

# Assessment Cycle 2020 - 2021

## Bachelor of Fine Arts (214)

**College: Arts and Sciences**

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**Date: June 10, 2022**

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**Date: 23 June 2022**

**Northwestern State University Mission:** Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

**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.

**Bachelor 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 skills, 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 a portfolio and experience to begin professional practice or graduate studies.

**Methodology:** The assessment process for the BFA 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 student 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);
- (5) The Program Chair will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricular and program changes.

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### Student Learning Outcomes:

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

**Course Map:** Tied to course syllabus objectives in all courses

**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 data exceeded. Target not met.

**Analysis:** No results were reported in AC 2020-2021. COVID 19 and weather-related disruptions interfered with assessment reviews. In AC 2019-2020, target was not met. Reported results show 56% met with SLO 1—student advising was not as involved as it could be and efforts were made to enhance advising and communication with the students. In AC 2021-2022, student reviews results (n=90) showed 55% of students reviewed met with an in-depth understanding and application of visual art techniques, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. This is a decrease of 1% from the 2019-2020 assessment cycle. Our students struggled with the return to campus and the demands of face-to-face courses. However, of graduating seniors (n=19) 89% met with this SLO 1.

**Decision:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will continue to implement more in-class demonstrations on topics found difficult by students in order to better explain requirements on assignments. The faculty will implement rapid instruction in basic tool use for students with tool use deficits. Faculty also agree that explaining and adhering to absentee policies established by the university will aid students in understanding the importance of attendance--an issue that has become more prevalent as the university has continued to move towards face-to-face classroom experiences. The Art Unit has also had the good fortune to have new instructors in painting, drawing and printmaking, photography, and ceramics. These new faculty have brought a renewed sense of involvement to the Unit as a whole and we look forward to this renewal to aid students and faculty in the return to the classroom.

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

**Course Map:** Tied to course syllabus objectives in all courses

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**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:** Acceptable data exceeded. Target not met.

**Analysis:** All classes are used to measure this SLO. No results were reported in AC 2020-2021. COVID 19 and weather-related disruptions interfered with assessment reviews. In AC 2019-20, target was not met--reported data was 54%. Faculty reported students' skill-levels as progressing slower. New faculty was added and emphasis was placed on in-class demonstrations, which some faculty members had forgone. AC 2021-2022 student reviews (N=90) results showed 55% of students reviewed acquired valuable production experience that is reflected in their own independent achievements, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. Our students struggled with the return to campus and the demands of face-to-face courses. Absenteeism and a sense of resignation towards their projects seemed to be systemic. Yet in the midst of this, we had two of the strongest semesters for our graduating seniors—who presented a level of excellence that was refreshing. Of graduating seniors (N=19) 73% met with SLO 2.

**Decision:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, to drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, instructors will focus on teaching technique in conjunction with producing final works that illustrate mastery of technique and growth in personal expression of the student's artistic voice. Faculty-led, in-class peer critiques will enhance student experiences.

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

**Course Map:** Tied to the course syllabus objectives

**ART 4980:** Professional Practice

**ART 4990:** Senior Exhibition

**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 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

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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:** Acceptable data exceeded. Target not met.

**Analysis:** Senior Capstone classes ART 4980 and ART 4990 are the best measure this SLO but the Art Unit collects data from all other courses as well. No results were reported in AC 2020-2021. COVID 19 and weather-related disruptions interfered with assessment reviews. In AC 2019-2020, target was not met. Reported results show 43% met with SLO 3. This may reflect the collection of data from all courses rather than just the capstone courses. No separate information is reported on 2019-2020 graduating seniors. AC 2021-2022 student reviews (N=90) results showed 51% of students synthesizing the curricular experience to meet their professional and creative goals, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. This likely reflects that the general population is included in this evaluation. However, when the population of graduating seniors (N=19) is evaluated alone, 94% met or exceeded this SLO. the Art Unit well exceeds its target of 80% in this scenario.

**Decision:** In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. To drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, a special University 1000 course was created as a Freshman Interest Group for Art majors. All incoming Art majors will enroll in this section in order to become immediately immersed in the unit's culture and the university experience's role in professional preparation. Faculty will evaluate senior capstone course recipients as a separate population in future assessment cycles.

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

**Course Map:** Tied to the course syllabus objectives in all courses

**Measure:** Observable through participation in departmental or class field trips to museums, galleries and design centers, and participation in student exhibitions and organizations. The percentage of majors attending major semester field trips, entering annual the student exhibition will be monitored. 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:** Acceptable data exceeded. Target not met.

**Analysis:** Results were measured in all classes. No results were reported in AC 2020-2021 due to COVID and weather-related conditions. In AC 2019-2020, target was not met--reported data was 49%. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, 68% of students participated in enrichment experiences, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. This is a major increase in participation (19%). Of graduating seniors (N=19) 89% met with SLO. However, especially in the case of this SLO, perhaps the onus for improvement lies with the faculty rather than the students. Often measures for this SLO are not collected routinely and thoroughly collected.

**Decision:** To drive improvement in AC 2022-2023, faculty will focus efforts on arranging more opportunities for students to travel to exhibitions, attendance at exhibitions/ receptions will be added for credit to University 1000 FIG, regular gallery talks with visiting artists will be more consistently scheduled. Faculty will work to develop uniform measure of attendance.

**Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results:** The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2021-2022. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results.

- The addition of new faculty in the areas of painting, drawing, printmaking, and ceramics has bolstered student involvement in departmental activities.
- Increased percentages of in all areas assessed except for SLO 1, which decreased 1% since AC 2018-2019, point to the effectiveness of curricular updates.
- More effective faculty use of Moodle as an interface made clearer grades to students
- Increases in presentation of unit sponsored trips (prior to AC 2020-2021) as aiding in engaging students more in the program.
- Efforts were made to enhance advising and communication with the students.
- An emphasis was placed on in-class demonstrations

### Plan of action moving forward:

- Implement more in-class demonstrations on topics found difficult by students
- Implement rapid instruction in basic tool use for students with tool use deficits
- Explain and adhere to absentee policies established by the university
- Establish routine faculty-led in-class peer critiques
- Establish University 1000 Freshman Interest Group for Art majors to immerse freshmen in unit's culture and the university experience's role in professional

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preparation.

- Instructors will focus on mastery of technique and growth in personal expression of the student's artistic voice
- Arranging more opportunities for students to travel to exhibitions
- Mandate attendance at exhibitions/receptions for University 1000 FIG
- More consistently schedule gallery talks with visiting professional artists
- Faculty will work to develop uniform measure of attendance.