Academic Assessment Plan

(BFA in Graphic Design)

(June 2022)

Program Goals (3-4)

(Program goals are broad general statements of what the program intends to accomplish and describes what a student will be able to do after completing the program. The program goals are linked to the mission of the university and college.)

1. The program will cultivate creative thinkers and inventive problem solvers that are aware of contemporary technological, social, physical and cultural contexts.
2. The program will prepare students to be contributors to an interdisciplinary design world.
3. The program will ask students to experiment with form, technique and concept, while understanding the historical precedents of their discipline, and working to respond appropriately to audience and context.

Student Learning Outcomes (6-8)

(Student Learning Outcomes are defined in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students will know and be able to do as a result of completing a program. These student learning outcomes are directly linked to the accomplishment of the program goals.)

1. Students will actively research, analyze and interpret the contemporary design world.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to solve problems through design.
3. Students will develop the ability to be successful collaborators through the use of strong communication skills and strong methodology.
4. Students will practice experimenting with form, technique and concept, pushing their work beyond expected outcomes.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to be lateral thinkers through experimentation and exploration during concept development.
6. Students will identify and describe historical precedents in the justification of formal, technical and conceptual choices.

Process for Assessing each Student Learning Outcome
(A process must be defined and documented to regularly assess student learning and achievement of student learning outcomes. The results of the assessment must be utilized as input for the improvement of the program.)

1. **Timeline for assessment and analysis**
   (Must include specific timeline for collection and analysis of assessment data.)

   Direct Methods are assessed by the full graphic design faculty in the School of Art at the end of every academic year. Indirect methods are monitored by Chair, Dean, and Provost through the Annual Report and the fields of study through external achievements of students continuing in the design fields. The Annual report is submitted in July.

2. **Means of assessment and desired level of student achievement**
   (Must include at least one direct and one indirect method of assessment for each learning outcome.)

   Direct method:
   BFA Graphic Design students in the first (sophomore) and second (junior) year of the program participate in formal reviews at the end of each academic year in which they are assessed by a group of faculty. Each reviewer fills out an assessment form, ranking the students on a scale of 1-5 for each question. These reports are communicated with the students expressing improvement areas and strengths. The questions include:
   - How well has the student integrated research/process into their work?
   - Is the student's work exhibiting formal qualities such as composition, hierarchy, and typographic voice?
   - Does their work reflect a clear understanding of the audience?
   - Have they adopted risk-taking and experimentation?
   - During the presentation, did the student demonstrate strong communication skills?
   - Was the presentation effective in articulating the obstacles or progress they encountered throughout the year?
   - Currently, how would you rate the student's overall performance in the program?
   - Additional notes/feedback?

   Students in their third and final year of the program (graduating seniors) design and implement a senior show exhibition that involves a poster presentation of their final project.

   Indirect Method:
   BFA Graphic Design students are required to maintain a 3.00 or higher GPA in their graphic design courses and at least a 2.00 GPA overall.

3. **Reporting of results**
    (Must at least report annually to the Dean of college/school.)

    Based on findings from assessment, a summary will be provided to the Dean's office via the department chair each July in the Annual Report.

Annual Academic Assessment Report

(BFA in Graphic Design)

(June 2022)

Report annually to the Dean of the college/school the following:

- **Results of analysis of assessment of Student Learning Outcome**
  Reviews were conducted at the end of the academic year with the sophomore (32), junior (30) and senior (34) students in the program, with all graphic design faculty (10) serving as reviewers. After the first academic year of all in-person classes since the beginning of the pandemic, we saw significant improvement in student achievement, productivity, learning and engagement. Students in all years of the program met or exceeded expectations, with very few exceptions (1-2 students).

- **Any changes to degree/certificate planned or made on the basis of the assessment and analysis**

  Overall, assessment scores met expectations, but we have made observations about room for improvement:

  First Year Students (Sophomores):
  We noticed both significant growth and significant challenges in the sophomore class. After their first year of in-person classes since joining the program, there was a need for greater support and modeling of appropriate classroom and studio behaviors. We saw greater capability and interest in working across physical and digital mediums, and see more opportunities to introduce interactive and speculative skills early on. We will continue to modify assignments in the first year curriculum to better address the need for digital interaction and motion design. We also observed challenges relating to comprehension and engagement in the History of Graphic Design course, and will consider moving it to the junior year in the program.

  Second Year Students (Juniors):
  Continued work on type sensitivity, understanding of systems, addition of motion design and augmented reality in the curriculum through specific projects in existing courses, along with more formal experimentation. We have noted also a need for more speculative design projects in the form of interface design, and increase yet in motion work, even with 3D modeling or environment design and exhibition curation. There is need to foster the notion that a designer is a facilitator and an active participant in moving the project along in a group, and taking ownership of outcomes and team responsibility. The professional development course, moved to the Junior year with

purposeful thinking, seems to see some need for revision throughout the senior curriculum as the students get closer to degree completion.

We observed noticeable improvement in the junior class, from their abilities to take on greater responsibility and ownership in client-based work, to their ability to speculate and experiment in digital and interactive contexts. We will continue to seek coursework and collaborations that emphasize the designer's role as facilitator and leader in this year of the program.

Third Year Students (Seniors):

Graduating seniors demonstrated improved skills in collaboration, speculation, research and leadership despite challenges returning to in-person classes. We continue to see a need for additional support relating to professional development during the senior year, and will consider adding a one-credit hour class/lab to address this need.

A faculty retreat is planned for summer 2022 and will address curricular changes.

- **Any changes to the assessment process made or planned.**

The assessment process was amended this year to respond to the observed needs of the students and faculty after the challenging first year back to in-person classes since the beginning of the pandemic. Reviews were held digitally and asynchronously to allow for an informal, in-person end-of-year gathering to build community amongst students and faculty after being disconnected for so long. The questions in the assessment forms were also simplified to streamline the review process (see questions above on page 2).