

Assessment Cycle AY 2018 – 2019

Master of Arts in Art

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.

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.

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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.

Master of Arts in Art Program Mission Statement: The Master of Arts in Art degree program offers the student an opportunity to study graduate level art courses either on campus or online. The curriculum allows the student to propose their vision for their studies that coincides with the vision for their personal art practice. Seminar and research-based courses will assist the student in personal research to expand their understanding of their own artistic context and methodology. These courses will culminate in the capstone experiences writing and presenting a creative research document and exhibition. The outcomes of these will propel the student into terminal degree studies or artistic and professional practice.

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 and graduate coordinator;
- (2) They will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program graduate faculty;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty if required (show cause);
- (5) The Program Chair and Graduate Coordinator will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

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Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. Evaluate own artistic experience and formulate an advanced direction, voice, and momentum in the creation of personal artwork.

Measure: Observable through projects, seminars, and by semester faculty and peer evaluations. Data will be collected through semester reviews. Benchmark reviews will be after the first semester and with the proposal of their creative research project. Advisor will collect data for the first benchmark. Graduate Coordinator will collect data for the proposals. Student and faculty (outcome and curriculum) will work together with the appropriate balance of direction and freedom in order for the student to build upon their artistic voice and style. Acceptable data would reflect 75% of the students actively evaluating their own artistic experience and formulating an advanced direction, voice, and momentum in the creation of personal artwork. Target data would show 95%.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018, the target was not met. In AY 2017-2018, 75% of students actively evaluated their own work. Thus, 25% of students were having a struggle actively evaluating their own artistic experience and formulating an advanced direction, voice, and momentum in the creation of personal artwork.

As a result of the decisions made at the end of AY 2017-2018, faculty adjusted acceptance policies and tried to closely follow recommended application deadlines. The faculty viewed the transcripts and statement of purpose as part of the initial review of the candidates. The graduate coordinator helped organize effective critiques and graduate exhibits with both online and on campus students. The coordinator also helped organize an effective faculty meeting where all the applicants were reviewed shortly after the application due date. They also would bring updated committee assignments to each faculty meeting. The communication and organization is vastly improving, and the students are responding.

In AY 2018-2019, 92% of students actively evaluated their own artistic experience and formulated an advanced direction, voice, and momentum in the creation of personal artwork. The changes implemented as a result of the AY 2017-2018 analysis have resulted in an increase (from 75% to 92%) in students achieving this student learning outcome. The target was still not met, but acceptable data was reached. From advisor reports, it was found that this year approximately 8 percent of students have struggles with writing and researching effectively. These issues have arisen in written class proposals, research papers, and in the creative research document drafts.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and to drive improvement, faculty will adjust the application, committee and critique processes. Faculty will work closely with the Graduate School and the faculty in charge of international students to help them understand and comply with the new regulations that were approved by the Graduate Council. Faculty will plan a meeting with both entities

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for early Fall 2019 semester to open the lines of communication. Faculty will work out the technological issues that keep more of our online students from participating in graduate critiques. These processes will continue the improvements faculty are seeing in their ability to offer effective, graduate level education into AY 2019-2020.

SLO 2. Synthesize the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals.

Measure: Observable and testable through the curricular opportunity to take independent courses in specific areas. Students will submit a proposal for each class of what they will accomplish for the course. The students will present a cohesive body of artwork and a creative research paper at the end of their degree program. An alumni survey will be administered at one-year, three-year and five-year intervals. Data will be collected through individual courses, reviews of exhibition and paper, and through the administered surveys. The faculty will assess whether the students have accomplished the proposals for each class. Advisors and committees will assess the success or failure of the papers and exhibits. Faculty will administer the surveys and collect the data. Data will allow faculty to assess current and future curricular needs. Students will respond to curriculum and their own creative drive to build a research and object-based output for review that will propel them to the next level of our artistic and academic goals. Acceptable data would reflect 75% of the students synthesizing the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals. Target data would show 95%.

Findings: Target not met.

This year we found that approximately 92 percent were synthesizing the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals. Acceptable data exceeded.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018, the target was not met. In AY 2017-2018, 80% of students were synthesizing the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals. The faculty decided to view the transcripts and statement of purpose as part of the initial review of the candidates. Faculty also decided to be more firm with the application deadlines. The graduate critique organization and the graduate exhibition has led to more accountability and interaction in students. The graduate coordinator has increased the organization and communication amongst the faculty and students. The faculty and students are invited to three formal critique times per semester. The graduate students present their work to the faculty and each other. This process worked well in AY 2018-2019. The graduate student exhibition included not only on-campus students, but also some online students. Faculty are still trying to work out the technological issues in this process. One of the faculty required all graduate students to present at the annual Research Day. The opportunity to put together a formal exhibit has also led students to more fully realize their professional and creative goals. As a result of the changes implemented in AY2018-2019, this year faculty found that 92% were synthesizing the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals. This is a 12 percent increase from the year before.

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The capstone exhibition quality has risen further this year. This is as a result of regular graduate critiques and graduate group exhibitions. One of the graduate students created portraits for the university and arranged to have a faculty member accompany him to Cuba for further research. The quality of student output continues to rise. The Alumni Survey was not effective. There was no responses, but the process has improved through faculty recommendations. Information gleaned from the Alumni Affairs office, helped pinpoint the exact students to invite to participate.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and to drive improvement, faculty will reorganize graduate committees to allow for more effective monitoring of students. Faculty will continue with graduate-focused critiques and exhibitions that include more online students. A strategy of implementing the surveys will be crafted during Fall 2019 faculty meetings.

SLO 3. 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 in national, international juried exhibitions, and in the graduate student exhibition opportunities. Also observable through teaching assistant opportunities. Data will be collected by generating lists of the percentage of graduate students attending the various class and departmental trips. Also in reviews, faculty will report independent trips the students have initiated, and their participation in student and other exhibitions. Data will also be received through reports of the Graduate Assistants' level of participation and professional candor in various assignments. Faculty will collect the data for student exhibition participation. Faculty will collect the data for student trip attendance. Advisors and committee members will collect the data for individual assignments in the Assistantships. Data will allow faculty to assess frequency and effectiveness of exhibitions and trips. Students will independently seek after life-long learning not based solely upon curricular experience. Acceptable data would reflect 75% of the students actively participating in experiences that encourage familiarity with a broad variety of work in various specializations and media. Target data would show 95%.

Findings: Target not met.

AY 2018-2019 approximately 65 percent of our students entered regional, national, or international art competitions.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018, the target was not met. Thirty percent (30%) of students entered regional, national, or international art competitions in AY 2017-2018.

In AY 2018-2019, 465% of students entered regional, national, or international art competitions. Three major field trips were taken in the Fall 2018 semester, and a large scale field trip to see a Van Gogh exhibit was taken in the Spring 2019 semester. Unfortunately, only one graduate student attended any field trips in AY2018-2019 (even

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with increased and varied options). One student participated in a group show in Pennsylvania focused on Cuban artists. Students participating in Graduate Assistantships effectively taught or assisted in courses, maintained facilities and lab hours, and many other things throughout the department. The Graduate Student Exhibition was a success with on-campus and online students participating. The Graduate Coordinator has increased the quality of many of these events and experiences. Discussions about requiring graduate students to enter juried exhibitions happened in the first faculty meeting of Fall 2018. There was no follow up at the end of the year though.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and to drive improvement, discussions will be held at the first faculty meeting in the Fall of 2019 about requiring graduate students to enter juried exhibitions and increasing the communication about the successes. Faculty will also discuss ways to invite more of graduate students to participate in our field trips.

Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of data. As a result of the analysis of AY2017-2018 data, the following changes were implemented in AY2018-2019:

- Faculty adjusted acceptance policies and tried to closely follow recommended application deadlines. The faculty viewed the transcripts and statement of purpose as part of the initial review of the candidates. The graduate coordinator helped organize effective critiques and graduate exhibits with both online and on campus students. The coordinator also helped organize an effective faculty meeting where all the applicants were reviewed shortly after the application due date. They also would bring updated committee assignments to each faculty meeting. The communication and organization is vastly improving, and the students are responding.
- The faculty decided to view the transcripts and statement of purpose as part of the initial review of the candidates. Faculty also decided to be more firm with the application deadlines. The graduate critique organization and the graduate exhibition has led to more accountability and interaction in students. The graduate coordinator has increased the organization and communication amongst the faculty and students. The faculty and students are invited to three formal critique times per semester.
- One of the faculty required all graduate students to present at the annual Research Day. The opportunity to put together a formal exhibit has also led students to more fully realize their professional and creative goals.
- Three major field trips were taken in the Fall 2018 semester, and a large scale field trip to see a Van Gogh exhibit was taken in the Spring 2019 semester. Unfortunately, only one graduate student attended any field trips in AY2018-2019. Graduate Student Exhibition was a success with on-campus and online

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students participating. The Graduate Coordinator has increased the quality of many of these events and experiences.

Plan of action moving forward.

As the target data were not met and in a effort to drive improvement, faculty have discussed certain changes in the application process that may help cull the students without the ability to succeed in this degree program. Faculty will continue discussions for the requirement of graduate students entering juried art exhibitions. The Art Department Graduate Coordinator has improved faculty involvement and organization of applicant reviews and we will initiate a meeting with the Graduate School and the faculty over International Student recruitment to make sure everyone is on the same page. Faculty will discuss better ways to reach alumni for survey participation.