Academic Assessment Plan

(MFA in Studio Art)

(May 2016)

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. **As the terminal degree in the field, the MFA program will cultivate achievement of the highest level of professional skill in the graduate student's area of study in visual arts and contemporary practices requiring:**
   a. **A demonstrated formal and technical proficiency in the major studio area**
   b. **A demonstrated conceptual development supporting creative research**
   c. **An ability to locate the work within the context of contemporary and historical issues in art (including references to other artists and art movements influential to the development of the work) and placing the research within visual culture**
   d. **An ability to successfully articulate the basis of research in written and verbal form**
2. **The program will ask students to rigorously deconstruct their practice encouraging risk-taking and experimentation towards the goal of expanding their practice and deepening their understanding of the implications of their work in the context of art history, critical theory, and visual culture.**

3. **The program will prepare students to be contributors to an interdisciplinary art and design world as creative thinkers and inventive problem solvers who are conscientious of technological, social, physical and cultural contexts.**

4. **The program will provide teaching and technical experience through Graduate Assistantship and Internship positions, which will make our students more marketable.**

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 evaluate their own methodology through active research, analysis, and interpretation of the contemporary art and design world as it relates to their own research to solidify a foundation for their studio practice.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to solve complex problems through art and design through requirements including the design and installation a solo exhibition of thesis work in their third year.
3. Students will master technical processes specific to their concentration area and learn new skills towards an interdisciplinary practice.
4. Students will develop the ability to be successful collaborators through the use of strong communication skills.
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 and contemporary practices as they relate to various cultures and critical theory in the justification of formal, technical and conceptual decisions.
7. Students will learn the teaching and technical skills needed to apply for university-level teaching positions and other related career positions.

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
   Direct Methods are assessed by the MFA coordinators of the Department of Art at the end of every semester in which an Academic Progress form is filled out and sent to the Graduate School. In-Direct methods are monitored by Chair, Dean, Provost through the Annual Report and the fields of study through external achievements of students continuing in the studio art and design fields.

   (Must include specific timeline for collection and analysis of assessment data.)
   The Annual report is submitted annually 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:
   Graduate Critiques: All M.F.A. students are required to participate in regular reviews critiquing their artworks. These reviews involve both a mid-term critique conducted by several faculty members and a final critique attended by the entire department faculty and all current M.F.A. students. After M.F.A. students receive Candidacy, their participation is still required although they will no longer need to present their artwork for review.

Candidacy Application and Review: After completion of at least two (2) semesters in the M.F.A. degree program, the student may make application to be a candidate for completion of the M.F.A. degree. The art faculty will conduct a formal review of the applicant's work and progress in the program. The awarding of candidacy will be dependent upon a two-thirds majority vote by the graduate faculty based on the following criteria: 1) a demonstrated formal and technical proficiency in the applicant's major studio area; 2) conceptual development as demonstrated by growth in ideas supporting the applicant's creative research; 3) an ability to locate their research in the context of issues and practices within contemporary and historical art issues; and 4) the ability to communicate the intention and basis of their research in coherent written and verbal form. At least two (2) regular semesters of residence must be completed after acceptance as a degree candidate.

Graduate Committee and Major Adviser: When the student has been accepted as a degree candidate, the student will select a major adviser from the graduate art faculty. The major adviser will serve as adviser to the student in planning the completion of the program of study. At least one semester before graduation, a four- or five-member committee of graduate art faculty will be selected. The student's major adviser will be chairperson of this committee, and one member of the graduate committee will represent the art history or criticism area. The degree candidate may select one additional committee member from a discipline outside the Department of Art.

Graduate Assistantship (GA) Supervisors: Each GA is assigned to a supervisor who writes a duty sheet describing the assignment and distributes to the GA through the Graduate Coordinator along with the GA contract in the beginning of each semester. The Graduate Coordinator collects GA Evaluation sheets twice per semester at midterms and finals in order to assess performance in the GA Assignment area. Areas of assessment include: Being punctual and present for the duration of duties, quality of work performed, completing duties on time, and faculty prerogative on continuance in the assignment. If a GA receives one evaluation in which they are not meeting the expectations of the assignment, it will be met with a warning from the Graduate Coordinator. If a GA receives two consecutive evaluations from the same supervisor in which expectations of the assignment are still not being met, the MFA Student may lose their Graduate Assistantship per graduate faculty vote. A MFA Student may also lose their Graduate Assistantship at any time with 60-days notice.

In-Direct Method:
MFA students are required to maintain a 2.85 or higher grade point average overall, or will be placed on academic probation. After two consecutive semesters on academic probation, the student may be dismissed from the program and will lose their Graduate Assistantship.

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

(MFA in Studio Art)

(May 2016)

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

- Results of analysis of assessment of Student Learning Outcome
  On the Academic Progress forms submitted to the Graduate School annually, eighteen (18) of nineteen (19) MFAs made satisfactory progress towards completion of the MFA degree in Studio Art during the 2015-2016 academic year.

  All five (5) graduating MFAs successfully completed their MFA thesis exhibitions and submitted their final written thesis to the Graduate School with the approval of the thesis chairs and committees. Two (2) of six (6) MFA students did not achieve a 2/3 faculty quorum and did not pass their Candidacy Review on April 29, 2016, and will go up again for a full-faculty Candidacy Review in September 2016. The remaining four (4) MFA Students who went through Candidacy Reviews received unanimous support from the faculty. Five (5) of seven (7) first-year MFA Students received evaluation scores following midterm and final critiques with the faculty that met and exceeded the below areas as assessed by the majority of graduate faculty, while two (2) MFA Students received lower scores from 1/3 to ½ the graduate faculty :

  1. **Conceptual Development**
  2. **Technical Development**
  3. **Productivity**
  4. **Presentation**

  All nineteen (19) graduate students received grades of As and Bs in Art Studio (major and studio electives) and Art History (including Contemporary Art History and Critical Theory) courses during the 2015-2016 year except for two (2) MFA students this Spring who received a C or lower in one to two of their studio art courses. These two (2) MFA Students are the students who did not pass their Candidacy Review in April 2016.

  Sixteen (16) of Seventeen (17) Graduate Assistants (GAs) including TAs for our Foundation and Studio Courses received scores meeting and/or exceeding their supervisors' expectations. The majority of the evaluation scores from faculty supervisors were excellent. One (1) MFA has performed poorly in one of her GA Assignments through several evaluations, and there is a question of whether she should keep a GA position in the 2016-2017 year.

- Any changes to degree/certificate planned or made on the basis of the assessment and analysis
  None

- Any changes to the assessment process made or planned.
  None