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MEMO TO: Diana Hess, Dean

FROM: Bill Hoyt (chair); Dan Lisowski; Carolyn Kallenborn (Review Team)

RE: Studio Art Certificate Program 5-year review

DATE: May 29, 2019

CC: Carolyn Kelley, Senior Associate Dean;  
Elizabeth Jach, Policy and Planning Analyst;  
Doug Rosenberg, Art Department Chair;  
Julie Ganser, Art Department Senior Administrative Programs Specialist

This is the report of the review team on the results of the 5-year review for the Studio Art Certificate Program. We were generally favorable in our review of the program and the documentation provided by the Art Department. We note a few recommendations for improvement in the assessment plan and providing data for key program outcomes.

Review team activities. The Program Review Committee (PRC) for the undergraduate certificate in Studio Art was formally constituted by School of Education Dean Diana Hess on April 22, 2019. The committee consists of three members: Bill Hoyt, Associate Dean for Health and Chair of the PRC; Dan Lisowski, Department Chair of Theatre and Drama; and Carolyn Kallenborn, Associate Professor of Design Studies in the School of Human Ecology and Program Coordinator for Textiles and Fashion Design. Committee members reviewed the committee's charge and the Department of Art conducted self-study prior to meeting with Department representatives Doug Rosenberg (Department Chair) and Julie Ganser (Director of Undergraduate Studies) on Wednesday May 22, 2019. At this meeting, the review committee received additional documentation from the Department which included a breakdown of courses included in the certificate program, historical enrollment numbers in the program, and a roster of recently graduated students earning the Studio Art certificate. During the meeting, the group discussed requested clarifying information from department representatives and discussed strengths and growth opportunities for this certificate program. Following the meeting, the PRC discussed the formal report and recommendations for continued program success.

Strengths of the program. The undergraduate certificate in Studio Art has been remarkably successful. The program has seen continuous growth in declared Studio Art certificate seeking students each year. Spring semester enrollees have grown as follows: 90 in 2014, 180 in 2015, 266 in 2016, 297 in 2017, 310 in 2018, to a peak enrollment of 371 students in Spring 2019. This steady growth demonstrates keen student interest in the program and provides indirect evidence of student satisfaction with this educational experience.

The flexible but focused curriculum structure is a clear strength of the program. The curriculum allows students to develop knowledge and skills in the studio art of their choosing: Painting, Drawing, Printmaking; Graphic Design; 3D Forms; 4D Forms, and Photography. Each certificate student is required to complete one course in historical context of art, two “foundational” courses in their focus area, and two “development” courses in their focus area. The information sheet provided on the course requirements for each focus group clearly outlines curriculum expectations and contact information for declaring the certificate.

Overall management of the certificate program is exemplary. The Art Department has responded appropriately to the enrollment demands by increasing administrative support and adding additional sections in high demand courses. The self-study provided a cogent rationale for this experiential learning experience, and the course requirements for the certificate aligned well with the designated learning outcomes.

Areas for improvement. Based on the self-study, the Art Department identified one key area for improvement, related to the concentration in Graphic Design. We discuss this decision in more detail below. The review team’s main recommendation for improvement was related to the assessment of learning outcomes and the reporting of data in the self-study. The self-study outlined a plan for evaluation of student learning but provided no data on the outcomes for the students who have completed the certificate to date. In addition, it was not clear to the review team that the procedures described in the self-study were designed to provide evidence of learning outcomes for all students earning the certificate. We discussed these issues in some detail during the meeting with the department representatives, and we summarize the issues and recommendations in the next section.

Recommendations for future directions. Analysis of program strengths and weaknesses can be furthered by collecting and reporting data on learning outcomes at the individual (student) level. For example, the assessment plan should allow for an evaluation of whether each student completing the certificate has met the two learning outcomes for the program. Annually, the department should be able to report on what percentage of completers successfully attained these learning outcomes.

It was not clear to the review team that the assessment plan presented in the self-study allows for individual-level assessment of outcomes. The plan references detailed examination of “samples” of student work from course exams for Learning Outcome #1 and from student exhibits for Learning Outcome #2. This intensive, qualitative examination of samples of student work may be valuable for evaluating student learning at the program level, but it was not clear to us that it provides data on individual outcomes for all students. Our recommendation is to consider linking individual assessment of student learning outcomes to student course performance, so that a summary of outcomes for all students (e.g., “98% of certificate completers successfully attained Learning Outcome 1”) is possible. Certificate program requirements include one course on history/context—closely related to Learning Outcome 1—and four studio courses—closely related to Learning Outcome 2. Provided that all eligible courses are designed so that successful course performance entails achievement of the relevant Learning Outcome (which it appears may already be the case), the individual-level assessment procedure could be based on course grades—e.g., passing grade, or perhaps “grade of C or better.” This recommended evaluation procedure need not replace the more detailed qualitative evaluation for subsets of program students, but would allow for summaries of data

for all certificate program students in future self-studies and on annual reports of assessment of student learning.

A related recommendation pertains to the section on recruiting, admissions, and enrollment. The self-study describes efforts to reach out to students across campus with information about the certificate program, including students from diverse academic majors and underrepresented students. The self-study states that the program has increased departmental enrollment from underrepresented groups and from departments outside the School of Education, but no actual data is provided to support this statement. Given that broadening exposure to studio art is an important mission of this program, we recommend that the department keep records of this information to track the success of these recruitment efforts and report summaries of this information in future self-studies.

Response to section 10 of self-study (department recommendations for improvements). It is clear that the Art Department is actively monitoring the program and has shown foresight and ingenuity in re-assessing and refining as it grows. In particular, program advisors noticed that the students in the Graphic Design area were not uniformly attaining Learning Outcome 2 and needed a specific type of academic support. In response, the department developed a separate Graphic Design Certificate as a way to meet the needs of those students without disrupting the success of the other areas of the certificate where the change was not needed.

The development of the Graphic Design certificate also precipitated a shift in thinking and structure of the department's B.S. and B.F.A degree. The self-study shows clear evidence of responsive oversight of the certificate program, which is integral to the overall conversation and curriculum of the department as a whole.