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

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK  Plan No. Part 13

Degree Program: BA in Art/Art history Track (13)
Department and College: Art, CAHSS
Degree type (AA, AS, BA, BS, BBA, BSE, BSW): BA
Prepared by: Laura M. Amrhein

Submitted to College Assessment Committee on March 6, 2015
Approved on

Submitted to Provost Assessment Advisory Group 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).

   1. Learn about the diversity of the visual arts and the variety of artists’ materials and techniques. Core: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Historical Consciousness, International Awareness, Social and Cultural Awareness, Verbal Literacy.

   2. Recognize and articulate the use of art elements and principles of design in a work of art. Core: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Historical Consciousness, International Awareness, Social and Cultural Awareness, Verbal Literacy.

   3. Learn specific information about art works from various art historical periods. Core: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Historical Consciousness, International Awareness, Social and Cultural Awareness, Verbal Literacy.

   4. Learn to write effectively about specific works of art and their historical contexts. Core: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Historical Consciousness, International Awareness, Social and Cultural Awareness, Verbal Literacy.

   5. Learn to speak effectively about specific works of art and their historical contexts. Core: Aesthetic Experience, Critical Thinking, Historical Consciousness, International Awareness, Social and Cultural Awareness, Verbal Literacy.

2. What are your learning objectives or outcomes associated with each student learning goal?
1. Identify particular artistic media such as painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, etc., and discuss the creative challenges posed by various media. (Goals 1, 2)

2. Identify works from, and analyze the creative influences on, art from major periods and classifications selected from Ancient, Medieval, Italian Renaissance, Northern Renaissance, Baroque, 18/19 Centuries, Early Modern and Late Modern, and Non-Western. Students will determine basic information about key monuments such as date, location, materials, information about artists, information about period styles, and information about themes. (Goals 1, 2, 3)

3. Write effectively about specific works of art and their historical contexts, using appropriate art historical terminology. Course assignments given in lower level art history courses (Survey and Survey II) such as formal analyses will demonstrate the student’s ability to distinguish visual elements, design principles and materials and to interpret the relationship between elements, composition, and material. Upper level research papers or projects will demonstrate the student’s ability to define, research, and creatively analyze art historical problems. (Goals 2, 3, 4)

4. In upper level courses students will define, research, and creatively analyze art historical problems and present the information in oral class reports or at a formal meeting such as a student symposium. The art history Senior Paper must be presented orally in a public forum. (Goal 5)
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.)

See the Curriculum Assessment Map Dr. Jane Brown and the art historians are using and the discussion below. Our rubric for assessing papers is also attached. We focused on Objective 3 and upper level research papers this year.

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

Objective 1: The identification of media, artistic techniques, and art elements/design principles are assessed within the formal analysis assignment. This assignment is required in a foundations (beginning) course for art history or art majors. See comments related to Objective 3 below.

Objective 2. The data from the slide identification portion of exams and quizzes in the art history surveys classes, the entry level art history classes, will be collected and analyzed for the percentage of correct answers in categories such as title of work, date, period style, and original location. See comments related to Objective 4.

Objective 3. A random sample of papers is collected from art/art history majors in survey courses and from art history majors in upper-level courses. The department art historians and, if funds are available, an external reviewer rate the characteristics or traits appropriate for each type of writing, a formal analysis for the survey level or a research paper for upper level. We have been successful in receiving funding, which has been beneficial to improving assessment approaches. For this assessment cycle Dr. Emily Gerhold from Henderson State provided our evaluations. She evaluated the same papers we rated and wrote a statement about the strengths and weaknesses of the student work, the assessment plan, and the art history track. The breadth of experience represented by the UALR art historians, as well as the additional perspective of the external evaluator, assists in inter-rater reliability. There is no national norm for scoring the college student writing samples we have chosen to assess. Among the evaluators, the total paper score must be within two points for the formal analysis, and within four points for the research paper. Each assessment period, the art historians meet to discuss rubrics and evaluate possible variations in scoring. We also evaluate possible reasons for these variations.

Research papers or projects are assessed by scoring fourteen traits or assessment characteristics on a 0-3 scale. The goal for the assessment of research papers is that 70% of the sample should score 26 or more points out of 42 possible points.

This year we focused on Objective 3 for assessment. Six research papers collected from the previous semester were scored in early spring semester which was the total of art history majors or minors in the current cycle. Of these, 100% met the goal of 26 points. The sample average
score was 34 points. Some improvements from the last assessment cycle occurred in our student’s ability to articulate a clear thesis and subsequent logical, organized body of research and content. This demonstrates adequate improvement, but less than of one than we would like to see overall given a student paper could be scored at 42 points. However, student research and writing has improved since the last assessment cycle with the average score being 23.2. To better student scores we have have taken steps to address weaknesses (see below), one of which is low scores in the development of ideas from a (clear) thesis.

The above findings were discussed during our annual assessment meeting with the three UALR art historians. It is clear that students are beginning to incorporate the fundamental elements of scholarship (thesis, identification of evidence, development of argument, conclusion) in their papers. Our strategy has been to introduce students to scholarly writing in a step by step process. Lower level courses (Survey I, II, and Non-Western) are designed to help students succeed in our upper level courses. Typically in the lower level (Survey courses) students have not yet declared an art history major. All students in ARHA 2311, Art History Survey II, a key pre-requisite for upper level courses, read the same scholarly article and are required to identify the author's thesis as well as discuss why the author uses specific footnotes. To reinforce and further these skills, an assignment in the upper level courses requires students to analyze scholarly articles to identify the thesis statement, the author’s develop of the argument, the author’s use of sources, and the author’s use of footnotes to document sources. All art historians require formal analysis papers in which students look closely at a work of art and discuss the visual elements, principles of design, and draw interpretative conclusions based on their analysis.

To better prepare all our students for writing papers, we continue to revise the department document "Guidelines for Writing Research Papers," which is posted on the art department web site. This resource provides examples of correct citations and visual documentation. Students are directed to this document in the research paper assignment. The art historians also schedule one-on-one student conferences fairly early in the semester to discuss the requirements of the term paper or project. Additionally the art historians dedicate a class meeting to discussing paper guidelines including the necessity for a thesis to organize scholarly content, formatting issues, and general questions. Students are required to submit a paper proposal and working bibliography. This year we also discussed changing certain terminology in our rubric to provide a better inter-rater realiability (for example, broadening what we mean by "Organization" and "Persuasive discussion" under the heading Trait/Assessment Characteristic). We are still discussing the best terms to use and addressed this issue in our assessment meeting and are considering reviewing our rubrics for clarity of terms and to be sure we have a shared understanding of our expectations.

The improvement of student research and writing has had positive impact on our students and program. Each year students present their papers at the Annual Art History Symposium. This symposium is competitive since students from UofA, UCA, Hendrix, and Henderson State typically submit proposals.
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”

Please see our own Assessment Map which is attached.