Institutional Effectiveness Achievement Report


Unit Head: Jean Nagy
Reports to: College of Liberal Arts

Mission:
Our mission is to provide a comprehensive visual education to a diverse student population. The central activities of the Department of Art at Middle Tennessee State University include the experience of art through creative processes and the study of design, art history and art education. We maintain that the creative act of the individual student is informed by the development of visual and verbal communication skills. Students in the classroom benefit from faculty who are actively engaged in creative and scholarly activities.

Our majors graduate with the following degrees: BFA in studio or graphic design, BA in art history or a BS in art education which enables them to work professionally as artists, historians or educators in art-related fields, and/or toward graduate degrees. The department is partnered with corporate creative departments, design firms, advertising agencies, educational institutions, museums and public institutions, all of which seek our graduates.

Use of Prior Results:
Last year we tried to create more structure in the thesis writing course, which is taught as an independent study. While this did help some students to have better results and to keep to a schedule and writing plan, other students continued to miss scheduled meetings and to ignore deadlines. The thesis was a required course and so was taken by all of our majors. For some, the independent study aspect was empowering and very effective. For others, the lack of structure and official consequences meant that they did not complete drafts on time, so that they could be reviewed, and ultimately did not produce a quality product. This led us to the conclusion that certain art history majors need more structure in their thesis writing semester in order to demonstrate the visual analysis skills, writing and editing skills, and professionalism that they are being taught in the art history program. With these concerns in mind, starting in the 2015-2016 academic year, we will give students an option. The Methods class (ART 3940) will focus more on writing and research skills and will require every student to write a thesis paper. In the Methods class, which is required of all art history majors, students will meet with the class and instructor twice a week and they will be required to produce drafts of their thesis and to participate in peer-review activities. Those students who are more self-motivated and ones who are planning to attend graduate school will be encouraged to also do a thesis as an independent study. This will no longer be required, but it will be encouraged for those students for which it is appropriate. Those students who do not take the thesis option will take an additional upper level course. This change to our program was approved by the department faculty and the University curriculum committee for the 2015-2016 academic year. We hope this more flexible approach that takes into account each specific student's needs will help all of our students to produce their best work and show a mastery of art historical scholarship and methods, as well as visual analysis skills.

Student Learning Outcome:
Art history majors will demonstrate knowledge of art movements within and outside of the Western tradition. They will demonstrate knowledge of core theories and methodologies of art history, as well as the ability to analyze visual materials and to assess and engage with scholarly arguments and debates.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure 1:</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Analysis of Results for Measure 1.(include strengths &amp; weaknesses):</th>
<th>Supporting Document(s):</th>
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<td>All art history majors are required to complete a senior thesis. Prior to graduation, a committee composed of all art history faculty members must approve the student's thesis. A rubric will be used to assess the thesis, with sections to measure visual analysis ability, critical thinking ability, understanding of art historical methodologies, and demonstration of professionalism.</td>
<td>Art history faculty</td>
<td>In the academic year 2014-2015, we had eight art history majors graduate and eight theses turned in. Six of these theses met expectations for visual analysis ability, critical thinking ability, and understanding of art historical methodologies. Two were below expectation in all these areas, especially in the area of professionalism, as these two students habitually missed deadlines and scheduled meetings. Our assessment of the theses led us to the conclusion</td>
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Future Actions:
Describe Program Changes (adding a course, assignment, project, etc.):
Starting in the 2015-2016 academic year, we will give students an option. The Methods class (ART 3940) will focus more on writing and research skills and will require every student to write a thesis paper. In the Methods class, which is required of all art history majors, students will meet with the class and instructor twice a week and they will be required to
that art history majors needed more structure in their thesis writing semester in order to demonstrate greater visual analysis skills, writing and editing skills, greater engagement with primary and secondary sources, and in their demonstration of professionalism. While we required more structure during the 2014-2015 academic year, giving students specific times to meet with their thesis advisor and required more and earlier drafts, students still procrastinated, failed to meet deadlines and missed scheduled meetings.

Those students who are more self-motivated and ones who are planning to attend graduate school will be encouraged to also do a thesis as an independent study. This will no longer be required, but it will be encouraged for those students for which it is appropriate. Those students who do not take the thesis option will take an additional upper level course. This change to our program was approved by the department faculty and the University curriculum committee for the 2015-2016 academic year. We hope this more flexible approach that takes into account each specific student's needs will help all of our students to produce their best work and show a mastery of art historical scholarship and methods, as well as visual analysis skills. In order to have students have greater knowledge of fundamental art history issues in all areas and periods, we will also try to encourage students to take their upper division courses in a greater variety of areas. Presently, students are required to take courses in three areas (medieval/Renaissance, non-Western, and Modern/contemporary), but as advisors, we plan to work more closely with students to make sure their choices are diverse, so that they leave MTSU with a broad understanding of art history.
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| Measure 2: All graduating seniors are required to take a major field exam. The exam is multiple choice, includes 150 questions, and covers fundamental art historical knowledge of European and non-European art from all periods. | Person(s) Responsible: Art history faculty | Analysis of Results for Measure 2: (Include strengths & weaknesses):
Eight students took the Major Field Exam and received scores of 45%, 65%, 70%, 75%, 77%, 78%, 85%, and 95%. As we designed this test so that 75% was satisfactory, five of the exams were at or above expectation, with three below. While most students demonstrated an adequate degree of art historical knowledge, some did not and all lacked some knowledge of fundamental areas. |
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Future Actions:
Describe Assessment Changes (measures such as rubrics, exams, diagnostic instruments, etc.): We are satisfied with our rubrics and what we assess. We hope that these structural changes will allow students to succeed in these areas.
Use of Prior Results: Last year we tried to create more structure in the thesis writing course, which is taught as an independent study. While this did help some students to show greater professionalism by keeping to a schedule, meeting deadlines, and attending meetings, other students continued to miss scheduled meetings and to ignore deadlines. The thesis was a required course and so was taken by all of our majors. For some, the independent study aspect was empowering and very effective. For others, the lack of structure and official consequences meant that they did not complete drafts on time, so that they could be reviewed, and ultimately did not produce a quality product. This led us to the conclusion that certain art history majors need more structure in their thesis writing semester in order to demonstrate the visual analysis skills, writing and editing skills, and professionalism that they are being taught in the art history program. With these concerns in mind, starting in the 2015-2016 academic year, we will give students an option. The Methods class (ART 3940) will focus more on writing and research skills and will require every student to write a thesis paper. In the Methods class, which is required of all art history majors, students will meet with the class and instructor twice a week and they will be required to produce drafts of their thesis and to participate in peer-review activities. Those students who are more self-motivated and ones who are planning to attend graduate school will be encouraged to also do a thesis as an independent study. This will no longer be required, but it will be encouraged for those students for which it is appropriate. Those students who do not take the thesis option will take an additional upper level course. This change to our program was approved by the department faculty and the University curriculum committee for the 2015-2016 academic year. We hope this more flexible approach that takes into account each specific student's needs will help all of our students to produce their best work and to show an understanding of the professionalism required to succeed in a n art history career.

**Student Learning Outcome:**
Art history majors will demonstrate the discipline and work ethics needed for a sustainable career.

**Measure 1:** Art history majors are required to take a professional practices course. Their understanding of work ethics and their readiness to enter into a career will be assessed at the end of the semester during a mock interview.

**Person(s) Responsible:** Art history faculty

**Completion Date:**

**Analysis of Results for Measure 1 (include strengths & weaknesses):**
The eight students who graduated in the 2014-2015 year took this course in fall of 2012 or the spring 2015. All of the students did well in the course and showed impressive professionalism in their demeanor and attitudes. This did not always translate to all of their thesis work, during which three of the seven failed to meet deadlines and missed scheduled meetings.

**Supporting Document(s):**

**Future Actions:**
Describe any additional resources needed (Leave blank if no additional resources are needed):
A graduate student will be encouraged to also do a thesis as an independent study. This will no longer be required, but it will be encouraged for those students for which it is appropriate. Those students who do not take the thesis option will take an additional upper-level course. This change to our program was approved by the department faculty and the University curriculum committee for the 2015-2016 academic year. We hope this more flexible approach that takes into account each specific student's needs will help all of our students to produce their best work and show an understanding of the professionalism required to succeed in an art history career.

**Future Actions:** Describe Assessment Changes (measures such as rubrics, exams, diagnostic instruments, etc.):

In addition to changing the format type of the thesis course, we will emphasize professionalism and work ethic on the assessment rubric for the senior thesis.

**Future Actions:** Describe any additional resources needed (Leave blank if no additional resources are needed):

| Measure 2: | Person(s) | Analysis of Results for Measure |
All art history majors are required to complete a senior thesis. Prior to graduation, a committee composed of all art history faculty members must approve the student's thesis. A rubric will be used to assess the thesis, with sections that measure the student's demonstration of professionalism.

2: (include strengths & weaknesses):

In the academic year 2014-2015, we had eight art history majors graduate and eight theses turned in. Six of these theses met expectations for demonstration of professionalism. Two were below expectation in this area, as these two students habitually missed deadlines and scheduled meetings. Our assessment of the theses led us to the conclusion that art history majors needed more structure in their thesis writing semester. While we required more structure during the 2014-2015 academic year, giving students specific times to meet with their thesis advisor and required more and earlier drafts, students still procrastinated, failed to meet deadlines and missed scheduled meetings.

Report Date: Fri Aug 14 2015
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