

Assessment Cycle 2024-2025

Bachelor of Fine Arts (214)

College: Arts and Sciences

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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 students 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: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met. Thirty-one percent (31%) of students (Freshman, Sophomores and Juniors: N=95) met SLO 1. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty provided increased and improved advising opportunities for students, continued to offer open studios for work outside of class time, and arranged off-campus trips to view artists and museums.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-25, the target was not met. However, an acceptable number of students did achieve SLO 1. Seventy-two percent (72%) of students (Freshman, Sophomores and Juniors: N=59) met SLO 1.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met. However, the percentage of students who met SLO 1 was acceptable and showed a dramatic increase to 72%. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, to drive improvement in AC 2025-2026, Art Unit faculty will maintain practices added in AC 2023-2024, namely provide increased and improved advising opportunities for students, offer open studios for work outside of class time, and arrange off-campus trips to view artists and museums. These changes will increase the students' ability to secure an in-depth understanding and application of visual art techniques thereby pushing the cycle of improvement forward

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

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

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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 to deliver a qualitative and quantitative level of involvement and production. Acceptable data would show that 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: In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met. Acceptable data shows 58% of students met SLO 2.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, we saw a dramatic decrease: 35% of student reviews (N=95) met with a 3.5 or higher mark on SLO 2. Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes in 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Faculty added more opportunities for students to attend workshops and internships and to work on public art projects as part of their studies and courses. Students received a handbook, "Art School in a Nutshell", that provided information about what to expect, how to plan, and resources that were available to students. This handbook was written by the faculty with input from NSUCares. As faculty efforts to abide by the University's absence policy increased, fewer students grappled with unexcused absences.

As a result of the changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was not met. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of students (Freshman, Sophomores and Juniors: N=59) met SLO 2. Thankfully, in 2024-2025, an increased number of students (+23%) met with this SLO, demonstrating improvement in this SLO.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met, however, an acceptable percentage of students (58%) exhibited high levels of production in their individual artistic achievements or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, to drive improvement in AC 2025-2026, in order to continue our upward trend, faculty will implement activities and practices from 2024-2025 focusing efforts to involve students in new external exhibitions and creating new opportunities for students to meet alumni who are professionals in art fields.

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

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

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

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will assess the success or failure of 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: In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met. An acceptable gain to 64% was achieved.

Analysis: In AC 2023-2024, 24% of Freshman, Sophomores, and Juniors who were reviewed (N=95) achieved a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. While Senior Capstone classes ART 4980 and ART 4990 are the best measure this SLO, the Art Unit collected data in AC 2024-2025 from all other courses instead as evaluating graduating seniors as a part of the total population could skew results. In AC 2024-2025, an acceptable level of 64% was achieved.

As a result of the analysis of AC 2024-2025, the target was not met. Sixty-four percent (64%) of students (Freshman, Sophomores and Juniors: N=59) met SLO 3.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was not met; however there has been a marked increase in students who have exhibited high levels of production in their individual artistic achievements, or a 3.5 or better on the review rubric. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, to drive improvement in AC 2025-2026, faculty will implement activities and practices from 2024-2025 and will focus efforts on involving students in external exhibitions and creating opportunities for students to meet alumni who are professionals in art fields. Emphasis will be placed on workforce readiness, graduate study readiness, and professional development earlier in the curriculum.

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 the annual student exhibition will be monitored. Data will be collected by generating lists of the percentage of students attending 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. The 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-

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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%.

Findings: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met. The data collected did exceed the acceptable level of 71% of students

Analysis: In AC 2023-24, 51% of students (N=95) helped us reach an acceptable point. Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, the faculty made the following changes to drive the cycle of improvement. The faculty increased focusing their efforts on arranging more opportunities for students to travel to exhibitions, attendance at exhibitions/ receptions was added as credit in UNIV1000 FIG, and regular gallery talks with visiting artists was more consistently scheduled. As faculty efforts to abide by the University's absence policy increased, fewer students grappled with unexcused absences.

In AC 2024-2025, that gain continued with 71% of students meeting SLO 4.

As a result of the changes of AC 2024-2025, the target was not met, but an acceptable point was met. Seventy-one percent (71%) of students (Freshman, Sophomores and Juniors: N=59) met SLO 4.

Decision: The target was not met in AC 2024-2025. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, to drive improvement in AC 2025-2026, faculty will arrange opportunities for students to travel to exhibitions, take attendance at exhibitions/ receptions as credit in UNIV1000 FIG and other courses, and regularly schedule gallery talks with visiting artists. Likewise, uniform measures of attendance based on university policies will be maintained. Additionally, faculty will increase opportunities for students to assist with the preparation of gallery exhibitions held at NSULA.

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 2024-2025. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results.

- Faculty provided increased and improved advising opportunities for students, offered open studios for work outside of class time, and arranged off-campus trips to view artists and museums
- Faculty implemented workshops and special topic presentations that allowed students to further hone professional skills like resume building and portfolio curation.
- Faculty distributed a student handbook to provide insight into what was expected during each year of the art program.

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- Faculty explained and adhered to absentee policies established by the University.
- Instructors focused on mastery of technique and growth in personal expression of the student's artistic voice
- Faculty offered more opportunities for students to travel to exhibitions.
- Faculty mandated attendance at exhibitions/receptions for UNIV1000 FIG and added the requirement for other courses.
- Faculty more consistently scheduled gallery talks with visiting professional artists.
- Faculty made curricular changes focused on clarity of class content.

Plan of action moving forward: As the Art Unit saw an increase in all areas in AC 2024-2025, new measures should be added in AC 2025-2026, in order to maintain our upward trend from the previous year. In 2025-26, the Art Unit will strive to build a better environment for student improvement by:

- Providing exposure to workshops and internship opportunities
- Improving advising opportunities for students
- Offering supervised open studios for work outside of class time
- Arranging off-campus trips to museums, galleries, and appropriate work sites.
- Placing appropriate emphasis on workforce readiness, graduate study readiness, and profession development earlier in the curriculum
- Developing uniform measure of attendance and interventions to unexcused absences based on existing University policies.