Department of Art

Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Art is to prepare students for careers in teaching and music performance or in art education or studio disciplines in visual arts; to enable students to build and share in an enriched life through participation in activities in music and the visual arts; to broaden the cultural perspective of the community, state, and region; and to instill in all University students a keen appreciation of music and the visual arts.

Majors, Concentrations and Options

Major: Art
  Concentration: Art Education
  Concentration: Clay, Fiber, Glass, Metals, Painting or Wood

1. Program Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Recruit, retain and graduate a larger, more academically prepared, and diverse student body.

Assessment:
   a. Track whether Departmental recruitment strategies are diversifying the major and non-major student population, including international students.
   b. Review whether potential outstanding undergraduate students, such as those who participate in the Governor’s School for the Arts are being reached sufficiently through current recruitment activity.
   c. Review whether advising procedures are efficiently monitoring student progress toward degree completion.

Analysis and Results:
   a. The art department will request information from the admissions office regarding trends regarding diversity goals, and include it in self-study documentation. The director of the Craft Center has had some discussions with International Affairs regarding cooperative ventures in China and recruitment in Korea, but no specific program for international recruitment tied to measurable objectives has been devised.
   b. Individual studios and the departmental offices both respond to prospective students. When the art department office is opened, we will create a comprehensive database of both Craft Center and main campus art faculty recruitment contacts, so that response rates can be tracked. Targeted students are then contacted through multiple media several times during high school. Tennessee art teachers are sent information on Craft Center workshops and TTU BFA recruitment materials. Further direct contact to high school art programs through participation in Admissions college fairs, and new opportunities to follow up contacts and results of campus visits using the Enrollment Management Technology will be developed.
   c. The Department has been working with the College Advising Center to improve the rigor of Departmental advising which has produced uneven results for Art Education majors. Studio faculty advisors are encouraged to use the Sophomore Assessment process to identify potential problems that would impede progress toward graduation in BFA studio concentration. Sophomore assessment results need to be compiled to look for evidence of trends.

Goal 2: Review current programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels and develop new programs that promise the enrollment of students who would not otherwise attend TTU.

Assessment:
a. Full implementation of Ready2Teach curricula will take place in F2013. The impact of subsequent changes to the Art Education curriculum will be assessed in the self-study to be prepared for NASAD reaccreditation during the 2013-14 year.

b. Review new program development.

c. Review success of departmental efforts to recruit, hire and retain nationally recognized faculty members.

Analysis and Results:

a. A new survey of art alumni is needed to indicate current program strengths and weaknesses. This instrument can also be used to gauge the impact of Ready2Teach changes.

b. A formal proposal has been submitted to develop a graphic design concentration in the BFA program, and is included in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan. Implementation of this program is planned for the 2014-15 academic year. No graduate programs in art are planned at this time.

c. Two art faculty searches are underway this year. An aggressive recruiting plan has been implemented to increase faculty diversity and to attract the best national candidates. Departmental tenure and promotion procedures are under review to assure adequate mentoring and review of candidates.

Goal 3: Provide adequate programmatic equipment and information technology for students, faculty and staff.

Assessment:

a. Review access to appropriate educational technology for students, faculty and staff.

b. Review the amount of internal and external support dedicated to the repair and replacement of studio equipment and information technology.

Analysis and Results:

a. All faculty desktop computers are reasonably up to date. The Craft Center AV2 lab was upgraded in F2011, including a 12-station student lab with Internet, Adobe Creative Suite, Rhino 3D and specialized software for weaving design and glaze chemistry. The laptop computer cart in Art Education Lab in Rm. 248 Bryan Fine Art was replaced in F2011, including the upgrade to Adobe Creative Suite from Photoshop Elements.

b. Yes, for the present, however, no budget has been identified to support future faculty and student lab equipment replacement. A fee increase has been applied for required to maintain the program technology and equipment maintenance needs into the future.

Goal 4: Separate the unit into a Department of Art and Department of Music with a practicing visual artist leading the Art unit for the first time.

Assessment:

a. Review efficacy of combined arrangement by art and music executives, art and music faculties, and evaluation teams from NASAD and NASM.

b. Seek approval for separation into Department of Art and Department of Music according to Tennessee Board of Regents and Tennessee Technological University policies and procedures.

Analysis and Results:

a. Art and music executives, faculties, and two teams each of NASAD and NASM evaluators judged this arrangement as ineffective.

b. Applications for new Department of Art and a renamed Department of Music have been approved at Tennessee Tech and submitted to the Tennessee Board of Regents.

Goal 5: Seek new Chair of Art who will provide leadership for a successful NASAD reaccreditation, and who will lead the implementation of a new concentration in graphic design.
Assessment:
  a. Review progress of graphic design proposal.
  b. Verify that accreditation reports to and meetings with NASAD are timely and successful.

Analysis and Results:
  a. Results to be determined.
  b. The NASAD self-study and reaccreditation process scheduled for the academic year 2011-12 has been rescheduled to 2012-14 with the approval of the NASAD Commission. This will enable the process to assess the new departmental structure and to include the proposal for a graphic design concentration.

2. Learning Goals and Objectives

The Bachelor of Music degree is the initial professional degree in music. The Department of Music and Art has developed the degree in accordance with the guidelines established by the National Association of Schools of Music. As such, the degree emphasizes the development of skills, concepts and sensitivities essential to the professional life of the musician and music educator.

Learning outcomes for students in the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree include:

Goal 1: Students will develop knowledge of great works of art and the stylistic characteristics of the historical periods from which they come.

Goal 2: Students will develop knowledge of multicultural artistic traditions.

Goal 3: Students will develop the common body of knowledge and skills of art, and will exhibit technical competence, a broad knowledge of art history, an understanding of style and its implications, critical thinking, an insight into the role of art in the life of humankind, and the ability to identify and solve problems.

Goal 4: Students will develop the ability to formulate and defend evaluative judgments about art and to make qualitative decisions concerning their own personal creative expressions.

Goal 5: Students will demonstrate professional expertise through the presentation of a culminating exhibition or portfolio.

Goal 6: The student will compete effectively for careers in art education or studio arts, and will achieve appropriate professional certification.

Assessment methods
  1. Sophomore Assessments
  2. Senior Thesis Committees
  3. Praxis Exams
  4. NSSE Student Surveys
  5. Alumni Surveys

Analysis and Results:
  1. Students in a BFA studio concentration with approximately 45 - 60 earned hours are screened for appropriate progress in art foundations classes, general education classes, and classes in the concentration studio. Studio advisors assess whether the level of accomplishment (the quality of the artwork) in at least two classes in the concentration is sufficient to support a recommendation to continue in upper division work in that studio. This result is recorded in the student file, and shared with the student in advising. The
alternative to a recommendation to advance is to deny that recommendation. This denial is only advisory in nature and does not have the status of a prerequisite for upper division courses. (It is commonplace at professional art schools that portfolio review is used to screen initial admission, and again for admission to a major beyond the studio foundations program. Conscientious and competent performance in beginning studio classes may produce grades of C or better, and yet not indicate the potential to be competitive in a studio career. Although our sophomore assessment process is less severe, it is intended to serve a similar predictive function.) This process has encouraged students to change concentrations and even to change majors. This recommendation is denied in a small proportion of cases, and the process has been conceived as an enhancement of advising on an individual basis. If a denial of the recommendation to advance leads a student to a more productive major, it is deemed a successful outcome. However, from Spring 2012 forward, the results of these assessments will be tabulated, to see if trends emerge that are useful for program assessment.

2. The senior thesis process requires the student to propose and develop a one-person exhibition and a portfolio of stylistically unified, technically accomplished work, and to define and defend its conceptual premise(s) to a committee of faculty and sometimes invited professional artists. This process generally involves two six-credit courses completed over two consecutive semesters. Occasionally a student may fail to produce enough work, or work of sufficient quality, and will not receive the minimum grade of "C" in a senior thesis course. However, in a more frequent minority of cases, a student may experience a breakthrough that prompts a change of direction in the work, or encounter an unforeseen technical or aesthetic roadblock that requires more time to resolve, even though the quantity and quality of work is sufficient for a passing grade. (Some prominent art schools, such as the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, consider letter grades in studio programs to be ineffective and misleading, and use a pass/fail system of grading, making portfolio review an even more primary benchmark for advancement.) The student may be advised by the committee and choose the opportunity to extend the project an extra semester. The senior thesis process is intended to fulfill the professional requirement that an emerging professional artist can present a body of work that projects a clear level of aesthetic and technical resolution. The resulting portfolio will be the basis of judgment, for galleries, exhibitions, professional art fairs, graduate school admission, etc. From Spring 2012 forward, a record of senior thesis committee recommendations will be tabulated, to see if trends seem to emerge that are useful for program assessment.

3. The Director of Art Education carefully monitors PRAXIS results and incorporates them in all ARED curriculum updates.

4. NSSE results had not been broken down by art major and reviewed at the departmental level prior to the preparation of this report. Discussion has begun with the TTU Director of Assessment regarding the validity of a sample of 5 freshmen and 6 seniors, how to increase future participation, and the concern that some questions under "coursework emphasis" and "institutional emphasis" may not correlate meaningfully with the experience of students in a studio concentration. Nonetheless, NSSE results will become part of ongoing reviews of art program components and of the NASAD self-study process. CCTST scores are monitored and included in departmental self-study and planning, but have not driven specific changes in recent years.

5. Alumni Survey information broken down by major has not been utilized to assess the art programs. A new improved plan for the collection of Alumni data will be implemented Spring 2012, and will provide more reliable results for the disaggregation to the disciplinary level.

Summary of Key Continuous Improvement Achievements

A. The Art Education program was extensively revised for the Fall, 2011 semester in response to a Board of Regents initiative called Ready2Teach. The main thrust was toward an entire year of student teaching experience.
B. Art faculty members are increasingly taking advantage of national and international development opportunities.
C. All faculty members have been provided with new PC or Macintosh computers.
D. All art classrooms now have integral projection and internet capability.
E. Approval of the division of the current department into departments of Art and Music is anticipated for the Fall, 2012, semester.
F. Approval of a new concentration in Graphic Design will be sought, to be implemented in the Fall, 2014, semester.
G. Searches for the new position of Chair of Art, a new position in Foundations, a restored tenure track position in Painting and a new Director of the Appalachian Center for Craft are planned for the current year.
H. The consolidation of Craft Center and main campus art programs under an Art Department office will facilitate improvement in organizing assessment results and applying them in planning and implementing further improvements in recruitment, retention and graduation.
I. A total of seven endowments dedicated to BFA scholarships, artist in residence programs and exhibition program now exceeds $1,000,000 in assets.

Off-Campus Programs/Offerings:
Art offers ART 3200 Art Applications I off-campus. These courses are evaluated the same way on campus programs are evaluated. The instructors are full-time TTU faculty who travel to off-campus sites to hold classes. Exit exams/major field tests are similarly available to all students; computer-based exams are available on TTU’s campus and paper-based exams are available in Nashville, Knoxville, or Chattanooga. The student’s choice determines the test format. IDEA evaluations are handled similarly to on campus classes.