

## 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.F.A. in Art**

### **Objectives**

#### **B.F.A.**

1. To prepare students in a highly specialized and directed way to enter selected studio or professional fields in the visual arts;
2. To prepare students for entry into graduate programs in the visual arts and careers in the field of art;
3. To enable students to concentrate in specific media areas and to develop high levels of technical proficiency in those areas;
4. To develop students' knowledge of major achievements and principal artists in the art of Western and non-Western cultures; and
5. To prepare students to make discerning evaluations of quality in design products and works of art.

#### **Learning Objectives for the B.F.A. Degree**

1. Students will demonstrate a high level of formal and conceptual competence in at least one discipline in the studio arts.
2. Students will demonstrate a significant understanding of the major issues in contemporary art and of these issues' relationship to their own artwork.
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.F.A.**

The need for students to synthesize all the elements of their education in art and design is understood by the faculty and is built into the entire program. Emphasis is put on our ability to assess the degree to which art majors are able to do this and is tracked in a variety of ways from the completion of the Foundations program through to graduation. The first level of assessment involves the successful mastering of the Foundation material and content, which are intended to provide a common basis of knowledge and skills on which students will build. To continue, students must achieve at least a C in every School of Art course. By the end of the sophomore year all students must apply to one of the four sequences that make up the art program, Graphic Design, Studio, Art Education, or Art History, or apply for admission to the BFA program, which involves submission of a portfolio and a letter of support from a faculty sponsor to the BFA Committee. The BFA applicant also undergoes an interview. If accepted into the BFA program, the student must choose two mentors to help guide his/her program. In addition to the

assessments already described, BFA students undergo a final review that consists of an individual exhibition of work in the University Galleries and the writing of a supportive statement. Both the exhibition and the statement demand a synthesis of all they have learned to that point. Students cannot have this final capstone experience without approval of their faculty mentors who evaluate the students' readiness for it. Much of the work done in this program is tutorial-based and requires a great deal of independent, self-directed work on the part of the students.

### **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.F.A.**

(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. Students in this degree program also do a significant amount of independent study work in studio art. This highly individualized work with faculty members provides a very direct mentoring and assessment process in which verbal and written critique and analysis are used to measure learning outcomes and to provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate the relationship of their own work to issues in contemporary art.

(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.F.A. students are also required to take coursework in both modern and 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 B.F.A. students are required to take at least three 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.F.A.**

The B.F.A. program has been one of the strongest in the School of Art for some time. It requires an additional portfolio review, recommendations from two faculty members, and a major and overall GPA of 3.0 for admission and retention. The high quality of the final solo exhibitions the students mount is evidence of their mastery of the learning objectives. There was also some evidence, however, that the critical thinking and writing skills of these students needed to be improved, as well as their knowledge of contemporary art. Consequently, a required seminar dealing with theoretical and critical issues was created specifically for the B.F.A. program, their art history requirement was increased from 18 to 21 credit hours, and additional reading and writing assignments were added to their studio tutorials.