

**Marshall University Department of Art and Design, Masters of Art,
Graduate Program Assessment Report
Submitted December 4, 2007, for Academic Year 2006-07**

1. Assessment Activities

A. Program Goals The M. A. is not a terminal degree. It is a choice typically made by those interested in building a body of work for an application to an M. F. A. (Master of Fine Arts) program, which is the terminal degree in studio art; for art educators seeking new skills and additional university credit; and for artists attempting to improve their studio work for sale and/or exhibition. Students concentrating in the graphic design area acquire skills that can apply directly to a variety of jobs, including those in print graphics, multimedia, and web design. Students opting for a concentration in Art Education (not appropriate for those seeking certification), often have broad interests, which include museum education programs or community arts education programs.

- 1.) The goal of the M. A., Masters of Art in Art, degree program are to, 1.) expand a student's knowledge of the principles of art and design and art history.
- 2.) Strengthen the artistic skills and problem-solving abilities students need to create successful, thoughtful, individual artwork.
- 3.) Present student artwork in both a contemporary and historical context.
- 4.) Prepare students to develop new curriculum and teaching methods.

**B. Learning Outcomes / Data Collection
9 and 18 Hour Reviews**

Outcome: Students should be conversant about ideas central to his/her work and exhibit the concepts and processes he/she is exploring to create a thesis or a body of art work. He/she must display work in progress; give an oral presentation of his/her ideas, including historical references, as well as, articulate artistic and educational goals. In 2006-07, the Department of Art and Design continued the faculty review of the student's work after a completion of 9 hours, and then again, after the completion of 18 hours. The review is facilitated by the Graduate Director, Professor Peter Massing. The reviews take place on the study day, during final exam week.

The studio faculty meet in the studio space that houses the equipment and/studio for the student's area of concentration, where the student displays or presents his/her work. The faculty evaluates the artwork, after the student makes an oral presentation, explaining the techniques and processes used, as well as the concepts considered for their art. The student's advisor is also present. Faculty offer ideas on how to improve the work, comment on work habits, and constructively criticize the work, referring to art historical movements, traditions and concepts, and contemporary issues.

To further learning goals and preparations for 9hr and 18hr reviews the graduate students presented work in progress during a mid-term critique that was open to faculty and

students in the department of art & design. The graduate student blog site is intended to allow periodic exchange of concepts related to media and methods in art, show examples of artwork, and critique individual development.

Results/Analysis: The advisor contributes his/her concerns about the student's progress in order to develop a plan of study. A Review Form, which rates the student's work from excellent to poor, is completed by each faculty with written comments included on the form. The Graduate coordinator collects the evaluation forms and copies them for the advisors. The advisors share the comments and rating with the students. The chair keeps the original forms in the art office and puts a copy in the student's file.

The reviews are useful in determining whether a student is progressing well in his/her areas of concentration. The reviews are used to translate the collective evaluations of the faculty. Graduate students are informed about their academic standing, progress, and direction with their plan of study.

The 9 hour review is an important event in the M. A. degree curriculum, since it tends to give shape to the remainder of a student's program. By the 18 hour review, a student must file a plan of study for the remaining 18 hours and select two faculty members who, along with the department chair, will continue to advise the student and read the final comprehensive exam. At this point a student is well on his/her way toward developing the work which defines his/her program, thesis, or exhibition. Most students gain confidence in the time between reviews and present the work in much more professional manner at this review.

Data Collection: *During 2006 – 2007 five graduate students presented their work during 9 and 18hour reviews with scores ranging from 2.32 to 3.4 and with an average of 3.064. Criteria used to evaluate the review process are currently being revised so that the student and advisor can be better informed about the collective faculty's assessment.*

Art 670, Seminar

Outcome: Students will gain research skills on topics related to their artwork or courses of study, and become conversant in issues surrounding their artwork or courses of study. Students form a small group and work closely with a faculty member who guides them through the research process, resulting in a research paper. They also spend time presenting and discussing relevant art issues.

The Graduate Director now strongly urges students to complete Art 670: Graduate Seminar, during the first eighteen hours of course works. In 2006-07 Art 670 was offered during the Spring semester so that the seminar course can provide learning experiences that will raise the rigor and meet higher expectations by the Art & design faculty at large.

Data Collection: During 2006-07 three students completed Art 670 that included seminar discussions on current Art & Design articles, internal and external group critiques, and term papers.

Action Taken: The Art 670 class coordinated an exhibition of artwork “Body Shots” in conjunction with Women’s History month that was displayed in the Memorial Student Center during the Art, English, and Political Science symposium. In addition to Art 670 and with the Graduate Director the students created and developed a graduate student blog site that uses technology to promote, discuss, and critique, student work and ideas.

Exhibition/Thesis

Outcome: Students present a professional body of artwork in the Birke Art Gallery, document it, and write artists’ statements or write theses, and submit them prior to graduation.

Students completing their M. A. in Art degree, in either studio, or art education, with a studio option, exhibit in the Birke Art Gallery. Those pursuing an M.A. in Art, with art education or art history as an option, complete and submit a thesis project. Since the inception, three years ago, of the art education program with a studio and exhibition option, it appears that there will be a very limited number of these students choosing to research and write a thesis. No one graduated with this option the past three years nor is anyone working in this area currently.

The students in studio areas receive guidance from their primary advisor, the Graduate Director, the department chair, and the gallery director in planning the thesis exhibition. Graphic Design students work with the graphic design faculty to select an appropriate exhibition venue.

Faculty complete Graduate Exhibition Review Forms, with a rating scale of excellent to fail and written comments. The forms are collected by the Graduate Director and kept on file in the art office and also in the student’s file. Students have access to their records. The advisor in the student’s area shares the Review Form with him/her. The graduate student needs approval of the collective faculty as indicated in the 18 hour review evaluation. The overall rating must exceed a 2.78 rating and meet the approval of the graduate committee.

Data Collected: *The average rating score for the last 15 graduates was a 2.77 out of a possible 4. Scores ranged from a 1.66 to 3.8. Fortunately, the three lowest scores were almost two years ago. The 2004 single graduate was rated at a 3.63. In the fall, 2005, one student presented a graduate exhibition and received an average score of 2.97. In 2006-07 six students presented exceptional exhibitions and excellent artist’s statements, three students during the fall 2006 and three during the spring 2007 with scores ranging from 2.78 to 3.34.*

Comprehensive Examination

Outcome: To write a paper which displays basic writing skill, and articulates an understanding of major influences in the student's work, as it relates to art in both a contemporary and historical context.

Data collected: Five graduate students during 2006-07 had three hours to write an exam on the major art historical influences, the traditions, the techniques and technology, audiences and content had on their artwork. The chair, the Graduate director, the advisor and an art historian read their papers and graded it with an Excellent, Pass, Pass with conditions, or Unsatisfactory. Again, earlier concerns about the relevance of this exam have led to a focusing of the Seminar class on the issues addressed by the questions on the exam. Recent examination papers produced have covered these issues with greater confidence, conviction and style. All students taking comprehensive exams during this reporting period passed.

C. Results

There are no nationally accepted standards or norms for graduate art programs. As with the undergraduate program, the department looks to NASAD, National Association of Schools of Art and Design, and the CAA, College Art Association, for recommended standards of conduct, safety, contact hours, and curriculum.

The methods the faculty uses to assess student progress and participation are the 9 and 18 hour reviews, class critiques, completion of Art 500 (Co-Curricular Experiences), Art 670 (Seminar), the Comprehensive Examination, and the Exhibition or Thesis.

Restructuring the Art 670, Seminar, class focused on personal research pertaining to each student's artistic interests has resulted in more appropriate artists' statements and comprehensive exams that indicate that each student can express coherently his/her intent, ideas, and concepts as well as produce art that should visually represent those same concerns.

Studio contact hours have been increased from three/four hours per week to six hours per week to be consistent with undergraduate class contact hours and NASAD standards. A new suggested four semester course curriculum has been developed for studio majors. The development of a studio option or thesis option for Art Education within the M.A. Art Degree has been completed. Within the past year two students concentrating in Art Education at the MA level have taken the option to research and produce art work for an exhibition.

For two or three years now grad students will have considerable studio space in the sculpture and ceramic areas and efforts to increase the physical space for photography printmaking, graphic design, and art education is being considered. Painting, weaving, visual resources and much of the remainder of the departmental studio areas must now be made a priority.

The single graduate of the program in 2005 year will be completing an M. F. A. program

at the University of New Mexico. One of the 2006 graduates taught at West Virginia State University in the spring 2007. Another teaches part-time in the Marshall's Department of Art and Design and works full-time for Computing Services.

II. BOT Initiative 3 Compliance

Not applicable to graduate programs.

III. Plans for the Current Year

The Department of Art and Design's chair, Prof. Byron Clercx, was able to fill one new position in Art Education with tenure track faculty member. The Art Education faculty member will assist graduate students with additional learning opportunities that will broaden the scope of student research as applied to curriculum development and teaching methods. Professor Massing has assumed the position of Graduate Director.

The Graduate Committee along with the chair and the Graduate Director will continue to assess the graduate program with regard to an Art & Design graduate advising handbook, graduate committee structure, review evaluations, Art 670/ graduate seminar, advertising the graduate program, and recruitment.

IV. Assistance Needed

Assistance is needed in the area of recruitment of new students from within and without our region and assessment of the success of our Masters graduates. It is necessary to seek those qualified candidates for our program from amongst the smaller colleges and universities in our region. The difficulties continue to be the lack of a terminal degree in the field, inadequate stipends, the redirection of assistantship funds into part-time faculty funds because our graduates are not always ready to teach (the department has a continuing need for faculty), and inadequate recruitment material. Tracking of former students who have completed our Masters program is also problematical. Over the past five years former students have graduated with terminal degrees from Pennsylvania School for the Arts, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Ohio State, Miami of Ohio, Memphis College of Art and Design, and Western Michigan State. Some have gone into higher education or back into the public school systems. Recently graphic design graduates have found corporate positions. However, the department has no systematic method of gathering information on its graduates, and could certainly use help in this endeavor.

V. Most Important Thing Learned

The Department of Art and Design's M.A. degree in Art is a slowly evolving program that continues to improve. The Graduate Committee has made important changes and contributions to the program as a result of the ongoing assessment we have put in place. The vagaries of student interest and enrollment, the challenges of studio space for grad students, new faculty and expertise, and the finances devoted to the area will require continuing review of the program.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____

Peter Massing, Director, Art and Design Graduate Program

Marshall University
Assessment of Student Outcomes: Component/Course/Program Level

Component Area/Program/Discipline: M.A. ART, Department of Art and Design

Component / Course/ Program Level					
Student Outcome	Person or Office Responsible	Assessment Tool or Approach	Standards/Benchmark	Results/analysis	Action Taken
1. To exhibit work and/or describe issues central to artwork or thesis to faculty	Graduate Director, chair, advisor, faculty	9 hour review of student work by faculty, rating form completed	Comparisons to previous M.A. work and professionals in the discipline	Students are defining ideas and skills that will mature before the 18 hour review	Students given specific artists to research in consultation with advisor
2. Same as above	Same as above	18 hour review of work, rating form completed	Same as above	Students exhibit growth from the 9 hour review- refine concepts and medium	Criteria for evaluation is being revised in order to refine students development and learning goals
3. To develop curriculum and teaching methods	Faculty	Thesis	MA students that choose to write a thesis are given direction with the development, oral presentations, and written document	Thesis/ Exhibition	Students thesis have not been presented in the past three years, the collective faculty is being consulted
4. To acquire research skills and learn about contemporary issues	Faculty	Art 670- Faculty member works with students, evaluates and grades the papers, gives quizzes, and tests	Grading consistent with academic courses	An individualized research paper, an abstract, an artist's statement is required	Course now focused on research and writing concerning student's work.

5. To present professional research in the form of an exhibition or thesis	Advisor, Gallery Director, Graduate Director, chair, faculty	Documentation of art work, written papers, orals, faculty complete evaluation sheet	Comparisons to previous M.A. work and professionals exhibitions and research in the field	Five students displayed the results of creative research. All have found art related employment.	Abstract of content and documenting slides required, or professionally prepared thesis
6. To write a coherent and inclusive comprehensive examination	Advisor, Graduate Director, chair, additional faculty member	Written test, evaluated by advisor, chair, Grad Director and additional faculty member	Departmental standards	Improvement has been shown in recent tests with changes in Art 670	Greater focusing of 670 class has improved preparedness for exam