

Herron School of Art and Design

Program Review and Assessment Report, 2011-2012

July 5, 2012

Introduction

Herron is preparing for reaccreditation review by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) in 2013. Preparing the self-study serves as a full review of all programs offered by the school and their outcomes. The central part of the reviewers' on-site visit will be looking at students' artwork. NASAD insists on looking at work done by students at all levels, first-year through senior thesis, and of all qualities, with examples of work that earned the full range of grades. This is considered by NASAD to be the truest form of outcomes assessment.

Herron's assessment and implementation philosophies are informed by policy studies published by NASAD, including "Assessment on Our Own Terms," "Assessment of Undergraduate Programs in Art and Design," and "Assessment of Graduate Programs in Art and Design," which are published on the NASAD website under the heading "Assessment and Policy Studies," <http://nasad.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=Assesment and Policy Studies>.

While Herron has defined and published student learning outcomes for each program, we also adhere to NASAD's overall vision for learning in the art and design fields. NASAD defines the Characteristics and Attributes of Individual Achievement as including:

- Basic professional-level knowledge and skills
- Personal vision evident in work
- Conceptual acuity and creative virtuosity at multiple levels of complexity
- Imagination and ability to channel imagination to reach artistic goals
- Technical virtuosity
- Conceptual and technical command of integration and synthesis

NASAD asserts that, while these attributes may be shared by practicing professionals, they are not manifested in the same way, and that their "actual realization is subject to preferences or individual aspirations and standards of quality that are internal to the kind of work being done and to the development of each artist or even each work of art or design." ("Assessment On Our Own Terms," p. 6)

Herron practices individual and program assessment with integrity and depth. However, since the teaching and learning done at Herron is highly individualized, we beg the readers of this report to consider that assessment can be systematic and thorough without

being standardized or primarily numerical. As faculty, we constantly engage in assessment processes that mirror the NASAD reviewers': we look at the students' art and design work and find ways to make it better. Sometimes that requires programmatic changes, but always it includes direct and individual coaching.

Overall School PUL Results

Direct assessment results are taken from campus comparison by school charts for 400-level classes declaring a major emphasis, on a 4-point scale, converted to common denominator of 20.

Indirect assessment results are taken from specifically targeted questions on Herron's graduating student survey for students graduating in 2012, on a 5-pt scale, converted to common denominator of 20.

PUL	1a	1b	1c	2	3	4	5	6
direct	17.85	20	17.25	17.5	16.9	16.45	16.3	20
indirect	15.92	15.92	15.92	17.52	16.24	16.96	16.12	15.64

Scores are what we expected and indicated that the school's programs are meeting their goals overall. Discrepancies between direct and indirect measures are likely the result of questions asked differently. For instance, faculty assessed students' level of attainment for PUL 6 (values and ethics), whereas Herron's survey asked students how much their college education had contributed to their values and ethics. Written comments implied that students considered themselves to have acquired their ethics before beginning college.

Actions taken in response:

Quantitative skills are not a focus of Herron's degree offerings. Variations between direct and indirect assessment likely result from students' reflecting on their overall education and faculty only assessing that PUL in classes where it is emphasized. Thus, we are not likely to change our curricula to address the lower score in this area. However, the changes to general education in Indiana will likely result in students spending more of their credits in areas that focus on quantitative skills.

We will consider revising our questions to address separately the three parts of PUL1.

Group critique is a common feature of training in art and design. Typically, after each assignment or at several points in the semester, students present their work for open critique by their faculty, guest faculty, and their peers. This process gives both students and faculty immediate feedback about process and outcomes (both the artwork created and the students' ability to discuss their own and others' work) from multiple perspectives. It is not uncommon for instructors to adjust their next lessons or assignments based on the results of the critique experience. This process of immediate feedback and quick response by faculty is integral to education in the arts.

Assessment of Program Specific Student Learning Outcomes

I. Bachelor of Arts in Art History (B.A.)

Published Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to describe connections between art and social and cultural contexts across history and throughout the world.
2. Students will be able to evaluate and critique works of art from a range of methodological perspectives.
3. Students will be able to conceive and carry out research involving: formulating a question; gathering information using a variety of tools and techniques; critically evaluating information; making an argument; and defending a conclusion in speech and writing.
4. Students will be able to compare and contrast the underlying value systems that inform the aesthetic decisions of art makers and viewers in different cultures.
5. Students will be able to recognize perspectives from a range of disciplines in the arts and sciences.
6. Students will be able to apply their visual literacy to make informed and ethical judgments in their own lives.
7. Students will be able to interpret works of art using visual analysis, historical research, and defined theoretical perspectives.
8. Students will be able to describe and discuss a substantial body of knowledge about and understanding of their own art historical traditions and the traditions of others.

These outcomes are assessed in several ways:

Student course grades, faculty review of final capstone papers and projects, ePortfolio, discussion throughout the capstone seminar, and written responses by capstone seminar students about the SLOs directly.

The capstone seminar represents a sample group whose learning is assessed directly and indirectly in significant depth. The faculty member teaching this seminar worked closely with the students in a workshop setting, and gained an intimate knowledge of the students' understandings and research processes. These were summarized and reported to the full art history faculty for discussion in the final meeting of the year. The students also generated seventeen pages of comments on the curriculum which has been given to the professors who are leading the curriculum review and revision scheduled for 2012-2013.

Findings:

Information literacy is emphasized unevenly. Faculty address it individually to different degrees. Some students receive very little training, while others find it over-taught and repetitive, depending on which courses they chose.

Students do not understand what is meant by SLO 6.

Students do not understand that an opinion means more than "taste." They have not fully developed the concept of an informed and defensible opinion, though some of these same students seem comfortable with the idea of a "thesis."

Non-western art is insufficiently covered in the curriculum.

Actions planned in response:

A complete review of the curriculum is scheduled for 2012-2013. Five credits were cut hastily in the spring of 2012 in response to the state mandate. The review will allow us to redistribute the remaining credits more thoughtfully.

Information literacy will be built into the curriculum in a more structured way, ensuring that students receive an even and appropriate level of training.

E-Portfolio will be incorporated earlier in the curriculum, in order that it may represent the growth process as well as the final level of achievement.

Learning outcomes will be introduced in introductory art history courses so that they are understood, and so that students have a clear idea of the goals of the curriculum.

Non-western courses will continue to be offered to the degree that faculty and enrollment levels allow. Non-western material will continue to be included in the two semesters of art history survey courses. However, increasingly students take these courses at Ivy Tech or other colleges. We will urge Ivy Tech to include non-western material, but we cannot enforce that.

II. Bachelor of Art Education (B.A.E.)

Published Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the Bachelor of Art Education at Herron students will demonstrate the following competencies:

Philosophy

Demonstrate critical reflection on the aesthetic and artistic purposes of art in P-12 learners; articulate and apply personal philosophy in classroom practice.

Communication

Communicate ideas clearly through speech, writing, and visual forms about issues of personal importance and human significance in local and global communities; and apply this to classroom practice.

Content Knowledge - Studio Art

Demonstrate expertise in basic expressive, technical, procedural and organization skills in a wide variety of media and demonstrate mastery in conceptual insights and visual thinking developed through studio experiences; and make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for P-12 learners.

Content Knowledge - Art History and Analysis

Understand the major styles and periods of art history, the analytical methods and theories of criticism; understand development of past and contemporary art forms, including visual culture, and, understand contending philosophies of art and the relationship of all of these to the making of art; and, make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for P-12 learners.

Content Knowledge - Innovation/Ideation

Understand and apply processes of idea generation, imagination, and innovative thinking from a range of disciplines to problems in their artwork and their lives; and develop abilities of creative problem solving and critical inquiry and authentic meaning making in P-12 learners.

Learner Development

Understand the developmental needs and diverse social and cultural constructions of identity in all learners and implement a variety of appropriate visuals, tools, media, technology, and other disciplines to differentiate learning in inclusive, multicultural, and urban classrooms.

Learning Environment

Construct a learning environment that promotes student achievement, utilizes social learning and group dynamics, promotes respect and collaboration among of all learners, and incorporates multiple contexts where art exists outside the classroom including museums, galleries, homes, and public sites.

Instructional Strategies

Understand and implement curriculum and a variety of instructional strategies that develop in-depth, complex student skills and knowledge in art content, and integrate art across disciplines.

Assessment strategies.

These learning outcomes are assessed in multiple ways. Students complete supervised student teaching practica, in which faculty observe and mentor their performance in the

classroom. Students also compile teaching portfolios that include lesson plans, student assignments, outcomes, and video documentation of performance in the classroom.

All students seeking licensure as K-12 teachers in Indiana must pass the Praxis Exam (administered by ETS). This is required prior to being accepted into the major in the junior year.

Students also must pass a sophomore advancement review at Herron.

Findings:

This year, 12 students passed the Praxis Exam and were accepted into the program after successfully completing sophomore advancement review.

Actions taken in response:

Program is deemed to be operating successfully. No changes appear necessary based on these assessment findings.

Guidance and recommendations continue to be provided to students individually throughout their training.

III. Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.)

Published Student Learning Outcomes for the B.F.A.:

1. Students will develop a personal aesthetic that will be demonstrated in the characteristics of their artwork, writings, and speech.
2. Students will demonstrate a mastery of visual thinking and the technical demands and craft appropriate to their discipline and artwork.
3. Students will be able to describe historic and contemporary art directions, movements, and theory and place their own artwork in a contemporary context.
4. Students will write and speak effectively about their artwork and ideas.
5. Students will do research and construct their own aesthetic problems utilizing creative process strategies and critical thinking to provide multiple solutions to the problems.
6. Students will exhibit an openness to different or new ideas and a willingness to examine and reconsider familiar ways of thinking.
7. Students will be able to critique their own and others art work in a theoretically and historically informed manner.
8. Students will apply ideas and methods of thinking from a range of disciplines to problems in their artwork and their lives.
9. Students will be able to engage with diverse communities through personal and creative activities.

10. Students will apply their knowledge of art in a professional context, and will utilize the best practices and ethics held by their profession.

Assessment strategies:

Herron's process for assessing student learning is vigorous. Each student is reviewed individually by a panel of faculty midway through their academic studies and as a prerequisite for being accepted into a major. This Sophomore Advancement Review represents a best practice in Fine Arts Assessment and is recognized as excellent by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, by whom Herron is accredited. At Sophomore Advancement Review, the student submits written responses to two essay questions (which faculty reviewers read in advance), the student presents twelve finished works of art taken from their courses in their first two years of study. These represent work completed in the Foundation Year courses (first year fundamentals such as perspective drawing and color theory) as well as works from second-year courses elected in the area they intend to major in. Faculty view and evaluate the work in terms of form, content, and process, and then interview the student about it in order to evaluate the student's intellectual and critical processes and ability to communicate about the work.

Faculty decisions are either "pass," "probation," or "denied." If a student passes, she or he may advance into 300-level coursework in the major. If a student is put on probation, the terms of the probation are tailored to the individual student. She or he is assigned a faculty mentor and is usually required to take additional coursework in areas that are weak (or to work on those areas in other ways). Often these students are permitted to take 300-level courses in their stronger areas but must demonstrate improvement before being formally accepted into the major. If a student is denied, she or he is assigned a faculty mentor and recommended to continue coursework at the 200-level and in recommended areas, and then to be reviewed again in 6 or 12 months.

This process not only assesses student learning, but ensures it. This is a process that considers the students' mastery of technical skills and also of their ability to formulate and articulate an individual trajectory for their artistic explorations. The results are also compiled so that they can also serve as evidence to assessing the first and second year curricula. These results are shown below.

Assessment also occurs at other moments such as the juried student show, success rates of students who compete for regional or national commissions, and student thesis exhibitions. Results of PUL assessment and written comments on Herron's graduating student survey are also used to evaluate the program. Work in the Fine Arts, and especially in the junior and senior year, is highly individualized, and the emphasis is on the creation of the new rather than the internalization of existing knowledge, assessment must be based on the students' successful use of a creative process and accomplishment of diverging goals. The rigor of fine arts assessment is in its depth and integrity. Assessment of such individualized practice is diminished when expressed in numerical terms. To quote NASAD's policy paper, "Assessment On Our Own Terms," p. 15, "How

is it possible to call for a deeply integrated system of standardization so that results can be compared, and at the same time call for innovation and a climate of innovation?"

Findings:

Compiled Sophomore Advancement Review scores with faculty reflection, May 2012.

Average Student Spring 2012 Fine Arts Sophomore Advancement Review

Grades (20% of total evaluation). Studio GPA
3.29

Presentation (60%) of total review—students' work presented at Review and their ability to speak and write about it as directed.

Scale 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

1. *Student work is well crafted, organized.*

3.75

2. *Student work is of aesthetic sensibility, conceptual development and creativity.*

3.59

3. *Student's technical skill is of high quality.*

3.84

4. *Student is able to concisely explain their work and why it is successful.*

3.47

5. *Student displays critical thinking and understanding.*

3.42

6. *Written statement is acceptable in development and format.*

3.52

Likelihood of success in intended major. (20% of total evaluation)

Scale 1 to 10

7.61

The following questions focus program-level faculty reflection on the results of Sophomore Advancement Review:

- *Do we teach the technical skills better than we teach cognitive skills?*

- *Is the difference between our expectations and our teaching greater in the realm of thinking than in the realm of craft?*
- *Do we need to provide more examples of critical thinking and more practice?*
-
- *Are there any areas of strength or weakness in the students you saw as a group that won't be revealed by averaging everyone's numbers on the review sheets?*
- *If you could teach one additional class session for the students you reviewed, what would you do in that class?*

Actions taken in response:

A formal program review of the Foundations Program (the first year curriculum) is underway, with the self-study to be completed by the end of summer.

More full-time faculty have been scheduled to teach first-year classes, including full-time faculty whose appointments are not specifically in Foundations. This will promote better communication between faculty teaching at the introductory and advanced levels, and will also help students build relationships with full-time professors earlier in their college experience.

Faculty will be urged to include more writing in their classes.

IV. B.F. A. in Visual Communication Design.**Published student learning outcomes for the BFA in VCD:**

1. Students will be able to *identify, describe, and summarize* communication problems through user-centered research and analysis.
2. Students will be able to *generate and evaluate* solutions to communication problems by creating alternative solutions, prototyping and conducting user testing.
3. Students will *recognize, describe, and respond* to social, cultural, physical and cognitive issues embedded within audiences and contexts.
4. Students will be able to *demonstrate* an understanding of visual form in response to communication problems through visual organization/composition, information hierarchy, symbolic representation, typography, aesthetics and the construction of meaningful messages.
5. Students will *understand and apply* appropriate tools and technology in the *creation, reproduction and distribution* of visual messages, including but not

limited to, drawing, offset printing, photography and time-based media and interactive media.

6. Students will be able to *address* and *discuss* design from a variety of historical, theoretical, social, cultural, technological and economic perspectives.
7. Students will be able to *discuss* and *demonstrate* basic business practices, including the ability to organize design projects and work productively as a member of teams.

Assessment strategies:

As in Fine Arts, student learning is evaluated midway through the program at Sophomore Advancement Review and through final senior theses and group projects in the senior professional practice seminar. As in Fine Arts, assessment is intertwined with individual mentoring, so that the assessment processes serve also as teaching opportunities, and simultaneously assess and ensure achievement.

Sophomore Advancement Review in Visual Communication is similar to that in Fine Arts. Students submit written essays and then, before a panel of faculty, present examples of their design work and discuss them in an oral presentation followed by interview format questioning.

Findings:

VCD Sophomore Review Scores by student, May 2012

(student names removed for this report)

Studio GPA	Translated Grade %	Grade - Total Percentage 25%	Total Poss Points - Prez & Port	Prez & Portfolio - Earned Points 39 pts	Pres & Portfolio - Total Percentage 50%	Likelihood for Success - Earned Points 15 pts	Likelihood for Success - Total Percentage 25%	Total Percentage 100%
4.00	100%	25%	39	38.80	49.7%	14.20	23.7%	98.40%
3.76	92%	23%	39	35.60	45.6%	13.60	22.6%	91.20%
3.77	92%	23%	39	31.57	40.4%	10.85	18.0%	81.40%
3.09	88%	22%	39	31.42	40.2%	11.00	18.3%	80.50%
2.98	87%	21.75%	39	29.33	37.6%	11.66	19.4%	78.75%
3.36	89%	22.25%	39	27.83	35.6%	11.50	19.1%	76.95%
3.52	90%	22.50%	39	26.60	34.1%	12.00	20.0%	76.60%
3.15	88%	22%	39	28.60	36.6%	10.40	17.3%	75.90%
3.31	89%	22.25%	39	28.00	35.8%	10.50	17.5%	75.55%
2.53	80%	20%	39	28.33	36.3%	11.16	18.6%	74.90%
3.20	89%	22.25%	39	26.50	33.9%	11.00	18.3%	74.45%
3.33	89%	22.25%	39	26.40	33.8%	11.00	18.3%	74.35%

3.01	88%	22%	39	24.71	31.6%	10.00	16.6%	70.20%
3.48	90%	22.50%	39	24.50	31.4%	9.66	16.1%	70.00%
3.26	89%	22.25%	39	23.80	30.5%	10.00	16.6%	69.35%
3.23	89%	22.25%	39	22.75	29.1%	10.50	17.5%	68.85%
3.03	88%	22%	39	24.00	30.7%	9.50	15.8%	68.50%
2.64	81%	20%	39	22.40	28.7%	9.40	15.6%	64.30%
2.83	84%	21%	39	23.00	29.4%	8.20	13.6%	64.00%
3.35	89%	22.25%	39	22.00	28.2%	8.00	13.3%	63.75%
2.72	82%	20.50%	39	18.80	24.1%	9.20	15.3%	59.90%
2.95	87%	21.75%	39	18.20	23.3%	8.60	14.3%	59.35%
3.04	88%	22%	39	15.83	20.2%	7.16	11.9%	54.10%
2.88	84%	21.0%	39	17.66	22.6%	5.66	9.4%	53.00%
3.26	89%	22.25%	39	15.66	20.0%	4.50	7.5%	49.75%
2.96	87%	21.75%	39	11.80	15.1%	6.20	10.3%	47.15%
3.20	89%	22.25%	39	12.00	15.3%	5.20	8.6%	46.15%

Actions taken in response:

This is the third review cycle since it became clear that changes were necessary. Results have been better each year since then, and projections continue to be positive. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement, and the quest for ever more effective teaching continues.

The new department chair began in August 2011. Subsequently, two new full-time, tenure track hires were made in spring 2012, with appointments to begin in August 2012.

A full-time visiting faculty member with several years' experience with the VC curriculum has been repositioned to teach Foundation courses, so that the first-year experience can better address the concerns of the VC curriculum.

The sophomore year curriculum was restructured for the 2011-12 year so that students had invested fewer credits in Visual Communication Design prior to sophomore review. This meant that students who were denied advancement into the major saw more of their credits transfer into whatever degree track they chose instead, but it also meant that students who passed did so with a lower level of accomplishment. This result seems to be more fair, but still imperfect.

In 2011, a remedial summer course was developed so that students given probationary status at review could catch up and enroll with their cohort in the fall. Of those who took this course, 100% were judged to be ready to proceed by August.

In 2012 this course was switched from mandatory to recommended, and students were given the option of beginning advanced work without this extra course.

Work has begun, and still continues, to bring the learning outcomes for each course and the grading standards for sophomore courses more into line with the expectations at review, so that grades in sophomore VC courses will be better indicators of success at the VC sophomore review.

VI. Masters of Art Education (M.A.E.)

Published Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop a comprehensive, critical understanding of the field of art education by investigating the ways in which art education has evolved and continues to change in response to cultural, economic, social, political, and technological conditions.
2. Examine and explore critical approaches to new media and directions in contemporary art practices, understanding innovative methodologies of professional artists in order to develop new approaches to elementary and secondary art instruction.
3. Understand the importance and roles of diverse learning environments appreciating both formal and informal art learning sites and studio environments in order to construct learning spaces that promote creative production, social learning and collaboration, as well as incorporate multiple contexts including museums, galleries, homes, and other pertinent public sites.
4. Develop in-depth conceptually based curricula with an understanding of local and global communities, and of the benefits and challenges of promoting democratic values in our culturally diverse society.
5. Demonstrate the ability to cultivate critical and creative thinking skills in others and to assert art's role in fostering multi-cultural, intercultural, and interdisciplinary understandings.
6. Demonstrate breadth of knowledge and skills in art history emphasizing contemporary art forms and visual culture, in analytical methods and theories of criticism, and in contending philosophies of art, and understand the foundational relationship of these components to authentic studio practice; and make these accessible and meaningful to P-12 learners.
7. Develop leadership roles and become an active participant in peer seminars, classroom tutorials, presentations, and reflective processes.
8. Understand, articulate, and continue to nurture the roles of Artist/Teacher/Researcher in their own professional practice and demonstrate increased breadth and depth of competence in studio skills, knowledge, and application.
9. Conduct professional research that demonstrates advanced levels of analysis, insight, design, and methods appropriate for art education settings and audiences. Utilize relevant applications for such research and professional publications.

10. Demonstrate reflective, critical thought, and scholarship as well as a commitment to ongoing professional development, and; contribute to the growth of the profession through disseminating scholarly activity as artist/teacher/researcher at local, state and national professional venues.

Assessment Strategies:

Assessment is highly individual in this program. A yearly meeting is organized for all current graduate students. One purpose of the meeting is to solicit written feedback and discussion concerning the program's class offerings and structure.

Individual annual meetings between the faculty program director and each graduate student are mandatory for reviewing each student's progress and course selections. This ensures that each student selects courses and projects that meet their individual goals and address their areas of weakness, while building on their strengths. Adjustments tend to be made at the level of the individual student rather than at the level of the program.

VII. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Visual Art and Public Life

Upon graduation from the Master of Arts in Visual Art and Public Life degree program, students will:

1. Be able to analyze and explain in writing and speech the meaning and effectiveness of works of art including their formal, thematic, theoretical, social, cultural, cognitive, and technological aspects.
2. Be able to conduct original creative research by controlling the formal, thematic, theoretical, social, cultural, cognitive, and technological aspects of works of visual art the student makes.
3. Be able to conduct original creative research that results in a cohesive group of art works produced at a professional level of quality in terms of formal, technical, and thematic consistency.
4. Have acquired knowledge of the professional factors, including the ethical responsibilities, of developing artworks in university and community-based collaborations.
5. Be able to critically analyze and communicate the analysis of works of visual art as an intellectual and experimental practice that is rooted in a specific time and place.
6. Have acquired knowledge of how to maintain a creative studio practice in a professional context, from making work to its presentation, installation, marketing, and critical analysis.
7. Be able to research, plan, design, fabricate, and complete their own art works (alone and in collaboration with others) utilizing a variety of technical processes in a variety of public and private settings for a variety of aesthetic and intellectual purposes.

Assessment strategies:

Each student pursuing the MFA in Visual Art and Public Life has an advisory committee of three or four faculty members, who oversee and review their work. Student work, along with the student's ability to explain and critique the work, is assessed three times during the two-year program, after 30 credits, after 45, and after 60 when the thesis is presented. (Students also receive grades for each course.) The teaching and mentoring in this program is highly individualized and students typically work alongside their advisors in the studio with discussion undertaken throughout the process of work, from conception of the project, to research, to methods of fabrication, to final installation.

Principles of Graduate Learning are also assessed at these reviews. Given the level of individualized mentoring provided throughout the program, it is not surprising that scores in this area are consistently excellent.

Findings:

Students are meeting their own and the program's goals on an appropriate schedule as evidenced by the 30-, 45-, and 60-hour reviews.

All students reviewed this year were judged to be achieving the PGLs at a satisfactory or excellent level at the 30-hour reviews, and all were judged to be excellent by the 60-hour reviews.

Actions taken in response:

The program is judged to be functioning well. Recruitment began for three new emphasis areas within the degree track. 2012-2013 will enroll a record number of students in the MFA program.

Advising

The new FLAGS system was utilized for "intrusive advising" in the case of students on or approaching academic probation due to low grade point averages. Advisors used the system to identify students at risk and to reach out to them.

A personal assessment was created and required for probation students and the FLAG system was used to check up on them. This appears to be an effective system, but is too new to be certain.

A survey was created in two versions for students who leave the school. One version is for students who leave Herron for another IUPUI school, and the other for students who leave Herron and IUPUI altogether. The purpose is to learn more about why they chose not to return. This information will be considered in both academic and student support planning.