

**MARSHALL UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN
B.F.A. UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Submitted October 2004, Assessment for AY 2003 – 04

1. Assessment Activities

A. Program Goals

The aim of the undergraduate program in the Department of Art and Design is to teach students the principles and practices of art and design, to become knowledgeable about contemporary issues and the history of art, and to respond analytically to artworks. The Bachelor of Fine Arts is a professional degree within the fine arts discipline.

B. Learning Outcomes / Data Collection

Freshmen Portfolio Review, upon completion of the Art Core Curriculum, Art 101, 214, 215, 217, 218

Outcome: Students should exhibit basic competencies in representational and abstract drawing and design, in using traditional visual language and varied processes, and in showing evidence of original exploration of concept and form. To pass, or earn a grade of CR, students need to have an overall grade of 2 or better in the majority of categories on the evaluation form.

In 2003-04, Department of Art and Design faculty administered a Freshmen Portfolio Review (Art 299—required, 0 credits). The three-fold purpose of this review is to determine the students' skill levels in 1) color application, 2) two-dimensional and three-dimensional design, and 3) beginning and intermediate drawing. Each faculty member reviews students' work individually and completes a rating sheet on each student. Next the faculty meet together to evaluate the students' progress and to assign a CR or NC to each student. Students who earn CR receive encouragement to continue to strive for quality work. The students who get NC, their advisors, and the chair meet individually to create an improvement plan. Each student who requested to see the completed rating forms received the final summary of his/her review within two weeks. The review form contains a numerical evaluation based upon a five point scale—4 is excellent, 3 is good, 2 is satisfactory, 1 is poor, and 0 is fail. The rating form also contains a section for comments.

Eleven faculty members reviewed all the students among whom are art education majors from the College of Education and Human Resources. Any art education major who received a NC rating, a faculty member, and the chair met to determine ways to improve their artwork for later resubmission. These and all other Freshmen Portfolio Review records, results, and precipitating actions are on file in the Department of Art and Design.

In an on-going quest to improve this evaluation, the chair and faculty undertook revisions of the Freshmen Portfolio Review rating sheets and summary forms. Revisions are underway to make each document more precise and more complete without sacrificing clarity and simplicity. At year's end, the department employed a full-time tenure-track fundamentals teacher whose responsibility is to work to achieve uniform quality of instruction among the multi-sections of Art 214, 215, 217, and 218.

Apprenticeship / Field Training, Art 490

Outcome: Graphic design students should be able to complete successfully an internship in a professional venue with an average score or better and a supervisor's positive recommendation and evaluation. He/she must earn a grade of C or better on a portfolio to be used as a tool for job interviews.

A majority of the art majors are concentrating in graphic design. During their senior year, graphic design majors enrolled in Art 490 (Apprenticeship/Field Training—3 credits) work at a professional site related to their specialization. At the conclusion of their internship, their supervisor completes an evaluation form. This form, similar to the Art 299 form, has separate questions that the supervisors answer, such as how should the value of the project be rated and what grade should the student receive. After a student finishes the apprenticeship/field training, the student's supervisor completes an internship evaluation form based on a five-point scale. The completed forms are on file in the Department of Art and Design.

Also during this course, students prepare a professional presentation of their work, meant to be a tool for job interviews in design related businesses. The portfolios are reviewed by regional designers near the end of each semester, with the students doing a full, professional presentation. The graphic design faculty uses an A to F grading scale to grade a student's internship and portfolio (Art 490).

Senior Capstone Project and Review

Outcome: Students should produce a professional body of work for a group exhibition, present it, document it, write an artistic statement, and earn a grade of C or better on studio faculty critiques. Quality work is defined by a high degree of craftsmanship, originality, installation, and evidence of facility with the chosen medium and technique.

During their graduation semester, students enroll in Art 499 (Senior Capstone Project—1 credit). An articulate artistic statement, participation in a senior exhibit, and documentation of their work are requirements in this course. The department receives a copy of each statement and visual documentation in slide and/or digital format. The studio faculty critiques the exhibition on an individual basis similar to the process used in Art 299. Each teacher completes a form with a five-point scale: 4 is excellent, 3 is good, 2 is average, 1 is poor, and 0 is fail. The form has a comment space. Faculty scores are averaged into one grade for the student's exhibition. The capstone professor, the student, and the student's advisor meet to discuss the results of the evaluation.

Annual Juried Exhibition

Two outside professionals in the art field evaluate the Annual Juried Exhibition. Works judged strong in concept and in the principles of design are exhibited in Birke Gallery. Students receive prizes for the “best of” in several categories such as best in design, best painting, best in show, etc. Enthusiastic donors give generous prizes to the winners, and the opening reception is a well attended event. Jurors complete evaluation forms to rate the overall quality of the exhibit and the quality of individual areas of work. Jurors may also include a written statement for individual exhibitors.

Co-Curricular Experiences

Outcome: Students broaden their experience, stimulate their creative imagination, and increase their aggregate art knowledge by participating in a variety of art and cultural events each semester.

B.F.A. art majors and art education majors participated in Art 200 (Co-Curricular Experiences—0 credits) in both the fall and spring semesters of 2003-04. This course, required for six semesters, is a participatory course during which students must attend three art/cultural events per semester. The department chair prepares and distributes a regional art/cultural events roster from which students choose events to attend each semester. Students receive a roster at the first meeting of the Department of Art and Design faculty and students each fall, and it is posted on the Department of Art and Design website. The department secretary maintains a record of attendance and places attendance cards for each event in the students’ files. Attending art exhibits provide students with a yardstick against which to measure their own works, and attending plays, ballet and modern dance, and films provide students with insights into lighting values, the psychology of color in costumes and sets, the spatial composition of sets, styles, the harmony and rhythm of composition, and all aspects of the visual arts at work in these productions—a cornucopia of seminal ideas to inspire their own work. These aspects of the visual arts are infused into students’ artworks in imaginative and creative ways that stimulate the feelings and thoughts of their audience; however, such aesthetic gains are not easily measured with grades or numbers because of the abstract nature of emotional and intellectual probing.

C. Results

Nineteen students graduated with a B.F.A. degree in 2003 – 2004

15—graphic design
1---photography
1---painting
2---crafts

No sets of standards/benchmarks have either nation-wide acceptance or general adoption by art departments in colleges and universities. Rather, the success of college/university art programs seem to be tied directly to the quality of the individual art faculties. The College Art Association is not an accrediting organization but the National Association of Schools of Art and Design does recommend standards. However, neither offers sets of standards that are accepted nationally. Many art departments use evaluation instruments similar to those used to rate the progress of art students at Marshall University.

Many changes advocated in the 2002-03 school year proved to be helpful in 2003-04. Art 101 for art majors provided a more in-depth study of the medium, elements, and composition of artworks. Art 412 presents a balanced amalgam of 20th century movements and issues.

The digital arts lab continues to help students in their pursuit of advanced computer art projects. As a consequence, our students will be more competitive in the job market for graphic art designers.

Faculty analyses of ratings of student portfolios in Art 299 and Art 499 motivated the formation of committees to resolve two needs: 1) The multi-sections of the fundamentals classes are in need of uniform quality and thoroughness, and 2) students need help with articulating a clearer artistic statement to accompany their exhibitions. Also, Art 499 ratings indicate that a different instrument for rating graphic design majors may be necessary because of the nature of their Senior Capstone Project. On-going reviews of the data by faculty will continue in an effort to assess program areas of strength and areas needing improvement.

II. BOT Initiative 3 Compliance

Essential skills and knowledge learned in the art program are: the principles of art and design and how to apply them to the study of production of art; the history of art and how it shapes contemporary thought about art; the language of art—how to read art, how to reflect upon it, and how to write about it. Course syllabi, student work, evaluations by instructors, outside jurors, employers, and collected data allow us to measure the success of student learning and the effectiveness of the program.

III. Plans for the Current Year

The Department of Art and Design faculty has begun the self-study of the art curriculum, safety and physical spaces, as well as all other issues that will strengthen the art program.

Plans are underway tentatively to restructure the graphic design sequence of classes; however, the loss of a graphic design faculty member has slowed the plan to incorporate additional multi-media applications and video digital editing into the web design program. Under the current five-year equipment replacement plan, software will

continue to be updated, and newer equipment with advanced capabilities is replacing older equipment as quickly as progress in technology dictates.

In the fall 04 semester, the art history faculty will submit a complete draft of requirements for a bachelor's degree in art history. Six new art history courses are already designed for the curriculum committee.

Preparation is underway for the Annual New York Art Fieldtrip and a spring fieldtrip to study the art and architecture of Madrid and other cities in Spain.

The art history and art appreciation faculty are learning to use the new digital projectors in SH 621. Dr. Susan Jackson is teaching them to use Power Point Presentations and other useful computer-generated programs in their classes. Renovations in SH 621 and SH 624 greatly enhance the academic ambiance, and they provide for the expanding visual-training possibilities provided by the faculty.

The Birke Art Gallery director has scheduled distinguished lecturers and artists. Our students will benefit from hearing these professionals as well as many distinguished artists scheduled to be at the Huntington Museum of Art and Museum in the Community. Exhibition lighting is being upgraded throughout the gallery.

IV. Assistance Needed

Costs for operating viable art programs are increasing steadily. This is particularly true in photography and graphic design areas that must stay abreast of the most recent technological developments in these disciplines. Grants from outside the University would help defray costs, and to this end the Dean of COFA devotes considerable time and effort. Additional faculty will be needed to insure the appropriate number of class offerings in the future B.A. in Fine Arts with an art history major. More images for art history and appreciation classes need to be digitalized.

V. What one lesson has this Assessment Report taught the reporter?

This assessment is well geared to encourage the Department of Art and Design to articulate sets of goals clearly and to improve its system for measuring program effectiveness, especially from an administrative point-of-view. Moreover, this assessment document urges the establishment of a prescribed set of goals that can be rated quantitatively, especially from an academic point-of-view. All of this process is good so far as it goes; however, in the creative arts, such an assessment has its limitations.

One limitation that comes to mind is that as faculty diligently pursues the goals to be assessed, we tend to limit our time for truly creative teaching outside-the-box and to limit imaginative forages into that boundless realm of artistic creativity. The assessment form is excellent for measuring the prescriptive programs, but it tends toward "rewarding" the

pedagogue and the pedantic. It risks encroachment of dogmatic activities that are measurable by tangible means. Such measures may not work as well in the fine arts.

Since no consensus of a universal definition of art exists among contemporary cultures, setting goals and standards are only academic at best. Raw talent does not lend itself to standard measurement because of the variables of imagination, experimenting with/and mastery of new materials, and that indefinable spark of creativity genius that, in reality, cannot be taught. Nor does this document measure those transcendental inspirational moments between teacher and student, which are important in the fine arts. Perhaps what this document assesses most are measurable principles of craftsmanship and administrative organization.

The assessment process is, no doubt, more helpful than hindrance, but it fails to assess the one tenet upon which the study of the fine arts is predicated—the encouragement and promotion of aesthetic creativity.

Submitted by _____ Date: _____

H. Gary Gillespie, Chair,
Department of Art and Design

Marshall University
Assessment of Student Outcomes: Component/Course/Program Level
Component Area/Program/Discipline: B.F.A. Visual Arts, College of Fine Arts 2003-04
Component / Course / Program Level

Student Outcome	Person or Office Responsible	Assessment Tool Or Approach	Standard/Benchmark	Results/Analysis	Action Taken
To be exposed to artists and different modes of expression and concepts	Chair, faculty	Art 200 slips collected from students at each event	Departmental—students need 3 events per semester to receive CR	Student attendance is strong, and 67% of the 2003-04 students received CR.	None
Exhibition of basic competencies, drawing and 2D/3D design skills	Chair, faculty	Art 299, Freshmen Portfolio Review, evaluation rating form, discussions, recommendations	Standards represented in texts used in drawing and 2D/3D design class. Textbooks illustrations used for models.	70% received CR, and 30% were advised to revise and resubmit their portfolio	Faculty worked with students needing additional help to improve basic skills in drawing, 2D/3D design
Successful preparation of a graphic design portfolio and an effective job interview	Chair, graphic design faculty	Art 490 rating form, written critiques, supervisor's evaluation of interns, faculty and graphic arts professionals' evaluation of job interview.	Standards adopted by faculty and by professionals in the industry	68% of the 03 – 04 students received A's and 32% received B's	Keep an updated file of internship venues beneficial to students' education
Demonstrate a mastery of principles and practices of art and design that culminate in a Senior Capstone Project (Exhibit)	Faculty, chair	Art 499 rating evaluation forms completed by faculty	Assess quality of: artworks, statement of intent, and overall presentation of work on a 5 point scale. A minimum of 3 or better is necessary to pass.	100% passed the Senior Capstone Project Show	Plans to improve the artist's statement in the Senior Capstone Project
Demonstrate mastery of strong conceptualization and principles of design of artworks in the Annual Student Art Exhibit	Faculty, chair, and outside jurors	Written ratings and jurors' evaluations	Number of entries and categories of media	Students see the success of their peers whose artistic efforts become models for all.	

