**2015-2016 Annual Program Assessment Report**

Please submit report to your department chair or program coordinator, the Associate Dean of your College, and to [james.solomon@csun.edu](mailto:james.solomon@csun.edu), Director of the Office of Academic Assessment and Program Review, by September 30, 2016. You may, but are not required to, submit a separate report for each program, including graduate degree programs, which conducted assessment activities, or you may combine programs in a single report. Please identify your department/program in the file name for your report.

**College: MCCAMC**

**Department: Art**

**Program: M.A., M.F.A.**

**Assessment liaison: Magdy Rizk**

1. **Please check off whichever is applicable:**

**A. X Measured student work.**

**B. X Analyzed results of measurement.**

**C. Applied results of analysis to program review/curriculum/review/revision.**

1. **Overview of Annual Assessment Project(s).** On a separate sheet,provide a brief overview of this year’s assessment activities, including:

* an explanation for why your department chose the assessment activities (measurement, analysis, and/or application) that it enacted
* if your department implemented assessment **option A**, identify which program SLOs were assessed (please identify the SLOs in full), in which classes and/or contexts, what assessment instruments were used and the methodology employed, the resulting scores, and the relation between this year’s measure of student work and that of past years: (include as an appendix any and all relevant materials that you wish to include)
* if your department implemented assessment **option B**, identify what conclusions were drawn from the analysis of measured results, what changes to the program were planned in response, and the relation between this year’s analyses and past and future assessment activities
* if your department implemented **option C**, identify the program modifications that were adopted, and the relation between program modifications and past and future assessment activities
* in what way(s) your assessment activities may reflect the university’s commitment to diversity in all its dimensions but especially with respect to underrepresented groups
* any other assessment-related information you wish to include, including SLO revision (especially to ensure continuing alignment between program course offerings and both program and university student learning outcomes), and/or the creation and modification of new assessment instruments

**3. Preview of planned assessment activities for next year.** Include a brief description and explanation of how next year’s assessment will contribute to a

continuous program of ongoing assessment.

**2. Overview of Annual Assessment Project(s).**

* **Explanation:**

The Department of Art is expanding on a pilot assessment project introduced last year (see 2014-2015) for the graduate program, to coincide with accreditation demands and to accumulate viable data with which to measure and improve the program. In 2014-2015, the assessment committee reviewed a short piece of graduate culminating documents (abstracts) but determined that in order to get viable data, the entire document needed to be read and analyzed. A rubric was modified for this purpose and analysis conducted in 2015-2016 with a new set of graduate documents. As a result of this assessment, a list of recommended changes and discussion topics have been developed to bring forward to faculty working with graduates. In addition, this will be an ongoing graduate assessment project this year, with a new set of documents and modified rubric.

* **A/B: Graduate Assessment**

The Department of Art is continuing to conduct assessment of the MA/MFA programs. The Assessment Committee has produced a rubric to measure thesis projects from the Masters of Art and Masters of Fine Arts programs.

The rubric (Attachment 1)was developed to measure the current SLOs 1, 2, and 3 used for graduate study in visual art.

1. Master advanced knowledge, theories, and concepts about art; communication ideas and concepts through writing, speaking, and art making.
2. Broaden the knowledge of contemporary art and the understanding of the theoretical, cultural and historical contexts of art through writing, speaking, and art making on advanced levels.
3. Master processes of generating and solving problems in art; analyze, interpret, and question traditional methodologies and preconceived notions of art and art making on an advanced level.

**Current department SLOs are in line with the following University learning outcomes:**

* Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World: CSUN graduates understand the history and scope of human knowledge in the natural and social sciences and appreciate the diversity of aesthetic and cultural achievements throughout the world.
* Intellectual and Practical Skills: CSUN graduates can effectively engage in inquiry and problem-solving, critical analysis, and creative thinking; they have quantitative literacy, are information competent and appreciate the role of these as life-long learning skills.
* Communication Skills: CSUN graduates can communicate effectively through written, signed or spoken languages, through visual and audio media using text, video, graphics, and quantitative data, both individually and as a member of a team.

Rubric: After a preliminary norming of the rubric and applying initial changes to the text, the committee still found ambiguous language within the instrument, specifically in the “Historical Knowledge” and “Understanding Context” columns (Attachment 1). This language initiated lengthy discussion amongst committee members about our new draft program SLOs, (Attachment 2) and goals of our various programs. As mentioned above, these discussions have contributed to a list of suggested changes and points of discussion for graduate faculty in the art department. These changes and points of discussion will be presented to faculty this year as part of closing-the-loop activities for this part of the assessment.

While scoring the selected theses documents, the committee agreed to only refer to the thesis document itself for scoring, versus actual exhibitions (that are no longer available to view), prior knowledge or experience with/about the student that faculty may have, for example. All other references, aside from the document, whether known or implied, did not (explicitly, anyway) have any bearing on scoring.

Results of Analysis: The committee found that the terms used on the rubric and in the current program SLOs were not expansive enough to embrace 21st century connections and concepts such as: local, national, global inclusion; cultural context; visual culture references; material culture references; and specifically art historical references (Attachment 1). Terms such as “Historical knowledge”, for example, will be redefined or elaborated to reflect the committee’s discoveries. The committee also discussed some standardizing of the department’s written thesis format, in order to realize specific types of content in all published culminating documents. This suggested change may depend on findings in this year's new selection of documents to be assessed. Interestingly, another likely indicator of success (more or less) in the culminating project in both visual and written form, is a time factor. It appears to be possible that an MA student, who has fewer courses and a shorter projected period for completion, might perform better if they take more time than is minimally allowed to complete the degree program. An MFA student, with more coursework and a generally longer time period projected for completion, appears to reach a higher and deeper level of visual work and conceptual understanding. However, if the MFA student takes only the minimal time allowed, they could be on par in level of achievement with an MA student who takes the maximum time allowed. This will be part of ongoing discussion in continuing graduate assessment but at this time there are no recommended changes in mind regarding this issue.

In addition to the above noted points, required differences in the amount and type of writing between MFA and MA will also be discussed with graduate faculty. During our graduate assessment project, the committee noted that the resulting theses vary in format, content and organization. The committee designated points of discussion on writing requirements for formatting that include:

* Required organizing principles/sections for a culminating project writing
* Requirements or standardized format for culminating oral review/presentation of thesis
* Required content framework for graduate inquiry

It appears that expectations in writing for MA students are different than MFA in terms of making connections, synthesis and analysis of their work and other artists or scholars, for example. The MFA is intended to be more in-depth and to take more time, therefore the written document would be naturally more extensive. The committee discussed the possible use of a

repository for graduate work in progress, to document culminating experiences for graduate students. The implementation of this repository could help demonstrate the evolution of graduate work for the duration of the entire MFA and MA programs. In addition, the weight and significance of written theses vs. the visual work, will be revisited and discussed with graduate faculty.

In general, regarding the process of assessing these graduate documents, committee members have noted that what might be called "flawed" scoring, due to the ambiguous nature of some of the language in the rubric and the variable content of the collected data, has been quite valuable in terms of providing many talking points for potential culminating writing, program SLO and rubric reform. Again, SLO changes and department-wide adoption will be addressed this year after discussion and presentation to department faculty.

Many of the points for discussion that came up as a result of looking at culminating writing, brought the committee back to the undergraduate program, taking a closer look at critical thinking and writing in the upper division B.A., beginning with a recently-created gateway course, Art 307, and targeting other courses that focus on the same. This will be part of a plan developed and data gathered this year as undergraduate assessment.

* **C: Proposed Changes to Graduate Program Practices**

The committee proposed incorporating several practices that could reinforce the pedagogy (the requirements listed on page 3 above) of the M.F.A. and M.A. programs, including the following:

* Verbal presentation/defense activity (contextual)
* Research practice/tools (digital tutorials for writing and research)
* Standardize formatting of thesis documents appropriate for MA and MFA.
* **C: Rewriting of Department SLOs**

The committee has decided to present updated drafts of new SLOs for all its programs, including the B.A., M.A., and M.F.A., to our faculty in the Fall 2016 semester. Changes stemming from our discoveries in our graduate project will be addressed concurrently. We anticipate discussion, revisions and, hopefully, adoption within the year. (Attachment 2)

* **B/C: Post-Graduate Survey (B.A. Program)**

A post-graduate survey is postponed in lieu of a more comprehensive and strategic avenue for data collection. This ~~new~~ indirect assessment will include the use of Alumni Services and a department-wide cooperative effort to establish a CSUN Art & Design Alumni Chapter, in progress this Fall 2016. With the establishment of an Art Department Alumni Chapter, the committee will have a more robust mechanism with which to access a post-graduate contact database that may be instrumental in gathering data pertaining to student success.

* **Diversity:**

Strengths of the MA and MFA graduate programs include the multiplicity of talents, knowledge, beliefs, abilities and experiences that are shared among MA/MFA graduate students and faculty. This is evident in the wide variety of subject matter chosen by individual students, including immigration, visions of utopia, political viewpoints on war, themes regarding collaboration, public and personal space, and the significance of domestic spaces. The Department of Art’s graduate program, for the last three years, has embraced a collaborative, interdisciplinary structure for art making and critiques practices amongst various faculty. The process is as follows: A diverse and interdisciplinary graduate committee meets as a group with all graduate students during review “walk-throughs”, once per semester. The graduate committee also works closely with all graduate students in their individual art making, exhibition planning, and written thesis development.

Our graduate students come from a wide variety of ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The program has accepted and recruited candidates from both national and international communities, thus enriching the program for both faculty and students alike. These students explore and incorporate their own racial, ethnic, and socio-political interests and concerns, for example, through their artwork and writing, as is evident in the latest selection of thesis documents for assessment (see links to documents below). In addition to working with their personal perspectives, the students' research artists and writers of art, art history and research literature, who related to those topics.

<http://scholarworks.csun.edu/handle/10211.2/4215>

<http://scholarworks.csun.edu/handle/10211.2/3154>

<http://scholarworks.csun.edu/handle/10211.2/1033>  
<http://scholarworks.csun.edu/handle/10211.3/125285>

<http://scholarworks.csun.edu/handle/10211.2/3497>

**3. Preview of Planned Assessment Activities for Next Year.**

* Graduate Assessment: In the next year, the department assessment committee will continue to implement a graduate assessment, as outlined above. In this next selection, a larger sample will be scored and the committee will discuss the selection of SLOs to be assessed. It is possible we may continue with the previous SLOs given how fruitful the discoveries and discussions were as a result of analysis (Attachment 1). The data from this will then be documented and again be shared with the Department of Art graduate faculty in order to determine what further actions would be useful to pursue as a result of assessment
* Program Draft SLO Adoption: The committee will continue to finalize new department SLOs for our current programs (B.A., M.A. and M.F.A) (Attachment 2), to be presented to faculty this Fall 2016, and implement a department-wide adoption within the next Spring or Fall 2017. This will assist in further developing clear and effective assessment activities as the department moves forward.
* Undergraduate Assessment: As mentioned above, a result of our graduate discussions and proposed changes has lead us back to looking at the undergraduate critical thinking and writing in the upper division, beginning with recently adopted gateway course Art 307 Core Art Studio (3), which introduces students to upper division concentrations, goals and expectations, with a focus on technology. The assessment committee will determine which additional courses in upper division would be best for these SLOs, then plan and implement a multi-course and cross-sectional assessment. The committee will examine the following possible SLO areas in the next year for undergraduate and graduate assessment:
* Diversity
* Collaboration
* Verbal Presentation
* Critical thinking
* The post-graduate survey for Department of Art B.A. alumni is postponed. The department is in the process of establishing an Art and Design Alumni Chapter, which will be instrumental in gathering data for a future post-graduate, student success-based (indirect) assessment.
* GE Assessment: Art is not part of this year's GE assessment plans, but the committee will review what may be needed for the following year 2017-2018.

**Attachment 1 Rubric: Graduate Thesis Documents**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Scoring Scale (1-4) | **Historical Knowledge  (Written)** | **Understanding Context (Written)** | **Art Making (Visual)** | **Analysis  (Written)** |
| Exceptional – 4 | Exceptionally clear evidence of advanced knowledge of applicable artists and art movements. | Exceptionally clear in-depth exploration and understanding of art in historical, personal, socio-cultural, and cultural contexts. | Exceptional evidence of advanced processes of generating and solving problems in art and applicable concepts, demonstrating exceptionally clear connections between visual and written content. | Exceptionally clear analysis, interpretation and questioning of traditional methodologies and preconceived notions of art. |
| GOOD – 3 | Clear evidence of advanced knowledge of applicable artists and art movements. | Clear exploration and understanding of art in historical, personal, socio-cultural, and cultural contexts. | Clear evidence of advanced processes of generating and solving problems in art and applicable concepts, demonstrating exceptionally clear connections between visual and written content. | Clear analysis, interpretation and questioning of traditional methodologies and preconceived notions of art. |
| SATISFACTORY - 2 | Satisfactory evidence of advanced knowledge of applicable artists and art movements. | Satisfactory exploration and understanding of art in historical, personal, socio-cultural, and cultural contexts. | Satisfactory evidence of advanced processes of generating and solving problems in art and applicable concepts, demonstrating exceptionally clear connections between visual and written content. | Satisfactory analysis, interpretation and questioning of traditional methodologies and preconceived notions of art. |
| MINIMAL - 1 | Minimal to no evidence of advanced knowledge of applicable artists and art movements. | Minimal to no exploration and understanding of art in historical, personal, socio-cultural, and cultural contexts. | Minimal to no evidence of advanced processes of generating and solving problems in art and applicable concepts, demonstrating exceptionally clear connections between visual and written content. | Minimal to no analysis, interpretation and questioning of traditional methodologies and preconceived notions of art. |

**Attachment 2**

**Proposed BFA Program SLOS (proposed BFA program is currently under review.)**

1. Students will produce a comprehensive and proficient body of work suitable for seeking professional and academic opportunities in their chosen discipline for the local and global marketplace.
2. Students will solve creative problems within their specific discipline area, including research and synthesis of technical, aesthetic, and conceptual knowledge at a professional level.
3. Students will communicate ideas and connect with their intended audience using visual, oral, and written components, exhibiting critical thinking skills, relevant to their discipline area at a professional level.
4. Students will demonstrate professional technical, aesthetic, and conceptual decisions based on an understanding of the elements of art and principles of design within their specific discipline area.
5. Students will demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultural and aesthetic movements, both historical and contemporary, while exhibiting research and art writing skills, relevant to their discipline area.
6. Students will demonstrate professional skills and practices needed for collaborative and interdisciplinary activities within their specific discipline area.

**B.A. Program Draft SLOS:**

1. Students will produce a competent body of work suitable for a liberal arts degree in their chosen discipline for the local and global marketplace.
2. Students will solve creative problems within their specific discipline, including research and synthesis of technical, aesthetic, and conceptual knowledge at a competent level.
3. Students will communicate ideas for their intended audience using visual, oral, and written components, exhibiting critical thinking skills, relevant to their discipline area at a competent level.
4. Students will demonstrate competent technical, aesthetic, and conceptual decisions based on an understanding of the elements of art and principles of design within their specific discipline area.
5. Students will acquire competent knowledge of diverse cultural and aesthetic movements, both historical and contemporary, while exhibiting research and art writing skills, relevant to their discipline area.
6. Students will demonstrate competent collaborative and interdisciplinary skills and practices needed for activities within their specific discipline area.

**M.A. Program Draft SLOS:**

1. Students will produce a proficient body of work suitable for seeking professional and academic opportunities in their chosen discipline for the local and global marketplace.
2. Students will solve creative problems within their specific discipline area, including research and synthesis of technical, aesthetic, and conceptual knowledge at a proficient level.
3. Students communicate ideas for their intended audience using visual, oral, and written components, exhibiting critical thinking skills, relevant to their discipline area at a proficient level.
4. Students will demonstrate proficient technical, aesthetic, and conceptual decisions based on an understanding of the elements of art and principles of design within their specific discipline area.
5. Students will acquire proficient knowledge of diverse cultural and aesthetic movements, both historical and contemporary, while exhibiting research and art writing skills, relevant to their discipline area.
6. Students will demonstrate proficient skills and practices needed for collaborative and interdisciplinary activities within their specific discipline area.

**M.F.A. Program Draft SLOS:**

1. Students will produce a comprehensive and individually focused body of work suitable for seeking professional fine art and academic opportunities in their chosen discipline for the local and global marketplace, while having historical context and advancing their field.
2. Students will generate and solve creative problems within their specific discipline area, including research and synthesis of technical, aesthetic, and conceptual knowledge at a professional fine art level.
3. Students will demonstrate a masterful command of ideas that communicates with their intended audience using visual, oral, and written components, exhibiting critical thinking skills, relevant to their discipline area.
4. Students will demonstrate masterful fine art technical, aesthetic, and conceptual decisions based on an understanding of the elements of art and principles of design within their specific discipline area.
5. Students will master knowledge of diverse cultural and aesthetic movements, both historical and contemporary, while exhibiting research and art writing skills, relevant to their discipline area.
6. Students will demonstrate professional fine art skills and practices needed for collaborative and interdisciplinary activities within their specific discipline area.