

Departmental Assessment Meeting: Report - Art Department

Please fill out this report based on your department's conversation and return via e-mail to Megan Leonard or Sasha Pfau by March 31, 2017.

Summary of past decisions

Please summarize up to three departmental changes made since the last HLC visit (08-09) the impetus for those changes and any changes to information gathering about student development.

1. The department eliminated ARTS100 Freehand Drawing as a pre-requisite for all 200-level studio art courses except painting courses. Impetus: The pre-requisite was an impediment for many (non-major) students who either could not fit the course into their schedule, and/or had a strong interest and ability in photography or sculpture for example, but couldn't study it without the ARTS100 pre-req. The pre-req. was dropped for printmaking courses in an attempt to salvage steeply dropping enrollments. There were many conversations between the faculty about this decision. Profs Maakestad and Payne decided that Freehand Drawing was no longer a necessary pre-req. for their 200-level photography, ceramics, and sculpture courses. Prof Gill felt strongly about keeping the pre-req. for her printmaking courses but finally decided to let go in the face of diminishing enrollment. Prof. Lopas has maintained the pre-req. for his painting courses but is also experiencing dropping enrollment numbers.
2. The department revised the senior capstone by creating new grading rubrics for all components, and writing a "Senior Handbook" to guide seniors through their final year. Impetus: This came from a series of departmental discussions assessing course evaluations, and student performance with the goal of helping our senior majors have the most successful senior year that they can, and to improve transparency of our methods of evaluation.
3. The department decided to change our course structure to include stacked courses, to allow for a broader range of courses in our curriculum. Impetus: This came as a result of a suggestion by Christine Reising in her 2012 assessment of our department, and subsequent departmental discussions. Stacking multiple levels of a course in the same time period allows for the broader range of courses offered, and it prevents courses from being cancelled due to low enrollments.

Looking forward

Please summarize your department's focus for student development and your evaluation methods.

The department's focus for student development for next year is the senior capstone criteria; further refining our current criteria in terms of work production expectations, research presentation expectations, ability to constructively critique self and peer work, writing ability, and professional portfolio. We will gather information to evaluate the senior capstone by all the grading rubrics related to the criteria; practicum critiques, senior seminar grades, oral presentation, senior exhibition, professional portfolio. We will also collect course evaluations for both senior practicum courses as well as a senior exit survey evaluation.

Achieving departmental goals for students

Please explain how your departmental curriculum achieves your student learning goals, being sure to include the Capstone. Feel free to attach a curricular map or other supporting documents. Summarize the ways your department provides guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

The Art Department's student learning goals:

1. Acquire the necessary technical and methodological skills to make visually engaging works of art.
2. Gain knowledge in the theory, history and philosophy of art
3. Excel at conducting research in art history
4. Communicate effectively about art in both written and verbal forms
5. Learn to refine, revise, and think critically about their work and that of their peers
6. Understand their work within the context of art history and contemporary art practice

The department does not differentiate between goals for the art major, the art minor, or non-art majors. The majority of students taking courses in the department are not art majors but are interested in the study of art or taking courses in the art department to fulfill one of the College's general education requirements and/or learning domains. A student taking courses in the art department will be exposed to most, if not all, of the above stated goals. However, studio majors advancing through the department's coursework include the goals above and the following three:

7. *Display professionalism in the documentation and presentation of their work
8. *Attain the skills and knowledge to pursue a professional career or an advanced degree in studio art or art history
9. *Gain the tough mindedness, critical independence, and studio dedication needed to be lifelong practicing artists.

How the Art Dept. curriculum achieves these goals:

1. Through technical demonstration and instruction, course projects, group critiques, and evaluation.
2. Through art history lectures, and research projects and presentations.
3. Through practical assignments in art history courses.
4. Through writing assignments, oral presentations, and group discussions.
5. Through the various stages of completing a studio assignment, students review, revise, re-think, and re-make. They learn to critique their own work through the experience of critiquing their peer's work and by observing the professor's critiques.
6. Through multiple presentations of historical and contemporary artists in class, as well as individual research.
7. *Through the development of a professional portfolio binder which includes an artist resume, artist statement, and a digital portfolio of images documenting their body of work, including a list of works.
8. *Through the rigorous work schedule required during their senior year to produce a body of work for their senior exhibition, including a large degree of independent work.
9. *Through their experience in the practicum critiques, they are forced to digest a variety of opinions from the faculty and then extrapolate their own independent thought that guides the direction and decision-making process of their creative work.

*These comprise the senior capstone.

Guidance in the effective use of research and information resources:

1. Students in Art History are guided in the use of the Jstor archive to facilitate their research process.
2. In the research project module of Gill's Beginning Drawing course, students are given a presentation by library staff on ways to use the library resources for their projects.
3. In Payne's Beginning Photography course, students complete several written assignments and a formal research project.

Your department's role in achieving the college's shared goals for students

Please explain how your departmental learning goals contribute to the Vision for Student Learning Goals. Feel free to attach a map or other supporting documents.

See attached excel file mapping Art Dept. student learning goals to the college's Vision for Student Learning Goals.