

ART DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT: 2014

Overview of Art Departmental Degree Program Offerings

1. The Art Department offers a BA and a BFA in Art with a focus on the following different majors; Commercial Art/Graphic Design, Art Therapy, Studio Art. We also offer interdisciplinary degrees with the Education Certification, and a Minor in Entrepreneurship. Between the two majors (decisions on BA or BFA do not take place until after a Sophomore review) we currently have approximately 75 students. There are 5 FT and 2 PT faculty in the department.
2. The Art Department actively engages in collaborative initiatives through two **inter-disciplinary** courses – The **Art of Entrepreneurship** and The **Art of Publishing**. These courses are designed to provide more opportunities for our majors without adding to the cost of our program.
3. The Art Department serves @ **60 non- majors per semester**, 48 in 2 sections of Intro To Visual Culture, and the rest are served in our entry level studios courses. This is **considerably higher** than any area of CFA, considering that we only have 5 FT faculty.

Program Quality Assessment:

The following Quality dimensions are relevant for the Department:

1. The faculty is uniquely qualified to provide a strong art experience for both very skilled and talented incoming students as well as less advanced and average skilled students.
 2. Alumni success indicates quality preparation.
 3. Students are choosing to attend Millikin to study art to interact with our faculty not because of our facilities.
 4. The portfolio review process continues to set the standard for quality student admits.
 5. Although we attract many first generation college students from smaller high schools who require financial assistance, our numbers reflect a solid consistency of enrollment and relatively low operating costs for the type of art experience we offer.
 6. We are recognized as being flexible, collaborative, and practical with both internal and external constituents.
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1. The faculty is comprised of qualified individuals with professional backgrounds who are engaged in their disciplines on a continuing basis. Therefore, **we practice what we profess** in the classroom and consequently transfer that mindset to our students. This is at the core of **Performance Learning**. Our **faculty are unique in their caring for the individual student** and their ability to transfer valuable knowledge outside the classroom (sometimes when the student least expects it). Our **faculty recognize art students have different skill levels and work extremely hard at bringing the greatest potential out of each student**.
 2. The **faculty have crafted the art curriculum that best prepares our students for entry into the art profession** upon graduation centered around the university's goal of combining theory with practice.
 3. Alumni success is a key indicator of quality. Data for 2004-13 from the University Career Center shows Professional Success of Studio majors at 83%, Art Therapy at 90%,

Graphic Design at 75%, Art Education at 100%. The BA art major reflected 50% placement numbers. These numbers fluctuate with each major throughout the years. The true numbers depend on how the students are actually reporting their employment. With Art majors this can be misleading. We have made a major push within the department to provide art majors with opportunities to learn business skills. The main effort has been in the introduction of the **Art of Entrepreneurship** courses taught in collaboration with the Tabor School of Business. We have embraced the program to the extent that we were able to hire a full time lecturer who teaches half-time within the Art of Entrepreneurship. Examples of student entrepreneurial ventures/laboratories include: **Blue Connection Gallery, Carriage House Press, and Ignite Design Studios.**

Some examples of **successful placements** of recent graduates include Hugh Sullivan who was hired by the Herald & Review to start and manage the streaming video reporting component of their web site, Ryan Gallagher was hired by a professional photography studio in St. Louis, Mike Mullan was accepted to grad school at RIT, Laura Podeschi was hired by a publisher in Champaign. Alida Duff's photography and design have been featured in magazines and in the publication of the book Eugene Carriere: Shadow and Substance.

Some examples of **successful alumni** in studio art include Richard Keen, Nathan Cox, Rob Fifield, Ben Gardner, Katie Hinton, Andy Messerschmidt, Michael Wille, Angie Zielinski, Teresa Sharpe, Amber Hany, Ben Cohan, Erica Reese, Kari Thornton, and Amanda Voltz. All of who are currently or have completed graduate study in studio art and are either teaching at the university level, are practicing artists, or both.

We teach our students to be successful by:

- Searching for ways to be **self-sufficient** within the discipline of art. We teach them that no one will hand them a job on a silver platter and if they cannot find one, create their own.
- Be **entrepreneurial** even if you are not working directly in your chosen field. Always look for ways to get your art in front of people by setting up exhibits, donating work for charitable causes, volunteer in all types of art related events, keep honing your craft/skills by keeping up with your own studio and/or taking additional classes.
- **Craftsmanship** is king. They may be creative and cutting edge, but if they falter on craftsmanship their end product will not be successful.
- One of the best things we do is prepare our students for a professional career in the Art world by supporting the institution's mission of **combining theory and practice**. We pride ourselves on **identifying** student's **strengths** and then assisting them in maximizing those strengths as it relates to employment opportunities. We do this through an emphasis on **production/studio work , internship opportunities and real world job experiences. This becomes the hallmark for Performance Learning.**

4. Students are choosing to attend Millikin to study art and to interact with our faculty not because of our facilities. The strength of enrollment for most art schools is the quality of their facilities. Potential art students and parents generally judge a program based on how well the facilities meet the needs of the students to create art, i.e.: studio space, equipment, storage spaces, safety issues, etc... Our success comes mostly from potential

students interacting with and believing in the opportunity to learn from our faculty. We have repeatedly heard from students and parents that they were not impressed with our studios but they were impressed with the faculty and the work the students produce.

5. The portfolio review process continues to set the standard for quality student admits. Our Fall 05 Apps to Admits was 64.6% and our Enroll to Admit was only 24.2%, which puts us down with some of the lower % disciplines. However, it does not reflect our numbers of Exploratory Studies students who want to be an Art major but simply have not submitted a portfolio yet. It also may appear that the portfolio review process is driving down our enrollment numbers, when in actuality we try to be very flexible with how we accept students who have weak or non-existent portfolios. By continuing to enforce the portfolio review requirement, we can still compete for talented and scholarly students who make it into our honors program. On average we graduate two honors students per year from our program and we value their contributions to raising the bar for all art majors.
6. A measure of a successful Art program is the ability to be **flexible, collaborative, and practical**. We are **flexible** in that we can think on our feet and get the jobs done no matter what the obstacles. Whether mounting a huge exhibit for very little money or developing alternative methods for firing ceramics, our faculty go with the flow to make things work. We are **collaborative** because we know how to work well with others. Whether it is taking on design jobs with outside companies or providing interns for a nursing home, people on campus and in the community know we provide assistance and valuable services when called upon. We are **practical** because we understand the negative stereotype of the “starving artist” and we work to eliminate any reason for that myth to continue or perpetuate itself. **We debunk the myth by showing students how to make a living being an artist without selling out.**

Our curriculum is designed to follow standard Art School sequencing of courses. This includes Design and Drawing Orientation for all freshmen. Sophomores are then allowed to break off into their chosen area of interest within the studios. Juniors continue to develop their skills and work to develop a body of work while taking advantage of opportunities to travel or seeking internship positions. Seniors focus on developing their portfolios for either job seeking or entrance into graduate school and conclude with some type of exhibition experience here at Millikin as a requirement to graduate.

In support of these efforts we provide students with multiple opportunities to learn to be **self-sufficient**. For example students may join the Art Club where they undertake community projects to raise money to support exhibits and trips to museums and galleries in larger cities. Students may also participate in the annual Pottery/Art Sales held twice per year, which allow them to earn money by selling their work to the public. They also may consign art work to the student run gallery the Blue Connection which is specifically set up to market art created by students, faculty, alumni and friends of the university. Students also have the opportunity to sell their work at the annual Student Art Show and/or their individual Senior One-Person Exhibit.

Department/Program Efficiencies:

In terms of **efficiencies**, it is worth noting that a majority of courses in the Art Department are **stacked**. In other words, a course such as painting or sculpture will consist of **beginning, intermediate, and advanced students**, with the instruction necessitating a degree of flexibility and fluidity in order to provide the necessary technical, aesthetic, and conceptual information to each respective student level and individual need.

-Art Department **facilities** were originally designed for no more than **20 majors**. We currently have **75 majors**.

-Art Department Faculty teach **stacked courses**(beginning, intermediate, advanced) students all in the same class period.

-Art Department Faculty teach at least **1 course outside of their area of expertise**.

-Art Department Faculty **teach 60 non-art majors per semester**, satisfying the FA requirement.

- **Art Department Administrative Assistant Splits her duties with the Kirkland Fine Arts Center**. As a result, we do not have a full time person to assist in all of the day-to-day operations of a mid-size department.

-Art Department has **cut traditional Photography** from its offerings. This has saved the department the maintenance costs of the traditional darkroom and old SLR cameras.

-Art Department **adjunct faculty teach 50% of freshman art foundations coursework**.

-**Perkinson Gallery** exhibitions have **been reduced to two per semester**, thereby reducing the overall costs of exhibitions.

-Art Department **operating budget has been reduced** from **\$66,078, to \$54,292 in FY 14. That is a reduction of \$11,786.**

- We have ,for a number of years, instituted a **materials/lab fee** in order to **offset** the materials **costs** for each course. The materials/lab fees have constituted @ **28%** of our **operating budget**. In **FY 14** the Art Dept **operating budget** was **\$54,292**, with the **materials/lab fee** comprising **\$15,116**.

In spite of the above mentioned cutbacks and efficiencies, we have still been able to set ourselves apart from our peer institutions in a couple of ways:

- Our **Art Therapy** program is only one of very few available nationwide as an undergraduate program. This program has demonstrates the ability to offer students a consistent platform from which to enter grad school in Art Therapy. Our competition for undergrads in Art Therapy is from the Art Institute in Chicago and SIU Edwardsville.
- Our **Graphic Design** program offers students an opportunity to work with computers at a very early stage in the curriculum (AR125 Production Techniques) and provides access to client based projects as early as the sophomore level. Our competition for students in Design is from Eastern, IL Wesleyan, Art Institute, Bradley, Whitewater WI, etc...
- Our students consistently have the opportunity to travel on **immersion** courses to domestic and foreign locations accompanied with Art faculty.
- Our **BFA in Studio Art** has a very high ratio of admits to graduate school in the Studio Art areas for our size of program: since 1996, 22 BFA students have gone on to graduate study for the MFA degree. Many of those have **received Full tuition scholarships**. Of those, 4 are employed as professors of art, and 7 are professionally active exhibiting, teaching, and working as artists.

Program Potential Assessment

The following Potential dimensions are relevant for the Department:

1. The 10-year trend of declared majors provided by the Registrar shows, with the exception of Studio, all Art majors have been consistent in their numbers with just slight increases and decreases.
2. The Department exemplifies the institution's mission and can assist further in its drive to become a distinctive small university.
3. The BFA Graphic Design program has more capacity.
4. The BA in Art has more capacity.
5. Art History and Entrepreneurship have potential growth once their roles are examined and boundaries are established.
6. The art program enriches campus culture in many ways.

1. From 2002-2008 our **enrollment** numbers have been **relatively consistent** throughout each of the majors even with the lack of marketing/recruiting done by the Department/University However, recent trends suggest a decline in enrollment as indicated in overall applications.
2. We support the university in other ways by providing fine art credit within our curriculum for non-majors. Non-art majors may **take Intro to Visual Culture** or any studio that does not have prerequisites and is not full with art majors. For example we have a large number of **non-majors** (30-50%) who take Beginning Photography or Ceramics. We usually have (5-10%) non-majors taking design and computer classes as well. Our art immersion trips have a high percentage of non-majors who travel with our groups.

We have seen an **increase** from 2-3 **transfer students** per year to 8-9, which may have to do with the economy. However, sometimes art transfers usually are behind when they are admitted to our program in their skills and require a lot of work by faculty to get them to a proper level to make progress towards graduation.

3. **Graphic Design** is a program with approximately 50% of Art majors working within the areas of design and computer graphics – with a strong connection to photography as well. Graphic Design is also justifiably perceived as being a practical Art major in the minds of students and parents because of the direct channels into employment. Graphic Design can be packaged in positive ways that make the major appealing for students with minimal “art skills”. Our capacity in this area is limited only to facilities and faculty loads. It would also require additional course development and revisions of how our Graphic Design majors work through our curriculum. We have seen a **decline** in the overall enrollment numbers in this area since 2008, which may need to be addressed via upgrades in technology and /or specific curricular changes.

Technology is a part of the Graphic Design curriculum. We have struggled through the years to support technology and maintain a functional computer lab in creative ways. This is an ongoing issue and will continue to have to be discussed. The fact

remains that our technology **is equal to or less than the average high school program** our students generally come from. This means we have little to offer in terms of the technology and have to make it up in the caliber of instruction and quality of the projects we engage our students in.

4. The **BFA in Studio Art** has been one of our **signature** programs as an example of **Performance Learning** in action. The immersion of each student in his/her respective creative medium is at the very core of the Art Department's mission and goals
5. The **Art Therapy** area has been a mainstay in our program. As one of the few undergraduate programs in the state, it offers our students an ability to use their art skills and apply them towards therapy for both adults and children. Our partnership with **Decatur Memorial Hospital** and the **Cancer Care Center** remain a strong element of performance learning in the community. We have a strong recruitment opportunity to develop even more as we move forward.
6. **The BA in Art** has capacity for students who are interested in Art but also interested in other disciplines. The **BA in Art is flexible** for the student who wants an art experience but does not have the same commitment to the studio load. The BA in Art offers students from other disciplines that want to double major in Art the opportunity to successfully complete two degrees. We have seen an increase in students asking for this option especially since we do not offer a minor in Art.
7. **Art History** has been a mainstay for our majors as well as non-majors wishing to take Intro to Visual Culture or other Art History classes. We have looked into the possibility of developing a major in Art History because we feel there is capacity in a lecture/research environment as opposed to our lack of space within the studios.
8. The entire art program **enriches campus culture** in many ways. We are responsible for maintaining an **exhibition program** throughout the year in **Perkinson Gallery, the Blue Connection** and the **Birks Museum**. **Performance Learning** is embedded throughout our curriculum: Some examples of **Performance Learning**: the **Ceramics Chili Bowl** event, the student **Blue Connection After 5 Live** events, the **Cancer Care Center, Carriage House Press, Ignite Design Studios**, and the numerous **art internships** both on and off campus.

The following **QPC data from 2009** illustrates both the **qualitative assessments**, and indicates some of the **efficiencies** in our program.

QPC Matrix

	<u>Low Quality</u>			<u>High Quality</u>		
	Low Potential	Medium Potential	High Potential	Low Potential	Medium Potential	High Potential
Low Cost					Art History/ Entrepreneurship.	BFA Art Therapy
Medium Cost			BA Art			BFA Studio
High Cost						BFA Graphic Design

QPC Conclusions

1. The **BA major** is placed in the Matrix as a Low Quality-High Potential-Medium Cost program. Low quality placement is based on the lack of existing assessment for the BA students. (These issues are being addressed in our Art Assessment Document.) High potential because these students operate on existing curriculum structure. Medium cost because we are unsure of potential costs and we have not really marketed towards this potential group of interested art students, yet with lesser skill development and/or weak high school programs.
2. **BFA Graphic Design** is placed in High Quality-High Potential-High Cost because of the generalized perception that students are employable with this degree and national trends see an increased interest from high school students in the digital art technology. The high cost comes in maintaining that technological edge. We may already be falling too far behind in our technological capacity to justify placement of the Graphic Design program in the High Quality section of the matrix.
3. The **Art History and/or Art of Entrepreneurship** as a High Quality-Medium Potential-Low Cost:
 - “High Quality” because we currently have the curriculum structure in place and students interested in Art History tend to be good scholars.
 - “Medium Potential” because we believe there is demand, but we are unsure how to go about attracting potential students to this program. It has natural connection to the increasingly popular Art of Entrepreneurship program, which will continue to grow as more students have the chance to participate.
4. The **BFA Studio** is medium cost and high quality in the success rate of those going on for graduate study, practicing artists working in the field, and as teachers/educators. **Removing one of the two areas of emphasis** would not create any particular savings, and would **negatively impact** our student’s employment and entrepreneurial abilities. It would also have the potential to **undermine the collaborative nature** of the areas within our own department.

5. The **BFA Art Therapy** is low cost, high quality due to the fact that it is another option added on to the BFA studio, which costs very little and provides more opportunities for professional success.

Some of the potential curricular changes discussed:

***Could we combine some classes into 1 section, i.e. Drawing Orientation and Design Orientation are currently offered in two sections each semester. Could we create 1 large section for each?** Currently this would not be possible, as we have more than enough students to require 2 separate sections. Our facilities would not allow for anything larger than 15 per section.

***Could we consider combining the content for Drawing Orientation and Design Orientation into 1 blended course such as Drawing and Design I, and Drawing and Design II?** This may be a possibility, but there are some pedagogical issues about whether combining these separate courses into one semester would be able to be delivered in terms of content. It would create savings for 2 adjunct sections per semester. (\$4500)

***Could we combine AR 201 Computer Art & Design with AR 236 Beginning Digital Photography?** It would require some careful planning, but could be beneficial for both Graphic Design students and Photography students. It would create a savings of 1 adjunct section per semester. (\$2250)

***Could we consider combining AR 122 Ceramics Handbuilding with AR240 Sculpture? Could students explore various handbuilding techniques as part of their sculpture studies?** There are currently pedagogical and safety issues that appear to be an issue that would prevent students from learning the necessary techniques, materials safely and thoroughly. Also, combining courses will not create a savings.

***Could we consider combining Figure Drawing and Painting into blended sections of Drawing/Painting?** This is yet another possibility that would change the focus of our upper level drawing curriculum and connect it more directly with painting. Again, this may not create savings.

All of the above mentioned changes would require the necessary re-alignment and re-thinking of our core curriculum as it relates to the Art Department mission. At heart is whether such changes would strengthen or weaken our promise to deliver on our mission, along with whether or not short term savings would offset potential long term effects.

Recommendations for Action

1. Continue to look for ways to attract students seeking a **BA in Art**. Work to provide a valuable service to these students by adding flexibility, adjustments in faculty distribution,

and additional **collaboration** opportunities between disciplines. Our BA students have the **AR 390 Blue Connection Gallery** course as their capstone experience. As a result, our BA student curriculum has a cohesive **interdisciplinary** experience.

2. Similar to the Theatre program, we need to **increase number of applicants** for the Department's major programs through intense marketing efforts. (The Art Department needs assistance in this area.) The tuition discounts are lowered when higher quality students are attracted to compete for a limited number of slots in BFA degree programs. However, we are limited as we do not have a FT Administrative Assistant to attend to the potential students.
3. **Improve studio/work spaces** as resources become available.
4. **Add a full-time position** in a combination role teaching **both Graphic Design and Photography (Digital)**. These are the areas for greatest growth potential.
5. Continue to be supportive of Art faculty who are willing to **travel, both domestically and internationally**, with students. Our faculty has gone above and beyond in this area and has provided valuable PR opportunities for the department as well as the university. The Art Department should play an integral role in future plans for global travel. Recommendations for continuation in art travel courses are based on past success and the pure marketability of a student being able to satisfy his/her fine art requirement with a domestic or overseas art travel experience.
6. The Art Department currently contributes to **PACE** on a consistent basis. However, the department could add more if our facilities were capable of handling more students/courses. Continue to provide **FAR** courses.
7. Continue the development of curriculum for the **Art Entrepreneurship** minor and offer **Performance Learning** components in each course. Possibly combine with efforts to bring in more Art History students by creating an actual Art History major.
8. Considering the ways in which we have already been working in terms of the aforementioned reductions and efficiencies in each of our respective areas in the Art Department, **we do not believe we can create any further efficiencies without negatively impacting the necessary curriculum.**
9. **Potential savings** can be made when Dr. Shelley Cordulack retires in Spring 2015 as Full Professor. We anticipate savings by hiring in at an Assistant Professor level FT Tenure Track Art Historian. **Potential savings: \$20,000**
10. **Decreasing the University credit totals to 121 from 124** will result in both the BA and BFA degrees to have one less required art elective.