# Undergraduate Degree Program Assessment Plan Cover Sheet (rev. 09):

**UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK**

**Degree Program:** BFA in Art  
**Department and College:** Art - College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences  
**Degree type (AA, AS, BA, BS, BBA, BSE, BSW):** BFA  
**Prepared by:** Carey Roberson

Submitted to College Assessment Committee on  
Submitted to Provost Assessment Advisory Group on  
Approved on  
Approved on

Respond to all four questions, following the Degree Program Assessment Plan Form Instructions. Attach additional pages as needed.

1. **What are your student learning goals for this degree program? Include which core competencies are addressed by these goals where applicable (see list at [http://www.ualr.edu/provost/assessment/competencies.shtml](http://www.ualr.edu/provost/assessment/competencies.shtml)).**

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art is a 120-hour, professional degree in art. The University of Arkansas at Little Rock offers two tracks: Fine Art and Applied Design. The Fine Art Track offers emphases in Drawing, Graphic Design, Illustration, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, and Sculpture. The Applied Design Track offers emphases in Furniture Design & Woodworking, Ceramics, and Metalsmithing & Jewelry.

Students that are admitted to the BFA in Art must show a strong sense of commitment and dedication to their art, and to their own educational experiences. The goal of the BFA in Art degree is to highly develop the skills, historical knowledge, conceptual understanding, and the sense of visual awareness needed to become a professional working artist. Exceptional evidence of these attributes is essential for earning a BFA in Art degree.

Admission Criteria: Admission to the BFA in Art is competitive and highly selective. Admission occurs via a review process that includes a portfolio and transcript review as well as the submission of a goal statement and application form. Minimum requirements for admission eligibility are (1) being a declared BA in Art major, and (2) completing of 24 art hours: 15 hours of studio prerequisites, 6 hours of art history, and the desired emphasis area’s introduction course. Students must have a minimum 3.0 GPA in all art courses.

Curriculum: Completion of the program requires a minimum of 120 credits. BFA in Art students take a total of 72 credit hours in art and art history courses and must participate in the BFA Thesis Exhibition and Presentation.

The BFA in Art Program Degree requirements, Program Goals and Objectives (Overall and Emphasis Specific) are aligned with the accrediting agency, National Association of
Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), in order to preserve current accreditation status, national standards, and maintain a highly effective and contemporary BFA in Art degree program.

Goals for BFA in Art Degree Program:
A. Develop a knowledge and understanding of visual information and the basic skills necessary to execute creative visual works. (Core Competencies: Aesthetic Experience, Historical Consciousness, Critical Thinking)

B. Develop an understanding of the historical antecedents and contemporary issues in the visual arts. (Core Competencies: Aesthetic Experience, Historical Consciousness, International Awareness)

C. Develop the vocabulary and analytical skills to discuss works of art and the creative process. (Core Competencies: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Information Technology, Verbal Literacy, Mathematics, Philosophy and Methods of Science, Social and Cultural Awareness)

D. Develop the ability to recognize, analyze and solve complex visual problems. (Core Competencies: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Information Technology, Verbal Literacy, Mathematics, Philosophy and Methods of Science, Social and Cultural Awareness)

E. Develop a high level of skill in a major area of specialization (ceramics, drawing, furniture design & woodworking, graphic design, illustration, metalsmithing & jewelry, painting, photography, printmaking, or sculpture). (Core Competencies: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Information Technology, Verbal Literacy, Mathematics, Philosophy and Methods of Science, Social and Cultural Awareness)

F. Develop an ability to express one's personal experience, vision, and thought with creativity, visual skill and clarity. (Core Competencies: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Information Technology, Verbal Literacy, Mathematics, Philosophy and Methods of Science, Social and Cultural Awareness)

G. Develop a level of expertise that qualifies the student for entrance level employment in the arts and/or continued success in a graduate-level degree program. (Core Competencies: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Information Technology, Verbal Literacy, Mathematics, Philosophy and Methods of Science, Social and Cultural Awareness)

2. What are your learning objectives or outcomes associated with each student learning goal?
Objectives for BFA in Art: Common Body of Knowledge & Skills

I. Studio.
Studies, practice, and experiences in studio subjects are of prime importance in the preparation of students for professional careers in art and design. The excellence of the creative work produced by students is the best determinant of the adequacy of the studio studies offered by the department. Creative work includes, but is not limited to, conceptualization, process, product, and critique.

Studio work begins at the freshman level and extends with progressively greater intensity throughout the degree program.

There should be opportunities for independent study at the advanced level that includes appropriate supervision and evaluation upon completion.

Irrespective of the department’s BFA in Art emphasis areas, all students must:

a. Gain functional competence with principles of visual organization, including the ability to work with visual elements in two and three dimensions; color theory and its applications; and drawing.
b. Present work that demonstrates perceptual acuity, conceptual understanding, and technical facility at a professional entry level in their chosen field(s).
c. Become familiar with the historical achievements, current major issues, processes, and directions of their field(s).
d. Be afforded opportunities to exhibit their work and to experience and participate in critiques and discussions of their work and the work of others.

II. Art/Design History, Theory, and Criticism.
Through comprehensive courses in the history of art/design, all students must:

a. Learn to analyze works of art/design perceptively and to evaluate them critically.
b. Develop an understanding of the common elements and vocabulary of art/design and of the interaction of these elements, and be able to employ this knowledge in analysis.
c. Acquire the ability to place works of art/design in historical, cultural, and stylistic contexts.

It is advisable students study the historical development of works within their area specialization.

III. Technology.
Students must acquire a working knowledge of technologies and equipment applicable to their area(s) of specialization.

IV. Synthesis.
While synthesis is a lifetime process, by the end of undergraduate studies students should be able to work independently on a variety of art and/or design problems by combining, as appropriate to the issue, their capabilities in studio, analysis, history, and technology.
Outcomes / Results.
Upon completion of the BFA in Art undergraduate degree program:
1. Students must demonstrate achievement of professional, entry-level competence in the major area of specialization, including significant technical mastery, capability to produce work and solve professional problems independently, and a coherent set of artistic/intellectual goals that are evident in their work.
2. Students must demonstrate their competence by developing a body of work for evaluation in the major area of study (emphasis area). A senior project and final presentation in the major area is required.
3. Students must have the ability to form and defend value judgments about art and design and to communicate art/design ideas, concepts, and requirements to professionals and laypersons related to the practice of the major field. They are able to work collaboratively as appropriate to the area(s) of specialization.

Recommendations of Opportunities. (Non-assessable)
Students engaged in the BFA in Art undergraduate degree should have opportunities to:
1. Gain a basic understanding of the nature of professional work in their major field. Examples are: organizational structures and working patterns; artistic, intellectual, economic, technological, and political contexts; and development potential.
2. Acquire the skills necessary to assist in the development and advancement of their careers, normally including the development of competencies in communication, presentation, and business skills necessary to engage in professional practice in their major field.
3. Develop teaching skills, particularly as related to their major area of study.
Mentorship.
4. Explore areas of individual interest related to art/design in general or to the major. Among the many possible examples are: aesthetics, theory, specialized topics in art/design history, analysis, and technology.
5. Explore multidisciplinary issues that include art and design.
6. Practice synthesis of a broad range of art/design knowledge and skills, particularly through learning activities that involve a minimum of faculty guidance, where the emphasis is on evaluation at completion.

Studio art & Applied Design Emphasis Areas: Essential Competencies, Experiences, & Opportunities

Ceramics
a. Understanding of basic design principles, particularly as related to ceramics. Advanced work in three-dimensional design. The development of solutions to design problems should continue throughout the degree program.
b. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes sufficient to produce work from concept to finished object. This includes knowledge of raw materials and technical procedures such as clays, glazes, and firing.
c. Understanding of the industrial applications of ceramics techniques.
d. Understanding of the place of ceramics within the history of art, design, and culture.
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<td>f. Preparation of clay bodies and glazes, kiln stacking procedures, and firing processes. Special firing methods such as salt glaze and raku are recommended by NASAD.</td>
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<td>g. Easy and regular access to materials, equipment, and library resources related to the study of ceramics.</td>
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<td>h. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work, as well as opportunities to submit to exhibitions, galleries, and retail outlets.</td>
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### Drawing

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<td>a. Understanding of basic design principles, concepts, media, and formats. The ability to place organization of design elements and the effective use of drawing media at the service of producing a specific aesthetic intent and a conceptual position. The development of solutions to aesthetic and design problems should continue throughout the degree program.</td>
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<td>b. Understanding of the possibilities and limitations of the drawing medium.</td>
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<td>c. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools and techniques sufficient to work from concept to finished product. This includes mastery of the traditional technical and conceptual approaches to drawing.</td>
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<td>d. Functional knowledge of the history of drawing.</td>
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<td>e. Extensive exploration of the many possibilities for innovative imagery and the manipulation of techniques available to the draftsman.</td>
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<td>f. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work.</td>
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### Furniture Design & Woodworking

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<td>a. Understanding of basic design principles, with particular focus on three-dimensional design. The development of solutions to design problems should continue throughout the degree program.</td>
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<td>b. An understanding of the possibilities and limitations of the medium, including its aesthetic and structural properties.</td>
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<td>c. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes sufficient to produce work from concept to finished object. This includes knowledge of various woods and technical procedures such as joining and finishing.</td>
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<td>d. Understanding of industrial applications of woodworking techniques. Studies in product design are particularly recommended.</td>
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<td>e. Understanding of the place of fine woodworking in the history of art.</td>
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<td>f. Functional knowledge of basic business practices.</td>
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<td>g. Preparation of a wide variety of objects in the wood medium. Such preparation should provide experiences in the broadest possible range of technical procedures. Experience in the fabrication of models of larger pieces is strongly recommended.</td>
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<td>h. Easy and regular access to materials, equipment, and library resources related to the study of woodworking.</td>
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<td>i. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work, as well as opportunities to submit to exhibitions, galleries, and retail outlets.</td>
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### Graphic Design

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<td>a. The ability to conceive and to design visual communications and systems involving</td>
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various integrations of the elements of professional practice outlined in items b. through g. below.

b. Understanding and use of basic visual communication principles and processes, including but not limited to:
   (1) Understanding of how communication theories, principles, and processes have evolved through history and the ability to use this knowledge to address various types of contemporary problems.
   (2) Understanding of and ability to develop strategies for planning, producing, and disseminating visual communications.
   (3) Functional knowledge of creative approaches, and the analytical ability to make appropriate, purpose-based choices among them, and to use such approaches to identify communication opportunities and generate alternative solutions.
   (4) Ability to plan the design process and construct narratives and scenarios for describing user experiences.
   (5) Fluency in the use of the formal vocabulary and concepts of design—including content, elements, structure, style, and technology—in response to visual communication problems. Studies in critical theory and semiotics are strongly recommended.
   (6) Ability to develop informed considerations of the spatial, temporal, and kinesthetic relationships among form, meaning, and behavior and apply them to the development of various types of visual communication design projects.
   (7) Ability to use typography, images, diagrams, motion, sequencing, color, and other such elements effectively in the contexts of specific design projects.

c. Ability to incorporate research and findings regarding people and contexts into communication design decision-making, including but not limited to:
   (1) Ability to frame and conduct investigations in terms of people, activities, and their settings, including, but not limited to using appropriate methods for determining people’s wants, needs, and patterns of behavior, and developing design responses that respect the social and cultural differences among users of design in local and global contexts.
   (2) Understanding of design at different scales, ranging from components to systems and from artifacts to experiences.
   (3) Ability to exercise critical judgment about the student’s own design and the design of others with regard to usefulness, usability, desirability, technological feasibility, economic viability, and sustainability in terms of long-term consequences.

d. Acquisition of collaborative skills and the ability to work effectively in interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary teams to solve complex problems.

e. Understanding of and the ability to use technology, including but not limited to:
   (1) Functional understanding of how to continue learning technology, recognizing that technological change is constant.
   (2) Ability to conduct critical evaluations of different technologies in specific design problem contexts, including the placement of technical issues in the service of human-centered priorities and matching relationships between technologies and the people expected to use them.
   (3) Functional capability to shape and create technological tools and systems to address communication problems and further communication goals.
   (4) Ability to recognize and analyze the social, cultural, and economic implications of
technology on message creation and production and on human behavior, and to incorporate results into design decisions.

f. Understanding of and ability to use basic research and analysis procedures and skills, including but not limited to:
   (1) Acquisition of research capabilities and skills such as using databases, asking questions, observing users, and developing prototypes.
   (2) Ability to use analytical tools to construct appropriate visual representations in the execution of research activities.
   (3) Ability to interpret research findings practically and apply them in design development.
   (4) Ability to support design decisions with quantitative and qualitative research findings at various stages of project development and presentation.

g. Functional knowledge of professional design practices and processes, including but not limited to professional and ethical behaviors and intellectual property issues such as patents, trademarks, and copyrights.

h. Experience in applying design knowledge and skills beyond the classroom is essential. Opportunities for field research and experience, internships, collaborative programs with professional and industry groups, and international experiences are strongly recommended. Such opportunities to become oriented to the working profession should be supported through strong advising.

i. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work.

Illustration

a. Understanding of how basic design principles and elements, including color, are utilized to address specific narrative or expressive problems. The development of solutions to communication and design problems should continue throughout the degree program.


c. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes sufficient to work from concept to finished product. This includes capabilities in fields such as painting, photography, typography, general design procedures, and digital/computer-aided design.

d. An understanding of the commercial applications and basic business practices of illustration.

e. Functional knowledge of the history of illustration, including its origins in the fine arts, and its relationship to written communication.

f. Preparation of illustrations in a variety of media and a variety of subject matter, from rough through finished pieces.

g. Easy and regular access to materials, studios, and equipment and library resources related to the study of illustration.

h. Opportunities to work with current technologies related to illustration.

i. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work.

Metalsmithing & Jewelry

a. Understanding of basic design principles, emphasizing both two- and three-dimensional design. The development of solutions to design problems should continue
Painting
a. Understanding of basic principles of design and color, concepts, media and formats, and the ability to apply them to a specific aesthetic intent. This includes functional knowledge of the traditions, conventions, and evolutions of the discipline as related to issues of representation, illusion, and meaning. The development of solutions to aesthetic and design problems should continue throughout the degree program.
b. Ability to synthesize the use of drawing, two-dimensional design, and color. These abilities are developed by beginning with basic studies and continuing throughout the degree program toward the development of advanced capabilities.
c. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes sufficient to work from concept to finished product, including knowledge of paints and surfaces.
d. Exploration of the expressive possibilities of various media, and the diverse conceptual modes available to the painter. This may deal with direct painting from nature or with alternative approaches to the making of traditional or innovative two- and, at times, three-dimensional images.
e. Encouragement to develop a consistent, personal direction and style.
f. Opportunities to work independently.
g. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work.

Photography
a. Understanding of the visual forms and their aesthetic functions, and basic design principles. Development continues throughout the degree program, with attention to such areas as design, color, and lighting.
b. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, technologies, and processes sufficient to work from concept to finished product. This involves a mastery of
the materials, equipment, and processes of the discipline, including but not limited to uses of cameras, film, lighting/digital technologies, processing in black and white, and color, printing, and work with non-silver materials. Work in these areas continues throughout the degree program.

c. An understanding of the industrial and commercial applications of photographic techniques.
d. Functional knowledge of photographic history and theory, the relationship of photography to the visual disciplines, and its influence on culture.
e. Work in experimental and manipulative techniques, candid and contrived imagery, documentary photography, archival processing, and interpretive studies should be included.
f. Easy and regular access to materials, equipment, and library resources related to the study of photography.
g. Opportunities for independent study are encouraged.
h. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work.

Printmaking

a. Understanding of basic design principles, concepts, media, and formats. The development of solutions to aesthetic and design problems should continue throughout the degree program.
b. Advanced abilities in drawing as related to various printmaking techniques.
c. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes sufficient to work from concept to finished product. This includes knowledge of basic materials and technical procedures such as intaglio, relief, lithography, silkscreen, and digital processes.
d. Mastery of at least one printmaking technique, including the ability both to experiment with technical innovation and to explore and develop personal concepts and imagery.
e. Functional knowledge of the history of printmaking.
f. The preparation of prints using all basic printmaking techniques with opportunities to work at an advanced level with one or more of these techniques.
g. Easy and regular access to materials, equipment, and library resources related to the study of printmaking.
h. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work.

Sculpture

a. Understanding of basic design principles with an emphasis on three-dimensional design, and the ability to apply these principles to a specific aesthetic intent. This includes functional knowledge of the traditions, conceptual modes, and evolutions of the discipline. The development of solutions to aesthetic and design problems should continue throughout the degree program.
b. Advanced abilities in drawing sufficient to support work in sculpture.
c. Understanding of the possibilities and limitations of various materials.
d. Knowledge and skills in the use of basic tools, techniques, and processes to work from concept to finished product.
e. Mastery in one or more sculptural media.
f. Functional knowledge of the history and theory of sculpture.
| g. The preparation of sculpture using the broadest possible range of techniques and concepts. |
| h. Easy and regular access to appropriate materials and equipment, such as hand and power tools, foundry and welding equipment, plastic and resin facilities, and other technologies. |
| i. Completion of a final project related to the exhibition of original work. |
3. Where will the objectives be addressed in your program? In which courses and through which activities will they be assessed? (Attach Curriculum Assessment Map.)

The BFA in Art Assessment Committee is currently researching new methods and practices of how to effectively assess its program. Previous assessment methods have not been as effective in giving enough specific information to overall and individual areas within the program.

The BFA in Art Assessment Committee is seeking out similar programs that have exemplary assessment programs to help develop effective assessment practices. We are also beginning to work with NASAD and other art/design associations to locate possible consultants that could assist in our assessment processes.

We hope to have a tangible assessment plan by the Fall or Winter of 2015.

4. How will you assess each objective? (a) Methods; b) Design; c) Assessment cycle; d) Stakeholder involvement.)

In progress.
Undergraduate Degree Program Assessment Plan Cover Sheet (rev. 09):

Curriculum Assessment Map: Degree Program Assessment

(NOTE: This is a template only. You may delete columns, change the format to landscape, or otherwise modify the layout as best fits your needs. However, the final map must include all goals and objectives, in which courses they will be addressed and how they will be assessed. Attach additional pages as needed.)

**Emphasis:**  Extensive  Somewhat  Little  None  
**Assessed:**  Exam  Paper  Project  Other  Not Assessed

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### Please Explain “Other”
