

Envisioning the Future: The Department of Art & Design and its Art Education, Art History, and Studio Programs, 2007-2008

(April 2007 Revision of Strategic Planning document)

Mission:

The Department of Art and Design at Grand Valley State University seeks to uphold the values of a liberal education while providing an intensive engagement with the production and examination of the visual arts.

Values:

As educators, artists, and scholars, we value investigation of the world through self-aware participation in broad cultural discourses. In addition to preparing students formally and conceptually for careers in the visual arts, the department strives to foster the broadly transferable skills of inquiry, reflection, critical analysis, dialog, and expression.

Student learning values that reflect our departmental mission:

1. Student will become familiar with the central issues and processes in their chosen area of study.
2. Students will develop competency progressively throughout the degree program and will work independently at the advanced level.
3. Students will achieve a high level of expertise in the practice of their chosen area of study.
4. Students will critique, discuss, and present their work in a professional manner.
5. Students will contribute meaningfully to artistic and regional communities beyond GVSU through engaging in learning opportunities.

Service Programs

Our primary service program in the Department of Art and Design is Art 101: Introduction to Art. This course fulfills the Arts Foundation and each year we have approximately 1300 number of students (non majors) who take this course. The course is structured with a large lecture and small discussion groups.

Major Programs

The Department of Art and Design offers the B.F.A. Degree for students interested in a professional degree in art or design. It will prepare students for a career as a professional artist or designer. In addition, the department offers the B.A. and B.S. in Studio Art and the B.A. and B.S. in Art Education (Teacher Certification). In fall 2007 we will begin offering a B.A. in Art History (major) and a minor in Art History.

Goal One (Instructional Goal): To continue improvement of the existing high level of instruction in our undergraduate visual arts program in all areas of the department including—studio arts, art education, and art history.

We in Art & Design are committed to promoting our area within the context of a liberal arts education/institution. In addition to opening our courses to non-majors and sustaining offerings such as ART 101, we will continue serving a broad spectrum of GVSU students through open enrollment in our courses and through courses developed for various General Education “themes.”

Objectives: to garner adequate resources to support a quality program in all areas of instruction.

- to hire a TT person in art education (with Ed.D. or Ph.D. qualifications)
- to hire TT faculty in graphic design area to cover print, pre-press, and web design
- to hire a tech person for computer labs & technology

Objective: to work out a comprehensive hiring plan for phasing in more art history faculty (1.5 position planned for 08-09) and visual studies (new emphasis area), to include more art education, digital illustration, 2D-drawing, and new media areas

Objective: to keep facilities in top shape: replace used equipment as needed; revamp and update

- items of safety should take priority
- illustration space, art history classroom space
- technology—curriculum appropriate updates to labs, coordination of lab space w/ School of Communication, portability plan (laptop computers)

GOAL TWO (Student Goal): To identify and encourage the diversity of our students

Objective: To collect data about our student population (incoming, current) to meet the mission of the university as well as the department

Objective: To monitor recruitment patterns and effectiveness to level out enrollments in all emphasis areas

In this area, we want to evaluate our present admit process to determine whether it produces the number and type of students we desire and whether our application

timeline appropriately dovetails with the university admissions timeline.

Evaluate our scholarship practices by examining type, qualifications, level, and number—(with the goal of increasing the number of minority students, out of state students, international students, and the like.)

Objective: to increase our students' preparation for diverse futures:

- Prepare students to successfully be admitted to graduate schools or to become successful practicing artists, art teachers, art historians, or other art related professionals.
- Equip students with transferable skills and knowledge that will enable them to establish careers outside the field of art.
- Continue and expand our present internships.
- Encourage our students to integrate their liberal arts experience in their art making and art studies.

Objective: to increase the already diverse co-curricular opportunities being offered:

- Further encourage travel opportunities and study outside of Western Michigan and abroad.
- Further expose our students to new and diverse ideas and skills through exhibitions, lectures, workshops, visiting artists, and conferences.

Objective: to increase the effectiveness of the Art & Design curriculum by promoting new curriculum areas such as the art history major/minor and the visual studies emphasis

- Aim to: increase cooperation between Art and Design and School of Communications
- Explore the option of a B.F.A. combined with an Art Ed. certificate w/ State of Michigan requirements

Goal 3 (Faculty Goal): The faculty aspires to increase their participation in the professional arenas of cultural work, creative work, and scholarship to enrich their teaching and broaden connections between GVSU and other arts communities.

- The faculty of the department of art and design is committed to maintaining professional activities in their areas of specialization. Exhibitions of creative work, curating, participation at conferences, and publications all enable faculty to keep current with scholarship, contribute to their fields of expertise, and develop working relationships with the broader communities and with their peers at other arts institutions.

Objectives: (Staffing) To secure three to five faculty lines in studio art and art education, hire a full time academic advisor/recruiter and a visual resources curator, as well as evaluate staffing needs in the 2-D areas.

- To hire between three and five studio/art education faculty to facilitate a change in the course load for these areas of the Department of Art and Design. The current teaching requirements of a 3:3 teaching load adversely affects how much time faculty can spend on their professional work as it does not address the time intensive course schedules demanded of studio faculty. For every three credit hour class, studio professors teach for six contact hours, resulting in 18 contact hours per week at GVSU. This demanding teaching schedule, in addition to service and advising responsibilities creates an environment where faculty schedules consistently exceed 50 hours a week, leaving no time for substantive professional endeavors.
- At present, advising and recruitment responsibilities are performed by faculty members, and in certain instances the unit head. Assigning these activities to a dedicated staff member would ultimately allow all faculty in the department greater time for their professional work. Not only would it ensure consistent dissemination of information, but also alleviate disparity of advising loads for individual faculty, and facilitate permit distribution. Lastly, such a position would allow for greater participation in recruiting activities. Ideally, this hire would attend events such as National Portfolio Days, new student orientation, as well as meeting with prospective students and their parents.

Objective: (staffing) to create a permanent, full-time visual resources curator to ensure consistent support for professor's classroom needs. This position would ensure the preparation, cataloging, and archiving of digital images for teaching purposes. Image preparation is vital to studio and art history courses and in the absence of a visual resources curator, these duties fall upon faculty, again limiting time for professional work. In addition, the cataloging of images offers a searchable resource for the unit as well as the university at large. There is also potential for this position to assist with other aspects of technological support within the unit. Currently, individual art faculty often assume these time consuming responsibilities. A departmental discussion would be necessary to clarify the optimal balance between image and technological support for this position.

Objective: (staffing) to evaluate staffing for the maintenance of 2-D studio areas.

- Currently the Department of Art and Design has two full-time shop technicians in the 3-D areas. Many of the other studio areas require maintenance of equipment beyond the services provided by IT and janitorial staff. Faculty currently perform these duties which directly impacts time spent on their professional work. Areas interested in additional support would coordinate to determine the extent of duties and skills required for this hire to determine whether a work study, part-time, or full-time AP position is necessary.

Objective: (Facilities) to oversee creation of individual studios, for faculty, ensuring broader participation in professional arenas. (Some ten faculty have indicated interest in having studios.)

- Several faculty members have expressed concern about the lack of adequate studio space to undertake their professional work. Provision for studios would facilitate faculty's ability to increase their professional activity. The studios are also a significant attraction for students and facilitate a vital exchange of information, techniques, and work habits outside of traditional classrooms. The variety of media and specialized equipment used by studio artists to produce their work frequently requires additional space above and beyond the dimensions of a typical faculty office. Art departments frequently provide workspace to support the professional endeavors of their faculty.

Opportunities for Creative Work and Research

To investigate and implement strategies for creating a balance between teaching, professional activity, and service.

- To clarify annual baseline expectations and those for contract renewal, tenure, and promotion to accurately communicate standards for faculty, in all phases of their careers. These clarifications will assist in creating a departmental environment in which faculty understand how they can proactively choose means to balance teaching, professional activity, and service in their career planning.
- To further evaluate the departmental committee structure and meetings to ensure that the Department of Art and Design is working in an effective manner.
 - For example, the creation of a rotating committee system may be one solution to ensuring balance between more and less labor intensive committees.
- To engage in further discussion with the administration to develop new strategies to broaden the definition of teaching beyond traditional "clock" and "credit" hours.
 - For example, changes to curriculum, scheduling, or creation of B.F.A. thesis classes would officially recognize the time consuming responsibilities in foundation, junior and senior reviews as well as classroom observation of students for art educators.
 - A more modest possibility could include the implementation of two-day teaching schedules for interested faculty members or restructuring the admissions and review processes.

GOAL FOUR (PROGRAM GOAL): to enhance relationships with university, local, and regional communities, becoming a recognized center for visual studies in West Michigan. Faculty, students, and alumni will foster and contribute to civic and creative culture and its attendant critical discourse.

University:

- to form and enhance cross-disciplinary exchange with other units and programs, and to create more situations of collaboration.
 - By its very nature, the study of visual culture is an interdisciplinary pursuit. The Art & Design Department is committed to forging ties across disciplines with other units and programs, and to enhancing already existing ties with departments such as Classics, Communications, Engineering, Sociology, and Writing. We look forward to more collaborative ventures with these units, such as jointly sponsored exhibitions and lectures, and team-taught courses.
 - The Art & Design Department will seek to establish a more structured and regular cooperative spirit among the various programs in Western Michigan at institutions of higher learning. (Crit-O-Rama is one example of a cooperative endeavor of this type.)
 - PAC gallery: enhance connections & work to highlight current links with the gallery
 - coordinate the Padnos chair of art position, suiting our needs & student interests; adding flexible studio space for that person, & adding a pt. time/full time liaison to work with community & university

Regional:

- to secure space in the “Arts Corridor” of downtown Grand Rapids in order to establish a fixed presence in the creative community.
- Encourage and support student activities related to Art & Design.
 - o These activities may include organizing exhibitions on and off campus, entering work in local and regional competitions, attending events and lectures hosted by other institutions, and contributing to verbal and written criticism of local culture.
- Encourage students to participate in conferences and exhibitions, either as presenters, or by accompanying faculty with whom they have collaborated on scholarly projects.
 - o We take special care to create opportunities for significant forms of faculty/student collaboration within the department. We encourage students to engage in research projects and to regularly present the results of such projects in public venues, both on and off-campus.
- Continue to facilitate & strengthen co-curricular programs, such as the Visiting Artists Program, the Crit-o-Rama event, and the Ceramics Guest Lecture Series.
 - o Art & Design has brought several nationally and internationally recognized scholars to campus to speak on topics of broad interest to faculty and students across the university, as well as

the general public, and we hope to expand this aspect of the unit's contribution to liberal arts education in the future.

- Identify and increase opportunities for student internships and service learning at area schools and other local institutions.
- Foster involvement and leadership in outside professional organizations (such as NCECA, NAEA, SNAG, CAA, MAPC, SGC, FATE, UICA) on the part of both faculty and students
- Expand relationships with local and regional high school programs.
 - o We are especially eager to expand our contacts with local and regional high school teachers, who can host our student teachers in their classrooms, lending them practical, hands-on experience. We anticipate that our contacts with the regional teaching community will also help in recruiting new students to GVSU.

Objective: to take the lead in the region as the university arts program to attend:

- Meet with area high school teachers
- Have a summer class for credit for area high school teachers
- Have more area students visit campus
- Coordinate an art exhibit/competition for area high school students