

Heron School of Art and Design  
PRAC Annual Report for 2010-2011

June 8, 2011

During the academic year of 2010-2011, faculty in each program at the Herron School of Art & Design formalized Student Learning Outcomes. New systems were implemented to assess Student Learning Outcomes. Several of these systems are quite new and data have been gathered only recently. The process of interpreting these data and making curricular changes if needed will proceed over the coming months. Existing assessment systems continued as in previous years.

The report below summarizes new initiatives and changes in 2010-2011, with some mention of continuing practices. Established practices that continue are described more fully in the reports from previous years.

Fine Arts, BFA

1. Each student presents and defends a portfolio and responds to written and oral questions before a panel of faculty before entering the junior year. This comprehensive direct assessment is an established tradition that provides feedback for both faculty and students, and leads to program adjustments when needed and individualized remedial assignments for students demonstrating weaknesses. Some changes were made this year to the eligibility requirements for students going up for review, and to the forms faculty use to record their evaluations.

In May, 61 students underwent review, of which 55 passed and 6 were put on probation. Each student placed on probation is assigned a faculty mentor and an individual program is devised to address weaknesses.

2. A new section was added to the sophomore review forms in order to gather data on those Student Learning Outcomes deemed appropriate to assess at the sophomore level. To avoid adding significant time to the already comprehensive review process, sampling was done by asking each faculty review team to focus on one SLO.

Results from May 2011:  
Scale of 1 (weakest) to 5 (best)

SLO 1. Students will develop a personal aesthetic that will be demonstrated in the characteristics of their artwork, writings, and speech.

Average: 3.15

SLO 2. Students will demonstrate a mastery of visual thinking and the technical demands and craft appropriate to their discipline and artwork.

Average: 3.25

SLO 3. Students will be able to describe historic and contemporary art directions, movements and theory and to place their own artwork in a contemporary context.

Average: 3.0

SLO 4. Students will write and speak effectively about their artwork and ideas.

Average: 3.9375

SLO 6.

Students will exhibit an openness to different or new ideas and a willingness to examine and reconsider familiar ways of thinking.

Average: 4.5

These data were gathered very recently. Faculty will interpret them and recommend actions based on them in the coming months.

3. Participation in campus PUL assessment continues.

### Fine Arts, MFA

1. Each student presents and defends work to his or her faculty advisory committee after 30, 45, and 60 credit hours. If students do not pass, individualized remedial assignments are made to address weaknesses. The 60-hour review is the thesis defense.

2. A new section was added to the 30-, 45-, and 60-hour review forms to gather data on student mastery of the Principles of Graduate and Professional Learning (PGLs) adopted by the campus. Of the four PGLs, two are assessed after 30 hours, the other two after 45 hours, and all four after 60 hours. This process is very new and data are still being gathered for spring 2011. Preliminary results indicate the following trends:

1. Demonstrating mastery of the knowledge and skills expected for the degree and for professionalism and success in the field. Results: Predominantly excellent

2. Thinking critically, applying good judgment in professional and personal situations. Results: data still being collected. (Excellent.)

3. Communicating effectively to others in the field and to the general public.  
Results: Predominantly satisfactory

4. Behaving in an ethical way both professionally and personally. Results:  
Excellent.

Faculty will evaluate these data and recommend any program changes in the coming months.

### Art Education, BAE

1. Each student presents and defends a portfolio and responds to written and oral questions before a panel of faculty before entering the junior year. Reviews occur twice per year. This comprehensive direct assessment is an established tradition that provides immediate feedback for both faculty and students, and leads to program adjustments when needed (none identified this year) and individualized remedial assignments for students demonstrating weaknesses.
2. The Praxis II Test, administered by ETS, is required of all students. This year 14 students took the exam and all passed.
3. On site faculty supervision of student teaching in the K-12 schools keeps faculty thoroughly informed about students' learning and their application of their learning.
4. Participation in campus PUL assessment continues.

The program was deemed to be successful this year with no significant changes needed based on these assessments. However, changes to Indiana's requirements for teachers will necessitate changes next year.

### Visual Communication, BFA

1. Each student is comprehensively and directly assessed by presenting and defending a portfolio before a panel of the full VC faculty before being admitted into junior level classes. The results of the review in May 2010 were particularly disappointing. As a result, significant changes were made to the VC BFA program. These include:
  - A. Changes to the curricular structure so that students who do not pass review have more options for getting back on track or switching to another degree program.

B. Steps taken to integrate better the VC curriculum and the school-wide first-year Foundations program by including VC content into Foundations and including VC faculty in Foundations teaching.

C. Changes to the eligibility requirements for Sophomore Advancement Review to facilitate students' timely progress through the program.

D. Changes to the structure of the Review to eliminate major discrepancies between high grades in coursework and success in review.

E. A category of probationary advancement was created so that students who do not pass review can address their weaknesses immediately and still advance to junior-level courses in the fall. A summer course designed to remedy probationary students was created and will be offered for the first time in Summer Session II, 2011. Students who pass this course with a C+ or better will be admitted to 300-level courses in the fall.

F. Changes made to program leadership. The department ran with an interim chair in 2010-11, and a national search for a new chair has just concluded.

Comparison of 2011 results with 2010 shows marked improvement as a result of these changes. Also, the new category of probation with a summer course to address these students means that many more students will still be able to earn a degree in four years. The new department chair arriving in August will be charged with continuing to improve the program so that even more students achieve the published SLOs.

Sophomore Advancement Review 2010: 50 students total, 60% passed, 40% denied

Sophomore Advancement Review 2011: 41 students total, 66% passed, 29% probation, .05% denied

2. Participation in campus PUL assessment continues.

### Art History, BA

1. Each student writes a capstone paper or completes an equivalent project. In the spring of 2011 a new Capstone Seminar was offered for the first time. This seminar addressed perceived problems in the existing capstone process by ensuring that students received consistent faculty mentoring, while also fostering peer discussion and critique among students with different specializations within the history of art.

2. The new Capstone Seminar made use of E-Portfolio to foster student reflection and to archive student work for annual program assessment. A subcommittee of Art History faculty has been created to study the work in the E-Portfolio in relation to the Art History SLOs. The subcommittee is assigned to complete this assessment during the summer and

to present their findings to the full Art History faculty at the first meeting in the fall. Any program changes deemed necessary will be discussed at that time.

3. Participation in campus PUL assessment continues.

### Overall School Assessments

1. Herron administers a graduating student survey to assess student satisfaction and as an indirect measure of student learning. The survey uses a variety of questions related to the six Principles of Undergraduate Learning as well as questions asking for students broad comments about Herron's strengths and weaknesses, how it prepared them for the future, and how it achieved its mission.

The students own assessment of their attainment of the PULs is somewhat higher than the PUL assessments performed by faculty. However, this may be due to the sequence in which faculty are performing the PUL assessments: faculty have assessed 100-, 200-, and 300-level courses, with 400-level courses scheduled for assessment in the upcoming semester, whereas the graduating students' survey polls students who have completed their education at Herron.

Historically, the results of this survey have been used by the school's administration to inform school level decisions. This year we will be sharing the results with the faculty at the August faculty meeting so that the results can also inform discussions of curriculum and teaching methods. This new distribution of the survey results will allow it to have a more direct contribution to ongoing program improvements.

2. While last year's results were generally positive, it appeared that students would benefit from greater access to advising. As a result, a second advisor has been hired and is currently in training for half-time advising duties.