Expected Outcomes: Students will solve problem-based art assignments

Students will solve problem-based art assignments demonstrating the ability to synthesize formal elements, techniques, and where appropriate concept.

Related typical general education outcomes:

6 Ability to Solve Open-Ended Problems
12 Aesthetic Appreciation and Engagement

Assessment methods

Method: evaluation of oral presentation

In the ARTS 4850 Professional Practices course, students prepare a visual presentation of a selection of their most accomplished artwork, and in an oral presentation discuss the methods and concepts represented. They are evaluated by the instructor using the attached rubric. This is a new rubric affording better evaluative detail. We have also implemented exit interviews with our graduating students, and these have given supporting detail to the more formal findings below.

Findings:

Findings below indicate a near-universal attainment of benchmark expectations for art-making competence, but significant range. We examined these aspects of the expected outcome:

- For technical attainment in at least one art medium, 14% were rated highly accomplished, 53% were judged accomplished, and 33% were rated at our benchmark for appropriate competency.
- For understanding of and ability to successfully utilize the formal aspects of art, 19% were rated highly accomplished, 62% were considered accomplished, 14% were seen as at our benchmark for appropriate attainment, and 5% were judged below expectations.
- In their ability to develop sophisticated conceptual content in their artwork, and to integrate it well with the formal and technical aspects of their work, 10% of students were considered highly accomplished, 33% were rated accomplished, 33% were seen as at our benchmark for appropriate attainment, and 5% were rated below expectations.

How did you use findings for improvement?

In exit interviews with graduating BA studio majors, a recurring theme is that many wish they had concentrated more of their studio work/hours in a single medium area, and thus gained greater accomplishment and a stronger portfolio of work in that discipline. These findings detail this concern. It would seem to be more an advising issue than a curricular one, and we are addressing it as such. Many of our BA studio art graduates anticipate art-related careers (such as art therapy, museum and gallery work, art education, arts management, etc.) rather than studio practice, and are well served by a generalist’s approach. But we will convey through our advising practices that many BA students, by the end, feel they could increase attainment in the degree program by undertaking an informal concentration in a particular studio area, and advancing to the upper-level courses in at least one medium-area.

Additional comments:

None
Expected Outcomes: students demonstrate an appreciation of art

Through oral presentations and/or writing assignments in ARTS 4850 Professional Practices, students demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the arts and aesthetics.

Related typical general education outcomes:

12 Aesthetic Appreciation and Engagement

Assessment methods

Method: evaluation of writing and class presentation

In ARTS 4850 Professional Practices, which serves as the capstone course for the BA in studio art, all students are required to produce several examples of professional, discipline-specific writing, and an oral presentation describing intentions and concepts in their artwork. These writings and presentations are evaluated by the instructor using the attached rubric.

Findings:

- In the student’s ability to demonstrate an understanding of key methods, media, and forms relevant to the artwork presented, 6% were highly accomplished, 59% were accomplished, 23% were at our benchmark for appropriate attainment, and 12% were considered below expectations.
- In awareness and understanding of concepts relevant to the artwork presented, 6% were considered highly accomplished, 35% were considered accomplished, 53% were rated at our benchmark for appropriate attainment, and 6% were seen as below expectations.
- In the student’s ability to utilize knowledge of relevant historical periods and/or contemporary art practices to discuss their own artwork, 12% were seen as highly accomplished, 41% seen as accomplished, 30% as at our benchmark for appropriate attainment, and 17% as below expectations.

How did you use findings for improvement?

We are discussing a number of curricular revisions and new practices that may improve performance of our BA studio majors. The Department of Art is an early-adopter of the QEP ePortfolio initiative, and all our majors will soon be expected to document, and make available to faculty, examples of their best work (visual and written) from a range of courses. By making these expectations known early in the degree program, we expect better awareness of expectations and higher attainment. The 50-hour studio BA degree cannot be expected to produce the same degree of competence and accomplishment as the 82 hour BFA, and serves different needs. But we continue to examine strategies for heightening student engagement and accomplishment in both. We are discussing a new course, “Orientation to the Arts,” that would be taught at the freshman or sophomore level, and would help us articulate expectations early.

Additional comments:

While we will continue to assess students’ performance as studio artists, exit interviews indicate value in assessing other aspects of our BA studio students’ accomplishment. Since many of these students aspire to other art-related professions than as practicing studio artists, assessing other aspects of their career preparation is critical. Professional writing and speaking are being assessed; we are working to increase student participation in internship opportunities, to provide museum and non-profit arts practical experience. As we grow these aspects of the program, we need to develop means of assessing our students’ learning in these areas.