. Consequently, required reading, writing and critical discussion were introduced into more studio classes and independent studies to reinforce the kind of work already being done in art history and art education classes. The art history requirement was also expanded from 12 credit hours to 15 credit hours, which will give even more experience in critical thinking, reading, and writing.

The Art History Sequence was revised by deleting the studio foundation courses as a requirement, allowing for additional advanced study in art history. In addition,

completion of the Survey of Art I, II, and III sequence with grades of B or better and submission of a writing sample were added as admission requirements for entrance into the Art History Sequence.

In order to better prepare Graphic Design students for the highly competitive nature of the field, the Sequence curriculum was revised to include additional professional courses, including Art 337, Graphic Design V, Art 315, Topics in Graphic Design, Art 316, History of Graphic Design, and Art 302, Graphic Design for the Web.

A major change in improving overall standards was the implementation of a portfolio review for admission to the School of Art. This has helped bring better-prepared and more committed students into the program and improved the overall meeting of learning objectives.