

## Assessment Cycle 2018 – 2019

### Bachelor of Fine Arts

**College: Arts and Sciences**

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**Northwestern Mission.** Northwestern State University is a responsive, Student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its Students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

**College of Arts and Sciences' Mission.** College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequalled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

**Department of Fine and Graphic Arts.** The mission of the Art Unit within the School of Creative and Performing Arts operates under the mission of the university as a whole. This mission involves three primary goals: first, to provide quality instruction in a variety of disciplines; second, to encourage creative activity and scholarship, and third, to serve the college and surrounding community via the educational, cultural and economic opportunities provided by the university.

A broad range of educational offerings in fine and applied art and art history, in conjunction with the university's core curriculum, provides in-depth study for the professional major, as well as a body of knowledge associated with a liberal arts degree.

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In addition to facilities, expertise and instruction regarding traditional media, the Art Unit has a strong commitment to technologically enhanced instruction and relevant technology curriculum. The availability of new technology and instruction is considered imperative by the faculty and administration.

The Art Unit is committed to an academic and professional environment, which encourages creative activities, scholarship, and research. Faculty development in the areas of personal research and creative growth, technological competencies and teaching is nourished by the department and the university as a whole. This emphasis on active professional competence promotes excellence in the learning environment while engaging the public in university activities.

The university serves a diverse cultural and economic audience encompassing not only the local area, but also the state, region and beyond. Students come from small communities as well as metropolitan areas. Through academic offerings, art exhibitions, and the contributions of students to the community and contributions of graduates to the work force, the Art Unit is deeply tied to the surrounding community. The unit is committed to an environment of mutual respect, in which academic and cultural opportunities are made available; helping to meet the educational, cultural, and professional needs of the community at large.

**Bachelors of Fine Arts Program Mission Statement:** Students in the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program will experience a thorough educational experience in the visual arts. They will learn a variety of foundational principles and mediums in art that will lead to upper level specificity and personal development. Each concentration will help the students reach their personal career and artistic goals by giving them opportunities through projects and class assignments to develop habits, style, and artistic voice. These class experiences will culminate with professional studies, business practices, and the capstone Senior Exhibition in order to provide the students with experience in planning, processing, and carrying out professional artistic and design practice. The students should graduate with the portfolio and experience to begin professional practice or graduate studies.

**Methodology:** The assessment process for the MA/MS program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected and returned to the program chair;
- (2) The program chair will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty if required (show cause);

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(5) The Program Chair will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

**SLO 1. Through directed studies in art and design, students secure an in-depth understanding and application of visual art techniques.**

**Measure:** Testable through projects, annual student reviews with faculty advising committees and class critiques. Data will be collected through curricular benchmarks, annual student review rubric forms, and course reports. Faculty advising committees will collect data at annual student reviews. Data collected will allow faculty to assess current and future curricular needs. Acceptable data would show overall 50% of students secure an in-depth understanding and application of visual art techniques, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. The target data would show 80%. Faculty and students (curriculum and outcomes) reach a competitive level of professional proficiency early in the students' studies.

**Findings:** Acceptable target met.

**Analysis:** In AY 2017-2018, 40% of students secured an in-depth understanding and application of visual art techniques. Based on the analysis of these results, in 2018-2019 the curriculum was changed. It was decided to combine a foundations course, and to take two other foundations courses and reduce their credits to offer them on a half-semester rotation.

As a result, in AY 2018-2019 56% of students reached 3.5 or better on the review rubric. This shows a 16% increase from AY 2017-2018. Thus, based on the changes implemented to the curriculum, student performance improved.

An adjunct professor was brought in to teach an ART 1060 (Drawing I) course. The professor brought new energy and excitement to the students.

Forthright advising proved effective. Faculty have met and discussed student successes and made notes of areas for student improvements.

**Decision:** Based on the analysis of data from AY 2018-2019, with the over 16% increase, the curricular changes and forthright advising have proven successful. To further drive student improvement in student understanding and application of visual art techniques, moving forward the faculty will focus on curricular offerings, further effective advising, and increasing classroom expectation in 2019-2020.

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Due to impending retirements and incoming new faculty, new approaches to teaching will be implemented. This includes a more contemporary and rigorous approach to drawing, painting, and printmaking.

### **SLO 2. Students acquire valuable production experience that is reflected in their own independent achievements.**

**Measure:** Observable through projects and academic patterns by regular faculty evaluations and review of sketchbook work. Data will be collected through annual student review rubric forms and curricular benchmarks. Faculty advising committees will collect data at annual student reviews. Data will allow faculty to assess current and future curricular needs, as well as frequency and quality of evaluation processes. Faculty and students (curriculum and outcomes) increase in the level of expectation and professional output. Students are expected and deliver a qualitative and quantitative level of involvement and production. Acceptable data would show overall 50% of students exhibiting high levels of production in their individual artistic achievements, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. The target data would show 80%.

**Findings:** Target met.

**Analysis:** In AY 2017-2018, the target was not met. In AY 2017-2018, 42% of students scored 3.5 or better on the review rubric. Faculty felt that one reason the target was not met was because students were spending too much time learning the foundations and not enough curricular time using foundational tools to find their own artistic direction. As a result of the analysis of the 2017-2018 results, in 2018-2019 the curriculum was revised. Some foundation courses were combined, and others added. Upper-level students were assessed in the spring of 2018 to evaluate the changes made and their actions in relation to them.

In addition, faculty increased the rate and quality of field trips taken.

**Decision:** Based on the analysis of data from AY 2018-2019, and to further drive student improvement in 2019-2020, emphasis on personal vision and reflection will be added to all levels. The capstone courses will be weighted heavier credit-wise. An artist talk will be a requirement for students in these courses, and they will provide a reflection document following their capstone experience. Upper-level students will be assessed to evaluate the changes and their actions in relation to them.

In addition, students will be required to participate in self-reflection assignments.

### **SLO 3. Students synthesize the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals.**

**Measure:** Observable and testable through the curricular opportunity to take upper-level courses in specific areas and the presentation of a cohesive body of artwork at the end of their degree program. Testable through an alumni survey that will be administered at

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one-year, three-year and five-year intervals. Data will be collected through annual student review rubric forms, curricular benchmarks, reviews of exhibition, and through the administered surveys. Students will submit a proposal for their senior exhibition. Advisors and committees will assess the success or failure of the exhibits. Faculty will administer the surveys and collect the data. Data will allow faculty to assess current and future curricular needs. Faculty and students (curriculum and outcomes) work together to develop and foster then individual voice and style of the student in preparation for professional work. Acceptable data would show overall 50% of students synthesizing the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. The target data would show 80%.

**Findings:** Target not met.

**Analysis:** In AY 2017-2018, 23% of students scored 3.5 or better on the review rubric. Based on the analysis of these results, in 2019-2020 to improve student learning, faculty revised grading techniques and increased classroom rigor.

As a result, in AY 2018-2019, 43% of students scored 3.5 or better on the review rubric. The artwork was thoughtful, skillfully executed, and cohesive. The percentage of students reaching an expected level of success significantly increased from last year.

**Decision:** Based on the analysis of the data from AY 2018-2019, in 2019-2020 faculty are discussing ways to collectively and individually raise the bar for student expectations. To further drive improvement in student synthesis of the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals, the final capstone course, ART 4990, will have a reflection document required after the Senior Art Exhibit experience is finished.

### **SLO 4. Students participate in experiences that encourage familiarity with a broad variety of work in various specializations and media.**

**Measure:** Observable through participation in departmental or class field trips to museums, galleries and design centers, and participation in student exhibitions and organizations. Keep track of percentage of majors attending major semester field trips, entering annual the student exhibition. Data will be collected by generating lists of the percentage of students attending the various class and departmental trips. Also, in annual student reviews, faculty will report independent trips the students have initiated, and their participation in student and other exhibitions. Faculty will collect the data for student exhibition participation, and the data for student trip attendance. Data will allow faculty to assess frequency and effectiveness of exhibitions and trips. Faculty and students (curriculum and outcome) will foster an atmosphere of learning through participation in gallery and extra-curricular experiences. Acceptable data would show overall 50% of students participating in enrichment experiences, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. The target data would show 80%.

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**Findings:** Target not met.

**Analysis:** In AY 2017-2018, the target was not met. Thirty percent (30%) of students scored 3.5 or better on the review rubric. Based on an analysis of the 2017-2018 results, faculty decided to make more trips available, to travel to a different city, and rotating locations to create interest.

As a result, in AY 2018-2019, 49% of students scored 3.5 or better on the review rubric. This is a 19% increase from AY 2017-2018.

Seventy-nine (79) students participated in field trips in AY 2017-2018. There were many overlaps, in that some students attended several of the trips. In AY 2018-2019 the number and variety of trips was increased. Thus, in AY 2018-2019, 102 students participated in field trips. Attendance to art receptions has been made a requirement to increase student attendance.

**Decision:** Based on the analysis of AY 2018-2019, and to drive improvement, in 2019-2020 communication efforts will be increased to engage students in the field trips by establishing talking points for faculty to use to ensure continuity in messaging.

### Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results

As a result of the analysis of the AY 2017-2018 data, the faculty implemented the following changes in AY 2018-2019:

- Curricular changes began in Fall 2017, combining some foundations courses and adding others resulting in a 16% increase in the learning outcome of students securing an in-depth understanding and application of visual art techniques and an 8% increase in the learning outcome of students acquiring valuable production experience that is reflected in their own independent achievements.
- Offered more field trips for the department and individual classes, and rotated cities to create interest, leading to 23 more students attending field trips and in student experiences that encourage familiarity with a broad variety of work in various specializations and media
- Reflection documents required after the Capstone experience helped the student and the department evaluate the experience holistically and specifically.

### Plan of action moving forward

An analysis of the AY 2018-2019 data shows improvement in all measures. The new reflection documents will be completed earlier and accounted for before grades are turned in. Increased communication between faculty and students regarding field trips, exhibits, and other engagement activities will increase the student participation rate.

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With the new incoming faculty, curricular changes and changes in teaching methodology will necessitate at-this-time unforeseen revisions to the SLOs and how they are analyzed.