

MSU Departmental Assessment Update Spring 2007

Department: School of Art

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Degrees/Majors/Options Offered by Department

Bachelor of Art in Studio Art

Bachelor of Art in Art History

Bachelor of Art in Art Education K-12

Bachelor of Fine Art in Graphic Design

Bachelor of Fine Art in Studio Art

Master of Fine Art in Studio Art

Art

This is a summary of the assessment activities and results reported for this undergraduate degree program. For further information, please contact the department offering the program.

Assessment Activities

Discipline-Specific Knowledge

Knowledge, skills, and abilities are assessed in the School of art by evaluations done in Art 490-Senior Thesis. These evaluations are in the form of critiques of the student artist's final works of art and design; the assessment of the Senior Thesis Exhibition; assessment of the Senior Thesis paper (Art History majors); and assessment of the student artist's knowledge of a wide variety of basic studio skills and educational theories related to artistic experiences (Art Education).

Communication Skills

Communication skills are assessed by evaluating the student's ability to verbally express understanding of the art and design produced as well as the art and design produced by peers. This assessment takes place with one or more faculty in both individual and group formal critiques.

In the area of written communication, students are assessed with art history papers, journals in studio courses, and undergraduate thesis statements in the Art 490-Senior Thesis course. Written communication skills develop an understanding of common art elements and vocabulary, place works of art in historical and stylistic context, and form and defend value judgements about art and design and art-related issues.

Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving skills are assessed by evaluating the student's competence in demonstrating the ability to communicate the origin and generation of ideas, and by evaluating the creative and technical skills appropriate to the particular studio such as color theory, painting, bronze casting, etc. Students must be able to break down the different levels of achievement in a composition, and discuss the thought process used to arrive at the final product. Evaluation is conducted by the studio instructor as well as student peers and outside reviewers.

Creative problem-solving is a basic skill for all art majors and is assessed at every level from freshman through senior year studio courses.

Assessment Results

Discipline-Specific Knowledge

Students in the School of Art develop a high level of competencies in creating finished works of art and design. The quality of work in the BFA Graduation Exhibition demonstrates success and knowledge of art-making skills and abilities. Students win awards in exhibitions, are successful in seeking employment with their design portfolios, and have a high rate of acceptance into graduate programs across the country.

Finished works of art demonstrate competence in technical skills, and understanding of processes and materials. Some of the areas of strength in this category are drawing, three-dimensional skills and abilities, and graphic design concepts.

Communication Skills

The level of communication skills in the form of written research papers is generally good. Art History majors have an especially high level of success in Undergraduate Scholars Conference, and success in graduate school acceptance. Art students need improvements in their ability to communicate and defend their statements during group and individual critiques. The School of Art needs to better prepare students to understand the theory of criticism both for individual understanding of one's own artwork, and to discuss the work of their peers.

Generally, written material in journals and in written examinations demonstrates a solid basic understanding of a student's own work and works of art in a historical and stylistic context.

Problem-Solving Skills

Student competencies in the area of problem-solving skills are high in the area of technical skills for studio majors, and average in the ability to analyze works of art and evaluate them critically. Art and design students are generally confident in their decision making skills as they relate to design concepts. Some levels of improvement are needed in criticism and analytical synthesis of creative problem solving in the first year of foundation studies (Art 110 and 111).

Program Improvements

University-Level Suggestions

The University needs to set higher priorities to preserve the academic budget. It is not possible to operate a solid academic program with shrinking resources. Within existing resources the University must honor its commitment to the students and maintain the academic budget as its highest priority.

Department-Level Suggestions

The School of Art can not continue to survive with existing resources and faculty with more than 500 majors. We can only reduce the number of students in our program by instituting an enrollment management plan. The School of Art is introducing a freshman portfolio review in the 2004-06 catalog.

Plan for Utilizing Data

The School of Art will have at least one dedicated meeting to discuss the assessment data and to respond appropriately with curricular or other changes.