



National
Association of
School of
Art and
Design

Memorandum

TO: Institutions Recently Visited by NASAD Evaluators

FROM: Teresa M. Ricciardi, Accreditation Coordinator

RE: Completed Visitors' Report

Please find enclosed a copy of the NASAD Visitors' Report for your institution, the procedures for submitting an Optional Response, and a questionnaire.

If you wish, you may submit a formal reply in the form of an Optional Response to the Visitors' Report prior to consideration by the Commission on Accreditation. The deadline for submission is noted on the cover of the Visitors' Report.

If the National Office Staff may provide further information, please do not hesitate to let us know. Thank you and best regards.

TMR:file
Enclosures

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN

Visitors' Report

Northern Illinois University

DeKalb, IL

Douglas G. Boughton, Acting Director

School of Art

March 17-19,

2010

Andrew Polk, Team Chair, University of Arizona
Karen Monzel Hughes, Team Member, University of Cincinnati

Programs or degrees for which renewal of Final Approval is sought.

Bachelor of Arts - 4 years: Art; Art History

Bachelor of Science in Education - 4 years: Art Education

Bachelor of Fine Arts - 4 years: 2-D (Drawing, Illustration, Painting, Printmaking); 3-D (Ceramics, Fiber/Fabric, Metalwork and Jewelry, Sculpture); Design (Photography, Time

Arts, Visual Communication) Master of Science - 1 year: Art (Art Education)

Master of Arts - 1 year: Art; Art History Master of Fine Arts - 2 years: Art

(Ceramics, Drawing, Fiber, Metalwork and Jewelry,

Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture, Time Arts, Visual

Communication) Doctor of Education - 3 years: Curriculum and Instruction (Art Education)

Programs or degrees for which renewal of Plan Approval is sought.

Doctor of Philosophy - 3 years: Art Education

DISCLAIMER

The following report and any statements therein regarding compliance with NASAD accreditation Standards represent only the considered opinion of the visitors at the time of the visit. Definitive evaluation of compliance and the accreditation decision will be made by the appropriate Commission following a complete review of the application, including the Self-Study, the Visitors' Report, and any Optional Response to the Visitors' Report submitted by the institution.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The visit team would like to thank faculty, staff and administrators at Northern Illinois University for attending to its needs in a timely manner during the visit. The team met with faculty in all areas, students in most programs, staff, and administrators. Everyone was extremely helpful. The team would like to extend special recognition to Douglas Boughton and his staff for managing the logistics of the visit and for their assistance and attentiveness to its needs. The team commends all members of the program who contributed to the production of its excellent Self-Study. The visitors received the Self-Study in sufficient time and were able to prepare in a comprehensive and thorough manner for the on-site visit.

While on site, the visitors had the opportunity to tour all of the facilities in a thorough and comprehensive manner. The team met with the administrators, faculty, staff and students and was provided with thorough responses to all of its questions. The institution had sufficient examples of student work for the team to review. Specific individuals with whom the team met included:

Raymond W. Alden III, Executive Vice President and Provost
Harold Kafer, Deputy Provost
Richard Holly, Dean, College of Visual and Performing Arts
Douglas Boughton, Acting Director, School of Art
Andrew Liccardo, Acting Assistant Director, School of Art
Deb Smith-Shank, Division Head, Art Education; Mary Quinlan, Division Head, Art History;
Kurt Schultz, Division Head, Design; Lee Sido, Division Head, Fine Art Studio
Michael Barnes, Graduate Coordinator, School of Art Jo Burke, Director, Northern Illinois
Art Museum; Peter Olson, Assistant Director, Northern
Illinois Art Museum
Peter Van Ael, School of Art Exhibitions Coordinator, School of Art
Kathy Krolo, Curator, Visual Resources Center, School of Art Loretta
Swanson, Coordinator of Undergraduate Advisement, School of Art
Jacqueline Wells, Recruitment Coordinator, School of Art

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1885 as Northern Illinois State Normal School, Northern Illinois University is a multipurpose educational institution. The central mission of the university is the transmission, expansion, and application of knowledge through teaching, research and artistry, and public service. The School of Art is the largest of three academic units within the College of Visual and Performing Arts. It offers programs in Art Education, Art History, Design, and Fine Arts Studio. It has a faculty of more than 40 artists, designers, and scholars, and an enrollment of more than 650 undergraduate and 80 graduate students. The School of Art has been an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design since 1969.

A. Purposes

See NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, II.A and XIII.B-C; Self-Study, pps 1-4;

On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators.

The School of Art outlines its three primary objectives, paraphrased here as a) providing professional quality education to its majors, b) enhancing the liberal arts and aesthetic education of non-art students, as well as art students, and c) serving the university as an integral part of its programming for both the academic community and the region it serves.

For the most part, these appear consistent with the central mission of the university which is "the transmission, expansion, and application of knowledge through teaching, research and artistry, and public service." (see <http://catalog.niu.edu>). NIU is included in the *Research Universities—High Activity* category of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. As such, the faculty and administration of the School of Art question whether 3/3 teaching loads are consistent with the institution's research/artistry mission. Through their observations of other institutions, the visitors are inclined to agree. Most research intensive institutions assign lower teaching loads within their art and design programs than do teaching institutions. Assignments of three courses per semester is more typically found at "Teaching" institutions whereas 2/3 and 2/2 loads are more typically found at "Research" institutions. The School of Art has found this to be true through surveys of peer institutions. The 3/3 teaching load expectation is further exacerbated by teaching responsibilities at the graduate level (i.e., committee work, independent studies, and etc. that are taken on in additional regularly assigned classes.) Accordingly, such teaching expectations appear to impede a faculty member's ability to conduct research and/or artistry by reducing the available time to devote to it. It also seems to undermine the school's faculty recruitment interests. The administrators interviewed expressed no objections to course load reductions as long they would not lower the School of Art's enrollments. Therefore, the school should consider ways in which to do this. Possible solutions could include reducing its undergraduate degree requirements from 122 to 120 units (120 units is not uncommon); admitting undergraduate students with the BA as the default, and limiting the number of BFA's to a smaller number (thus reducing the number of required seats for majors); identifying classes which could be increased in size without diminishing the quality of its classes. The model currently used by Art History - to provide larger lectures coupled with smaller breakouts - has been adopted for foundations and other classes in other programs around the country.

Overall, the balance between the institution's art and design objectives and its available resources appears to be reasonable for the present. NIU, like other US institutions, is adversely affected by the current national and state economies. The impacts felt by the School of Art will be enumerated in Section C of this report, but suffice it to say, that while the School of Art appears to be currently doing a reasonably good job of meeting its mission and objectives, a prolonging of frozen, limited, and reduced resources will take a negative toll over time.

B. Size and Scope

See NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, II.B.; Self-Study, pps. 4-7; On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators; Tour of facilities.

In all cases observed, the facilities appear to be of sufficient size to accommodate student and curricular requirements. While there seem to be sufficient permanent and temporary faculty lines,

there are presently, four unfilled, frozen faculty vacancies. These are in Ceramics, Time Arts, and two in Art Education. These disciplines may not meet their enrollment and curricular demands due to a shortage of faculty.

The school's enrollments appear to have dropped below desired anticipated levels, and those in the Design disciplines seem to have diminished disproportionately in comparison with the other school disciplines. There is evidence to suggest that the overall lowering of enrollments has resulted from a reduction in outreach to the region's high school during the past decade. In response, the school has hired a recruitment officer with a well conceived recruitment agenda and has instituted various activities intended to rebuild a strong relationship to regional school systems.

Enrollment declines in Design, in particular, appear inconsistent with national trends. Likely explanations for these include a) a design curriculum that does not meet student expectations or needs, b) reduced faculty support, and c) a possible redirecting of student interests through foundations and other non-design classes. These will be delineated more completely in other areas of this report. The graduate level design programs may lack sufficient student numbers to create a viable "community of students and faculty to permit the formal sharing of experience, ideas, and knowledge" (*NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition, XIII.B.4.*). The Design MFA enrollments are Photography[2], Time Arts [4], Visual Communication [2]. Whereas a total of 8 design students may appear to be sufficient, the Photography and Time Arts students are more aligned philosophically with the Fine Arts Studio students, and the two Visual Communications students appear to be philosophically isolated.

It is not clear how the degree requirements for the MA in Art History, the MFA in Design, and the MFA in Fine Arts Studio, assure compliance with the NASAD standard, "At least one-half of the credits required for graduate degrees must be in courses intended for graduate students only (*NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition, XIII.C. 1 .a.*) The reviewers note that there appear to be relatively few stand alone graduate classes offered and/or required for these degrees. The school should determine ways to reduce its reliance on graduate/undergraduate course clusters and to require a larger number of stand alone graduate classes.

C. Finances

See *NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition, H.C.; Self-Study, pps. 7-9; On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators.*

The institution has demonstrated a history of responsible and strategic financial planning. As a result, the art and design programs appear to be meeting their needs for the most part. However, the state and national economies have had required difficult measures taken by the institution and school. Among these are tuition and fee increases, frozen vacated lines, and minimal to no budget increases to address the increasing costs of services and materials. With 94% of its annual allocation devoted to personnel costs. The remaining 6% appears insufficient for covering all operating expenses. As a result, student fees cover the remaining costs of class materials, equipment repair and upgrading, lab assistants, live models and other aspects of its operations. The institution has a technology fee that supports university computer labs across campus, including one in the Arends Fine Arts Building. The school has other computer labs that it supports with college assistance. Although resources appear to be strained and the refresh rate (at 5 years) is slow, the school has managed reasonably well to keep its labs functioning. Given their records of solid financial planning, the institution and school should be able to sustain themselves during the upcoming review period.

The school's budgeting processes, reflecting the school's and institution's commitments to shared governance, involve the four division heads, the Graduate Coordinator, and Foundations Coordinator working together with the Acting Director. At NIU, the fundraising is not part of a School Director's job description.

D. Governance and Administration

See *NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, II.D.; Self-Study, pps. 10-13; On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators.

The institution's governance structure appears to be capable of serving the mission, goals, and objectives of the College of Art. The structure within the university is typical, with the Director of the School of Art reporting to the Dean of the College, who reports to the Executive Vice-President and Provost of the University. The organizational structure and reporting structure at the upper levels of administration are straightforward, as evidenced in the organizational chart and through on-site interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators.

Governance within the School of Art appears to be effectively managed through an Executive Council composed of the Director, Assistant Director, and the four Division Heads, along with two non-voting members, the Coordinator of Graduate Programs and Coordinator of Foundations. This Council is the primary decision-making body of the School of Art, and functions within the framework of the School of Art Constitution and the authority given the college dean and university provost by university policy. It meets two to three times a month. The school's constitution provides for strong faculty participation in and oversight of governance as concerns school policy. Planning matters such as new personnel, budget expenditures, visiting artists and scholars, and class scheduling do not require the full faculty and are determined by the School Director and Executive Council. General faculty meetings must be held a minimum of two times per regular semester of the academic year. Additional meetings may be called as needed.

In addition, there are several standing committees in the school: a Rules Committee that examines the school constitution and bylaws and makes recommendations to the faculty; a Graduate Steering Committee that oversees matters related to the graduate program and makes recommendations to the graduate faculty; and a Curriculum Committee that examines and makes recommendations regarding curricular change.

Within the college, the primary organizational structure is the individual school. The three schools are Art, Music, and Theatre and Dance. The School of Art has four administrative divisions: Fine Arts Studio, Design and Media Arts, Art Education, and Art History. The administrative head of the school is the Director, appointed by the Dean to a defined term of office. A review occurs at the end of the initial four-year term, and a second term may be considered. A supermajority vote of the faculty is required for terms beyond that, and it is unusual that additional terms would be considered. The Director is encouraged to teach at least one graduate or upper-division undergraduate course per year, and the current Director remains visibly engaged within his field and with his colleagues.

Additional administrative support at the school level is provided by an Assistant Director, the Coordinator of Undergraduate Advisement and Class Scheduling, and the Coordinator of Recruitment. Within the schools, Division Heads have oversight of individual programs. They are responsible for curricular review, coordination of all faculty, coordination with other program directors and staff, and report to the School Director. As mentioned above, there is also a

Coordinator of Graduate Programs in Art and a Coordinator of Foundations, both of whom sit as non-voting members of the School of Art Executive Committee. Faculty in each division have particular responsibility for enrollment management, including recruitment. Due to the extreme trend toward reduced enrollments in the School of Art, a new position was created and filled to address this problem.

Faculty expressed a high level of trust and appreciation for the current Director and Assistant Director. Staff appear to view the Director as a "peacemaker" and express great appreciation.

Overall, the organizational structure of the college, school, and divisions appear to be well defined and operating effectively. There does not appear to be undue concern for excessive workload, with the exception of the single academic advisor for the school's students. It should be noted that a commitment to shared governance provides for the engagement of all faculty, but also creates higher service commitments in that engagement.

E. Faculty and Staff

See *NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, HE.; Self-Study, pps. 13-21; On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators.)

Faculty

The faculty in the School of Art appear to be adequately credentialed, with all regular (tenure/tenure-track) faculty hires since the last NASAD review holding terminal degrees appropriate to their fields (Self-Study pp. 13-21). Other faculty have either terminal degrees or "equivalencies" as appropriate to their field, defined as "professional activity which in its depth, distinction, and recognition provides a level of experience or accomplishment equivalent or parallel to that which might be expected by those with the appropriate terminal degree." Most new faculty have taught full or part-time at one or more institutions.

At the beginning of the 2009-10 academic year there were 42 full-time regular (tenured, tenure-track) faculty in the School of Art. Those were distributed as 9 Assistant Professors, 23 Associate Professors, and 10 Full Professors. There are 14 adjunct faculty, both full and part-time, which appear to be a reasonable ratio of regular to adjunct faculty. The Gallery Coordinator, who also serves as Coordinator of the Museum Studies Graduate Certificate Program, augments the faculty by regularly teaching courses in museum practice.

While regular faculty members are assigned primary responsibility to one of the four divisions in the school, most faculty (with the exception of the Art Education faculty) teach courses that apply to all or a majority of the undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

The distribution of faculty among the divisions and programs is:

Art History, 9 regular faculty and 2 adjuncts
Art Education, 5 regular faculty and 3 adjuncts
Design, 9 regular faculty and 2 adjuncts
Fine Arts Studio, 18 regular faculty and 4 adjuncts
Foundations, 2 adjunct faculty (including the Acting Coordinator)

Faculty expressed concern that low entry level salaries coupled with heavy teaching loads are handicapping them in their faculty search (especially in the design fields), citing recent searches in

which offers were made and rejected due to salary. Recent and ongoing budget cuts have made filling open positions difficult.

Faculty hired into a tenure-track position agree in advance to a specified probationary period of 4 or 7 years, depending on prior experience and achievement. The faculty member is reviewed in the penultimate year of the appointment; if the recommendation is not for tenure, the following year is the final year at NIU. Assessment and mentoring of probationary faculty is accomplished with select senior faculty visiting the classroom and studio spaces to appraise teaching effectiveness. In addition to these visits and periodic constructive critiques of teaching effectiveness, other evaluative measures include: student course evaluations, and review of syllabi, a yearly written review, and a "Faculty Service Report" submitted by the faculty member each spring.

This evidence is forwarded to the Personnel Committee, which is composed of elected representatives from all divisions. Along with the two college council representatives and school director (who do not vote), the Personnel Committee is responsible for the merit evaluation of all regular faculty members on an annual basis. For merit salary increases, sabbatical requests, promotion, and tenure, three categories are used: artistry and/or research/scholarship, teaching, and services. It appears that these criteria and the means by which they are applied are in keeping with NASAD guidelines. The Faculty Service Report is evaluated based on criteria and a point system established in the school's personnel bylaws.

It appears that the process by which faculty are reviewed is consistent with NASAD guidelines.

In meetings with faculty, they expressed some concern about teaching loads. The normal teaching load per semester is 3 classes, or 6 classes per academic year. This load is exacerbated by the fact that no credit is given for graduate committee work, independent study, thesis, and one-person show courses. These are carried by the faculty member at his or her discretion above regular teaching load with no additional compensation. However, it is expected that regular faculty with graduate status will participate on or chair graduate committees. The Self-Study document states that "at least twenty-five to thirty percent of the regular faculty member's full-time contract load will incorporate research or artistry and service activities as part of the university's expectations for maintenance of professional currency and growth in the discipline."

The Art History faculty appear to have taken a highly successful creative approach to teaching the general education course by redesigning the instructional delivery model to utilize multiple faculty members lecturing on their areas of expertise for a defined segment of the semester. They have received financial support from the Provost and recognition through a competition jointly sponsored by the College Art Association and NIU School of Art for this restructuring. It may be that this same approach could be used in other courses to alleviate faculty teaching loads.

The administration appears to be working hard to assure that student/faculty ratios are kept at a reasonable level; it was 18:1 for fall 2009. This must be understood in the context of both reduced course loads in the case of administrative releases as well as much higher enrollments in Art History courses, particularly those that serve the university population as a general education requirement. Most Art History lecture courses range from 20-40 students, with the non-major art appreciation classes between 80-150 students. In upper undergraduate level studio classes, enrollment is generally less than 18 students; faculty reported verbally that many of the studio courses such as painting, weaving, and sculpture have maximum enrollments of 14.

All regular (tenure/tenure-track) faculty are expected to teach graduate-level courses and chair and/or serve on graduate student committees. Faculty are expected to seek Provisional graduate teaching status when initially appointed to tenure-track position, and are later reviewed for Full or Senior status. Applications for graduate status are through the school's Graduate Steering Committee, with criteria established by the faculty and approved by the Graduate School's Graduate Council. Criteria include an appropriate terminal degree or equivalent and accomplishment in research or artistry. Membership status at Full or Senior level is reviewed for renewal on a periodic basis of every 8 years.

The normal teaching load for full-time "temporary" faculty is 4 classes per semester, or 8 classes per year. They may alternately be assigned supervisory responsibilities in lieu of one class. This workload is based on the expectation that regular full-time faculty are pursuing professional, scholarly, or artistry work plus service, totaling at least 25% of their contract load. This seems to be reasonable.

The Self-Study indicates that graduate students are employed as teaching assistants (GTAs) for foundation courses and are supervised by a regular faculty member. It appears that the supervision is by a full-time faculty temporary faculty member who currently serves as Acting Coordinator of Foundations. The visiting team met with this individual and observed commendable enthusiasm for administering and teaching in the program, and it appears there is an adequate organization of graduate teaching responsibilities and an acceptable commitment to mentoring and supervising graduate teaching assistants. GTA positions appear to be highly competitive and are only awarded to second year students who have recommended by their divisions.

Three senior faculty have retired and a 4th will retire in August 2010. Further faculty losses include a junior faculty member in Time Arts and one in Art Education who have resigned in the last 2 years.

Art Education has further lost faculty capacity due to the senior faculty member who has become the current Acting School Director. Faculty in this area appear to be overloaded due to these depletions as well as the high demands of advising undergraduate, masters, and PhD students. Entering into the 2010-11 academic year, there will be only one senior faculty member in the Art Education program, which may result in difficulties for the new doctoral program. It appears that the Self-Study accurately assesses the need for additional faculty in this area.

However, there is currently a hiring freeze and budget rescission, and it appears to the School of Art that they will not be in a position to search for regular faculty in the near future. It appears to the visiting team that they will require the support of the University Administration to resolve this issue. In the meantime, they will necessarily rely on temporary faculty, which has the likelihood of lessening the overall effectiveness of the programs, and may further result in increased student/faculty ratios and recruitment difficulties.

Staff

Full-time support staff include seven secretaries, an account technician, chief clerk, and four other Supportive Professional Staff members. Three of the secretaries are assigned to the

four administrative division offices (Art History and Art Education share a secretary). Three secretaries staff the main office, and include the executive secretary to the Director, and there is one secretary for the Coordinator of Graduate Programs. The account technician oversees class fee accounts, and the chief clerk is assigned to the visual resources library.

One staff position is Coordinator of Undergraduate Advisement and class scheduling. This is the only academic advisor for the entire school. It appears the individual who occupies this position is highly competent, but maintains an inordinately high advising load. The visiting team notes that there seems to be some tension resulting from the student load, and suggests that additional advising assistance would be advisable.

One staff position is responsible for maintenance of equipment in Fine Arts Studio shops. It appears that this is barely adequate for the effective maintenance of safe standards for materials and facilities.

A new staff position was created to develop and oversee recruitment in light of the seriously declining enrollments. It is difficult to assess the success of these efforts, as the position was only filled in the current academic year. However, there are indications that the individual hired has been able to more fully engage faculty in the recruiting effort, and there appears to be a clear plan for recruitment activity. Further observations regarding recruitment follow in Section H of this report.

F. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety

See *NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, II.F.; Self-Study, pps. 21-24; On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators; Tour of facilities.)

For the most part, the amount, size/nature, lighting, temperature, and ventilation appear appropriate and adequate. The institution is commended for the improvements made to its facilities since the last review. The institution has addressed environmental health problems in, and improved access to, its facilities. Optimal ventilation systems have been installed in Printmaking and Metals. However, there are several problems that currently need attention.

Water leakage in the Visual Arts Building (Arends Hall) appears to be a problem that has persisted and worsened over the past several years. It affects printmaking, metals, fibers, painting, and a woodshop. This leakage poses dangers of slipping, structural deterioration, and poor working conditions. The institution should remedy the Arends Hall leakage problems.

Facilities and equipment in the Pleasant Street building appear to be even more severely impacted by water leakage. This affects the 3-D graduate and faculty studios. (The university plans to replace this facility with a better one before the beginning of the next school year.)

The ventilation in the Visual Arts Building painting studio appears to be insufficient for assuring a safe environment that is free of toxic fumes produced by oil painting.

The sculpture facility lacks emergency eyewash and shower stations. Dust collection and air filtration devices were installed. Although these devices appear to be "state of the art", there are reports that these are insufficient for heavy use periods. The reviewers were unable to verify this because the facility was not in heavy use during the visit. The institution should conduct air quality tests during heavy use periods to determine compliance with institutional standards, and it

should supplement its air exchange and filtration systems as the test call for.

The ceramics glaze cage lacks the necessary air intake mechanisms to circumvent the breathing of harmful particulates. Note: There was signage instructing students to leave the facility and/or to wear dust masks during glaze mixing. The visitors considered this to be temporary solution for assuring optimal health and safety, but not one conducive to the long term functions of a reasonably functioning facility.

The visitors found the 4th floor woodshop to be in disarray with piles of sawdust on the floor and hand tools strewn about instead of secured away in their proper places. At one point, the facility was found to be open but unsupervised during operating hours. In effect, the mechanisms and procedures to assure safety are in place, but there was evidence indicating that these were not sufficiently adhered to.

In many respects, the Art Annex is a wonderful and compelling facility for the faculty and graduate students who have studios there. However, there are some issues that may need attention.

It is an old building that has little ventilation beyond windows and standard HVAC. Students who used oil paints, sprays, and other such materials were situated together and nearer to windows, but the reviewers felt that further measures like ventilated spray booths/stations, exhaust fans, and the use of safer materials would improve upon health and safety concerns.

With approximately 40 studios on multiple floors, situated along long hallways accessible by narrow stairways, the facility is like a labyrinth. The visitors did not find the evacuation routes to be well marked, and were not sure if they are sufficient in number and location. The institution should make sure that escape routes are clearly marked and posted, and it should verify that the facility meets codes for access and evacuation.

As a lone building, isolated behind a larger commercial building, some students expressed concerns about their personal safety when walking up to the building alone after dark. Reportedly, the light fixtures on the outside of the building do not always all work. The institution would be well advised to provide mechanisms to assure that the building is always well lit at night.

G. Library and Learning Resources

See *NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, E.G.; Self-Study, pps. 24-29; On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators, Tour of facilities.)

There are two primary library facilities that act as resources for the School of Art faculty and students: the University Libraries and the School of Art Visual Resources Center. The latter is essentially a room in Arends Hall that houses some visual materials and some published materials.

Founders Memorial Library, part of the University Libraries, is in the main library building on campus. It is separate from the School of Art and supports the general university, and is a reasonable walk from Arends Hall. There is no separate art library for use by the School of Art. Founders Memorial Library, in serving a large research institution, contains over 2 million circulating volumes, over 30,000 current serials, over 1.8 million government publications, and

over 4 million microforms, maps, recordings, and audiovisual materials. The NIU Libraries are part of I-Share (Illinet Online System) and are thus able to provide exceptional access to a diverse source of research materials for students and faculty.

The Main Monographic Collection for art has nearly 57,000 titles, and includes works of reference, general nature, museum collections, monographs on individual artists, titles on styles, schools, and movements of all time periods. It appears that the collection is well-maintained and sufficient for the purposes of the School of Art faculty and students. In addition, there is a particularly strong collection of Southeast Asian Art, as part of the Southeast Asia Center and the Burma Studies Center. There appears to be an effort to display these materials in Arends Hall.

Periodicals observed were representative of the school's different disciplines. A concern noted by some faculty was the elimination of professional journals in conjunction with archiving them with J-Stor. In some cases, J-Stor never or hasn't for years subscribed to the archived journals, but it appears that hard copies of some journals have been eliminated. Digital copies of the pages in these journals do not appear to be of sufficient quality to be able to study them properly on the artistic or scholarly context.

The Visual Resources Center (VRC) is staffed with a director, technical assistant, graduate assistants, and work-study employees. It is a large centrally located facility with a collection of slides, reference books, periodicals, videos, and digital resources that appears to meet NASAD standards of size and scope. In addition to the management of its visual resource, the Center has computer workstations and assists faculty in the development of presentations and teaching delivery methods. The VRC houses and maintains an intranet server for master image files for its database, as well as functioning as a collaborative forum for all School of Art faculty and students.

The Visual Resources Center (VRC) staff has been working for several years in the analog to digital conversion of its slides and other resources. However, at its present rate (the Self-Study reports an average of 4000 slides annually converted of the 200,000 in the collection), the process will take 50 years. A large amount of valuable space is taken up by slide file cabinets housing seldom used slides. Faculty reported to the visitors that the predominance of slides are faded or discolored, and therefore not worthy of being converted. Some faculty bypass using the VRC altogether by acquiring image resources from public database sources. There is significant evidence to suggest that the school should re-examine the needs, functions, and timetable for the VRC's analog to digital conversion projects, in order to better utilize its current staff and space.

The VRC houses its digital resources on the school's intranet server and is working towards eventually streaming its resources to the classrooms. This is a laudable goal, but the institution would be well served to consider how the functions of the VRC server might be extended to address some of the school's other IT needs.

Art and design programs, nationwide, are wrestling with rapid and overwhelming changes within the field of Visual Resources. However, the VRC at NIU appears to be lagging in comparison. The school would do well to review VRC's in art and design programs of comparable size and curricula in an effort to reshape its VRC mission and objectives to achieve a more relevant and efficient approach to supporting the needs of the program.

H. Recruitment, Admission-Retention, Record Keeping, and Advisement

See *NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, U.K.; Self Study, pps. 29-37; (On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators)

Recruitment, Admission, Retention

As mentioned in the Staff section the School of Art has suffered declining enrollments in the past four years. There is evidence to suggest that this has resulted in part from a lowering of outreach activities to the region's high schools, initiated under a previous administration. Given that the admission requirements for freshmen are the same as the university minimum (19 ACT, top 50% high school rank), and that overall enrollment at the university is not declining, this is a rather troubling situation.

The school has taken the following steps to reverse the trend: It requested and was granted special funding from the Provost office to hire a recruitment officer who began in Fall 2009. This individual has developed and begun to implement a well conceived recruitment agenda and the school has instituted various outreach activities to rebuild a strong relationship to regional school systems. It is difficult, at this early stage, to assess the success of these efforts. However, there are indications that the strategies employed led to greater engagement by faculty in the recruiting effort, and there appears to be a clear plan for recruitment activity. It is hoped that the school will take a hard look at the underlying causes of the enrollment decline and not simply rely on this staff position to rectify this issue.

It should be noted that the extent of declining enrollment is both serious and somewhat difficult to understand, particularly in the professional disciplines of the Design programs of Visual Communications, Photography, and Time Arts. It seems that in hard economic times there would be stable, or even increased, demand for degree programs that offer promise of future employment. It is apparent that the school recognizes this trend, and has taken at least one step toward increasing enrollment and retention by creating a new course, "Introduction to Visual Communication" to introduce the discipline to students interested in pursuing it as a major.

A one-week residential summer art camp for high school students serves not only as outreach, but also as an important recruitment tool for the School of Art. Although this is not mentioned in the Self-Study's Recruitment section, and it would appear greater advantage could be taken of this opportunity to engage with high school students.

Critical mass concerns are evident with some of the graduate programs as indicated in the student numbers from the Self-Study curricular charts.

It appears that the Master of Arts in Art is seen as a "fall back" avenue for students who do not pass the review for admission to the MFA programs. It is suggested that the school evaluate the effectiveness and benefit of maintaining these programs in this model. There is certainly potential for increased enrollment in the MA programs, but a clear focus for these programs needs to be developed.

The curriculum appears to be strong and most disciplines in the School of Art have observable strengths, and demonstrate themselves to be among the best in the country. It is suggested that the school find ways to capitalize on the successes of their students and faculty as part of their effort to increase enrollment.

The school and university retention policies and procedures appear to be reasonable. The School of Art requires portfolio reviews at the end of the student's sophomore year for retention in all BFA degree programs. Students who do not pass the review often revert to the BA in Art with

the goal of attaining a degree in a timely manner. Higher GPA requirements are implemented for the 300-400 level courses in Photography and Visual Communication BFA programs for admission to the Senior Portfolio course, and students must complete that course for graduation with the BFA. The BS Ed in Art Education requires an entrance portfolio along with successful completion of "Introduction to Art Education" for continuance in the program. Also, an exit portfolio review is required and passing scores on the Illinois Art Content Test are required for student teaching.

The Time Arts program in the Division of Design appears to be much more aligned with a fine arts approach to the teaching of motion and interactivity than to design. It is not clear how or if the program relates to Communication Design and how motion and interaction are taught within that program, which may affect the recruiting for both programs.

Record Keeping

Staffing and space for physical records appears to be adequate. Most student records are kept online, with a degree audit capability. The Secretary to the Undergraduate Advisor is responsible for maintaining departmental advisement files. Designated individuals in the school are able to access student transcripts online from the University Office of Registration and Records with secured passwords. Students' files are updated with semester advisement sessions, portfolio reviews, clinical observation forms (Art Education majors), and other documentation and correspondence relative to the student. Appropriate procedures appear to be followed regarding disposition of records.

Advisement

The single Coordinator of Undergraduate Advisement has primary responsibility for advising the 700 students enrolled in the School of Art. Some assistance with schedule planning and general education and major requirements is provided by faculty and specially trained Art student Peer Advisors.

This is almost twice as many students as should be expected. It appears that the advisor is well-respected by faculty, students, and administration, but is spread too thin to provide students as much access as would be desired. She is very knowledgeable about the academic programs. The students would benefit greatly by having an additional advisor. Student Peer Advisors reduce the burden on the advisor and they appear to be very helpful for certain types of advising, but their continuous turnover, and the resulting need for new training, adds another task to the advisor's plate. At the same time, overall advising would be greatly helped by increased understanding by faculty of catalog requirements.

MyNIU, the institutional software tool for tracking student progress through the program has a number of rough edges that create unreasonable problems for student advising. It is hoped these issues may be resolved by the university. Degree Progress Reports are available to students and advisors online.

I. Published Materials and Web Sites

See *NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, ILL; Self Study, pps. 37-38; University and School websites; School Publications.

The undergraduate and graduate catalogs are available online and can be accessed via university,

college and school web pages. The School of Art web site is a comprehensive preview of the program, areas of study, students and their work, and faculty. The site also provides an up-to-date events calendar, news items, and a Facebook page. There are printed publications to promote the school and its various degrees and concentrations, as well as handbook publications. All of the school publications and web sites appear to be accurate, clear, helpful, and comprehensive.

J. Branch Campuses, External Programs, Use of the Institution's Name for Educational Activities Operated Apart from the Main Campus or the Primary Educational Program (not applicable)

K. Community Involvement; Articulation With Other Schools

See NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, II.J.; Self Study, pps. 38-40; On-site interviews with Faculty and Administrators)

Community Involvement

The School of Art appears to meet NASAD standards with regard to publishing formal relationships and policies concerning community involvement that are connected to curricular offerings. It appears that they have considerable commitment to community outreach, including a cooperative effort by all three academic units in the College of Visual and Performing Arts with the Northern Illinois University Community School of the Arts. The goal of this Community School of the Arts is the "promotion of artistic growth among all people in the community" and lifelong learning, with responsibility for publication of all materials about its programs housed in the College Office of External Programming.

The college offers non-credit adult courses in studio disciplines and administers a series of children's art classes, a 4-day children's summer arts experience, a residential summer arts camp for high school students, and a sequence of Saturday classes for primary school children. Significant involvement is maintained by the Art Education program, with supervised undergraduate majors teaching in the Saturday Art Classes. The Division of Art Education appears to maintain a very viable connection to the community through its partnerships and interaction with several regional school districts.

A \$5 million Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant partners the School of Art with the College of Education at NIU, Rock Valley College, and the Rockford Public Schools. Another partnership with the College of Education operates a K-5 involvement with an elementary school in DeKalb.

The Visiting Artists/Scholars Program, while intended for the school's general art program, also provides open access for the community at large. The Art Education faculty regularly offers workshops, conferences, and in-service training for area art teachers. Art History faculty hold an annual Art History Student Symposium, to which they invite students and faculty at select area institutions, and the School recently hosted a regional AIGA conference for students.

Articulation with Other Schools

The university participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) of the Illinois Board of Higher Education to facilitate transfer credit through common course content and classroom hours. Faculty from the School of Art have been actively engaged in the development of state

guidelines.

Appropriate faculty appear to review studio courses for articulation based on NASAD standards. The School of Art accepts foundation studio courses and a majority of first level media courses from most Illinois community colleges in the region. Faculty commented that there are resulting discrepancies in the level of accomplishment of students entering the mid-level courses, requiring accommodation in the curriculum and class structure. This might be resolved with stricter portfolio requirements in studio articulation.

L. Non-Degree-Granting Programs for the Community (not applicable)

M. Standards for (1) Independent Postsecondary Art/design Units Without Regional or Other Institutional Accreditation and/or (2) Proprietary Institutions (not applicable)

N. Programs, Degrees, and Curricula

1. Specific Curricula

Baccalaureate Programs

Bachelor of Arts - 4 years: Art History

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Arts in Art History requires 122 units and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in the liberal arts with a concentration in art history through a curriculum combining art history and general liberal arts studies. 30% of the coursework is in art history in both western and non-western traditions. This is supplemented with 6 units (5%) in studio art coursework and 12 units of foreign language. The general study and elective requirements enable students to take coursework in literature, history, anthropology, archaeology, and other areas. The Art History course, "Art Historical Methodology", provides a seminar experience while addressing the research methodologies and standards of the profession, and requires a research paper on a specialized interest of the student and an oral class presentation. It appears that all curricular expectations are in agreement with NASAD standards for the liberal arts degree in Art History (*NASAD Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, VII.F.)
- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The student work appears to be of good quality.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.

- (6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems well suited for providing students with an overview of the history of art and visual culture; an understanding of how art and culture have shaped each other throughout history; a familiarity with research skills; an excellent humanities background; and a good preparation for continued study at the graduate level.

Bachelor of Arts - 4 years: Art

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Arts in Art requires 122 units and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in the liberal arts with a focus on art while maintaining flexibility in elective work in other disciplines. 27% of the coursework is in studio art and design and 10% is in the history of western and non-western art history. The general study and elective requirements enable students to take coursework in literature, history, anthropology, archaeology, and other areas. It appears that all curricular expectations are in agreement with NASAD standards for the liberal arts degree in Art (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, VILE.)
- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear to be consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The student work appears to be of good quality.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NAS AD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems well suited for students who desire a focus on art and design in the context of a broader, liberal arts education. Student who graduate are expected to understand the nature of contemporary thinking on art and design, and have gained at least a rudimentary discernment of quality in design projects and works of art.

Bachelor of Science - 4 years: Education (Art Education)

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Science in Education in Art Education requires 124 semester hours for completion of the degree and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in the liberal arts with a focus on art while maintaining flexibility in elective work in other disciplines. 28% of coursework is in Art Education, with 24% in Supportive courses in Foundations and Studio Art, and 10% in Art and Design History. 51% of coursework is in Studio or related areas; 38% of coursework is in General Studies requirements. The required 14 hours of clinical Experiences and Student Teaching combined with Art Education coursework appear to be in agreement with NASAD standards for the liberal arts degree in Art Education (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, VII.B. and XIA.2.).

While the percentage of General Studies courses, at 38%, appears slightly lower than NASAD recommendations, sequence of studio course requirements appear to meet the spirit of the NASAD recommendation that "member institutions should focus their undergraduate teacher education efforts on BFA-type programs that provide the structure and sequence for a primary emphasis in studio work."

- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The work of the students appears to be of good quality and breadth. Studio work showed mastery of various techniques and media.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems very effective overall.

Bachelor of Fine Arts - 2-D Studio (Drawing, Illustration, Painting, Printmaking)

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2-D Studio requires 122 units and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in fundamental principles and techniques with opportunities for emphasis in the areas of drawing, illustration, painting, or printmaking. 30% of the coursework is focused specifically in one of the above specialization areas. 27% is in support art coursework, and 10% is in Art History. Students are provided with the essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities for this professional degree. It appears that all curricular expectations are in agreement with NASAD standards for the professional degree in 2-D Studio (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, DC.H.).
- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear to be consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The student work appears to be of good quality.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems well suited for students who desire a focus on art and design in the context of a broader, liberal arts education. Student who graduate are expected to understand the nature of contemporary thinking on art and design, and have gained at least a rudimentary discernment of quality in design projects and works of art.

Bachelor of Science - 4 years: Education (Art Education)

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Science in Education in Art Education requires 124 semester hours for completion of the degree and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in the liberal arts with a focus on art while maintaining flexibility in elective work in other disciplines. 28% of coursework is in Art Education, with 24% in Supportive courses in Foundations and Studio Art, and 10% in Art and Design History. 51% of coursework is in Studio or related areas; 38% of coursework is in General Studies requirements. The required 14 hours of clinical Experiences and Student Teaching combined with Art Education coursework appear to be in agreement with NASAD standards for the liberal arts degree in Art Education (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, VII.B. and XIA.2.).

While the percentage of General Studies courses, at 38%, appears slightly lower than NASAD recommendations, sequence of studio course requirements appear to meet

the spirit of the NASAD recommendation that "member institutions should focus their undergraduate teacher education efforts on BFA-type programs that provide the structure and sequence for a primary emphasis in studio work."

- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The work of the students appears to be of good quality and breadth. Studio work showed mastery of various techniques and media.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems very effective overall.

Bachelor of Fine Arts - 2-D Studio (Drawing, Illustration, Painting, Printmaking)

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2-D Studio requires 122 units and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in fundamental principles and techniques with opportunities for emphasis in the areas of drawing, illustration, painting, or printmaking. 30% of the coursework is focused specifically in one of the above specialization areas. 27% is in support art coursework, and 10% is in Art History. Students are provided with the essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities for this professional degree. It appears that all curricular expectations are in agreement with NASAD standards for the professional degree in 2-D Studio (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, K.H.).
- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The student work in 2D Studio appears to be excellent overall. A brief description for the specializations follows:

Drawing: A large number of drawings ranging from beginning to advanced and graduate were on display. These works demonstrated appropriate masteries with a variety of drawing materials (pencil, charcoal, ink, and mixed media), representational and mark-making skills, and conceptual depth/breadth in accordance with level.

Painting: A large number of paintings ranging from beginning to advanced and graduate were on display. These works demonstrated masteries with an acrylic and oil painting and mixed media, representational and non-representational approaches, and conceptual depth in accordance with level. The watercolor work on display was not as strong as (and seemed to lack the energy of) the oil and acrylic painting.

Printmaking: A large number of prints ranging from beginning to advanced and graduate were on display. These works demonstrated masteries in lithography, intaglio, relief, and silkscreen. The work combined personal invention with strong technical skills, and it was strong conceptually.

Illustration: A large sampling of illustrations from beginning to advanced were on display. These works demonstrated masteries with both computer and hand techniques, as well as their combinations. The work was innovative, highly skilled and professional. The reviewers appreciated the integration of color, drawing, painting, and design skills of the illustration work.

- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.

(6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems very effective overall.

Bachelor of Fine Arts - 3-D Studio (Ceramics, Fiber, Metalwork and Jewelry, Sculpture)

(1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought

(2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Fine Arts in 3-D Studio requires 122 units and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in fundamental principles and techniques with opportunities for emphasis in the areas of Ceramics, Metalwork & Jewelry, Fiber Arts (most easily equated to NASAD standard for "Textile Design"), and Sculpture. 27% of the coursework (32% for Fiber Arts) is focused specifically in one of the above specialization areas. 24-30% is in support art coursework (24% for Fiber Arts, 29% for Ceramics, and 30% for Metalwork & Jewelry and Sculpture), and 10% is in Art History. Students are provided with the essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities for this professional degree. It appears that all curricular expectations are in agreement with NASAD standards for the professional degree in 3-D Studio (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010; October 2009 Edition, IX.A.;H; N; S.*)

(3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.

(4) Student Work: The student work appears to be of overall good quality.

A brief description for the specializations follows:

Ceramics: A sufficient number of ceramics work ranging from beginning to advanced and graduate were on display. These works demonstrated appropriate masteries with a variety of materials and techniques, and conceptual depth/breadth in accordance with level. Upper level ceramics work was above average and there was a good range of exploration.

Sculpture: A sufficient number of sculpture ranging from beginning to advanced and graduate were on display. These works demonstrated appropriate masteries with a variety of materials and techniques, and conceptual depth/breadth in accordance with level.

Fiber Arts: A sufficient number of examples ranging from beginning to advanced and graduate were on display. These works demonstrated appropriate masteries with a variety of materials and techniques, and conceptual depth/breadth in accordance with level.

Metalwork & Jewelry: Work from Metalwork & Jewelry was somewhat limited in what was displayed but appeared to be of good quality. These works demonstrated appropriate masteries with a variety of materials and techniques, and conceptual depth/breadth in accordance with level.

(5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.

(6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems very effective overall.

Bachelor of Fine Arts - 4 years: Design (Photography, Time Arts, Visual Communication)

(1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought

- (2) Curriculum: The Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2-D Studio requires 122 units and it appears to meet the appropriate NASAD standards for this degree. Students achieve a thorough grounding in fundamental principles and techniques with opportunities for emphasis in the areas of Photography, Time Arts (most easily equated to the NASAD standard for "Digital Media"), or Visual Communication (Graphic Design). 30-34% of the coursework (30% for Photography, 32% for Visual Communication, and 34% for Time Arts) is focused specifically in one of the above specialization areas. 22-26% is in support coursework in art and design (26% for Photography, 25% for Visual Communication, and 22% for Time Arts), and 10% is in Art/Design History. Studies in the major area, supportive courses in art and design, and studies in visual arts/design histories total at least 65% of the curriculum (66% for Photography, 67% for Visual Communication, and 67% for Time Arts). Students are provided with the essential competencies, experiences, and opportunities for this professional degree. It appears that all curricular expectations are in agreement with NASAD standards for the professional degree in Design (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, IX.B, J, P.)
- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The student work was of mixed quality from one program to another. Photography work was very well displayed in both print and digital formats and was of very good quality. Time Arts work appeared to be highly conceptual with good technical skills, and was well displayed. Student work from the Visual Communication area was noticeably lacking in quantity and was not displayed in a manner that facilitated understanding of the project statements or scope of the projects. The visitors found it difficult to determine if appropriate levels of design theory and complexity of application are provided at the upper levels. Examples of print projects did not allow for complete evaluation of scope of the projects. Interactive projects were displayed with a single screen shot, which did not allow for any understanding of the scope of the project or the nature of student understanding of sophisticated interface design and theory. Discussion with one faculty member in the program did not yield a sense that students are getting experience with more than basic web design.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: There appears to be a need for review of the intent of the programs in the BFA Design area. Photography appears to be the most clearly defined as a professional program. Time Arts appears to do well in placing students in professional situations before and after graduation, but the focus of the work has the appearance of being more conceptually based and with a stronger affinity to the work of the Fine Arts programs. The Visual Communication program appears to be suffering from a number of concerns: faculty retirements without replacement, resulting in a rather stagnant approach to design; unclear goals for the program; apparent lack of interdisciplinary interest; unclear communication and recruitment approach; strong art faculty in the foundations program may potentially influence students' choices of whether to go into art or design. These concerns are resulting in lower admission and retention, and the lower student numbers compound the problem further. It is suggested that the School of Art evaluate the mission and vision of the Visual Communication program.

Graduate Programs

Master of Arts - 1 year: Art

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Master of Arts in Art requires 30 units, 70% of which are studio related and 20% are art/design history. As an initial graduate degree in art, the curriculum presents appropriate professional intensity and standards. It appears to prepare students to be professional artists/designers with mastery of skills, knowledge, and disciplinary engagement (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XV.A.) Candidates for this MA may specialize in any or several of the school's art or design specializations including ceramics, drawing, fiber, metals, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, time arts, and visual communications. In this degree, there is an atmosphere that encourages interdisciplinarity and cross-pollination. It is not clear that the institution meets the curricular standard that "at least half of all graduate classes must be intended for graduate students only" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: December 2009 Edition*, XH1C.1a).
- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: It was difficult to ascertain whether the graduate work shown was from MA or MFA students. The graduate student work observed was very good overall, distinguished by technical and conceptual depth, innovation, uniqueness of style, and interdisciplinary and mixed media approaches. The viewers did not see examples of graduate level visual communications.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: The program seems effective in many respects. However, it appears this degree is underutilized and is essentially a "fall back" program for students who do not pass the review for continuation in the MFA program. Enrollment is exceptionally low, and the degree does not appear to be highly promoted. In addition, the reviewers were concerned that some students (i.e., particularly specializing in the design disciplines) may not have sufficient student cohorts for them to benefit from a viable "community of students and faculty to permit the formal sharing of experience, ideas, and knowledge" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XIII.B.4.)

Master of Arts - 1 year: Art History

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Master of Arts in Art History requires 30 units and it appears to meet NASAD Standards for this degree in most regards. The curriculum assures that students will acquire a broad knowledge of the history of art, as well as applicable theory and criticism. Students are required to have a reading knowledge of one foreign language. Eighteen semester hours of art history electives allow for breadth and depth, but it is not clear from the degree requirements that all students will develop a specialization in a more limited area (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XV.B.2.). Additionally, it is not clear how the institution meets curricular standards that "at least half of all graduate classes must be intended for graduate students only" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XIII.C. 1 .a.).
- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.

- (4) Student Work: The student work appears to be of good quality.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program probably attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree. However, it appears that the curriculum may allow students to graduate without meeting the NASAD requirement for specialization.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: As an initial graduate program, the MA in Art History is well suited for students who wish to continue their studies at the PhD level. It is also useful to those who wish to teach Art History in institutions that do not require the terminal degree.

Master of Science - 1 year: Art (Art Education)

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Master of Science in Art (Art Education) requires 33 units, 36% of which are art education related and 64% are supportive courses in art education. It prepares students for leadership in the discipline in the areas of philosophy, pedagogy, and child development in art. As the professional degree in art education, the curriculum meets NASAD standards for graduate degrees in Art Education by combining practice-oriented study, inquiry, investigation, research, and scholarship in various ways that focus on the advanced preparation of practitioners, scholars, and/or researchers (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XIII.A.5 .c.)

It should be noted that there are two distinct populations served by this program: those who are either certified to teach (k-12) or those who are seeking such certification and who have a bachelor's degree in an art-related field. For the latter group, the program serves as the foundation for earning their certification while also completing higher-level coursework in Art Education. All students complete three core courses to assure thorough grounding in the history, philosophy, curricula, and research in the field.

- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title appears consistent with content
- (4) Student Work: The student work appears to be of very good quality and scope, and included examples of the students' own work as well as examples of curricular development and K-12 student work.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: This program seems highly effective overall.

Master of Fine Arts - 2 years: Art (Ceramics, Drawing, Fiber, Metalwork and Jewelry, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture, Time Arts, Visual Communications)

- (1) Status: Renewal of Final Approval is sought
- (2) Curriculum: The Master of Fine Arts in Art requires 60 units, 75% of which are studio related and 25% are art/design history. As the terminal degree in art, the curriculum presents appropriate professional intensity and high standards. It prepares students to be professional artists/designers and/or university art teachers with top level masteries, skills, knowledge, and entrepreneurial capabilities (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XVI.A.) Candidates for this MFA may specialize in any or several of the school's art or design specializations including ceramics, drawing, fiber,

metals, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, time arts, and visual communications. In this degree, there is an atmosphere that encourages interdisciplinarity and cross-pollination. It is not clear how the institution meets curricular standards that "at least half of all graduate classes must be intended for graduate students only" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XIII.C.1.a.). It is not clear that Visual Communications graduates students are sufficient in numbers of cohorts to create a viable "community of students and faculty to permit the formal sharing of experience, ideas, and knowledge" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XIII.B.4.)

- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The student work observed was excellent overall, distinguished by technical and conceptual depth, innovation, uniqueness of style, and interdisciplinary and mixed media approaches. The viewers did not see examples of graduate level visual communications.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: The program seems very effective in most respects.

Doctor of Education - 3 years: Curriculum and Instruction (Art Education)

- (1) Status: renewal of Final Approval for Listing is sought

The Ed.D program, located in the College of Education, was the doctoral art education program until recently when the Ph.D. in Art Education was approved and implemented. The Ed.D now has a very small number of students who did not transfer into the Ph.D. when it became available, and who are slowly continuing through the program. For all intents and purposes, the Ph.D. appears to be in the process of replacing the Ed.D.

It is not clear what the institution intends to do with this degree program, now that the Ph.D. has been instituted. The institution is encouraged to clarify and submit any additional information regarding this program with its Optional Response.

Doctor of Philosophy - 3 years: Art Education

- (1) Status: renewal of Plan Approval is sought.
- (2) Curriculum: The Doctor of Philosophy in Art Education requires 60 semester hours beyond the masters degree and 90 semester hours beyond the baccalaureate degree, including 9 semester hours of research methodology, 12-15 hours of cognate courses that address various aspects of visual culture, and 15 semester hours of core courses in policy studies for administration of art programs, research and theory in art-based educational programs, critical theories addressing art and culture, and study of philosophies of art and aesthetics. Admission to the program requires some kind of teaching experience through undergraduate or graduate study or to have taught at the K-12 level. A dissertation candidacy examination is required and doctoral work culminates in a dissertation of original work. As the terminal degree it emphasizes rigorous research, theory and philosophical development, and applications of new knowledge in art and visual culture. It provides art educators the opportunity to continue their research in the field to a terminal degree, and is intended to prepare them to be researchers, scholars, and leaders in the field of art education at all levels. The curriculum meets NASAD standards for graduate degrees in Art Education by combining practice-oriented study, inquiry, investigation, research, and scholarship in

various ways that focus on the advanced preparation of practitioners, scholars, and/or researchers.

- (3) Title/Content Consistency: The title and content of this program appear consistent.
- (4) Student Work: The student work appears to be of good quality.
- (5) Student Evaluation: Students who complete this program appear to attain the prescribed NASAD sets of knowledge, masteries, and experiences for this degree.
- (6) Overall Effectiveness: The program appears to be very effective. It should be noted that this is a new degree program and largely replaces the previous option of a Specialization in Art Education under the Ed. D. degree in Curriculum and Instruction offered through NIU's College of Education. There are currently 14 students enrolled in the School of Art's Ph.D. in Art Education program; one degree candidate has graduated and several are expected to graduate shortly. However, the reviewers have some concern about the adequacy of the number of senior faculty for a doctoral program of this size, particularly in light of the impending retirement of one senior faculty member and the partial loss of another to administrative duties as School Director.

2. Study of the Transcripts of Recent Graduates and Comparison with Catalog Statements

Baccalaureate Programs

Transcripts for the above categories were provided on site. These were reviewed during and after the visit, and they appear to adhere to their respective degree requirements.

Graduate Programs

Transcripts for the above categories were provided on site for the most part. These were reviewed during and after the visit, and they were found to adhere to their respective degree requirements. Only one PhD Art Education transcript was provided because there was only one person who has been awarded the degree during the past three years. There were no recipients for the EdD during the past three years.

3. Art/design Studies for the General Public

The School of Art does not appear to have a non-credit/credit art program for non-degree-seeking students. In cooperation with the College of Visual and Performing Arts' Office of External Programs, it offers Saturday classes for community grade school children. In addition, the Office of External Programs works with the art education faculty in arranging a visual art camp each summer for high school students. The camp runs for one week and provides a good recruiting mechanism for the school. The Office of External Programs also organizes short-term, non credit studio classes in life drawing and ceramics for interested adults; these may be taught by either School of Art faculty or outside individuals. (See Self-Study, pp. 107-108)

4. Visuals Arts in General Education

Northern Illinois University mandates as part of a general education requirement for all students that includes at least 9-12 semester credit hours in "Humanities and the Arts" and 3-6 hours in "Interdisciplinary Studies." Students are limited to no more than three courses from any one department and may not count these courses in their major unless it is for a second

major. The School of Art offers nine 3-credit hour courses that many be used to satisfy the general education credit; 8 of these fall under the "Humanities and the Arts" group and one is included under "Interdisciplinary Studies." These courses are all offered by the Art History program and provide a range of Western and non-Western cultural and ethnic interests. One course is specifically for non-majors, ARTH 282, and it maintains good enrollment. Overall enrollment of non-majors in the other courses is less than 20%.

Studio courses are open to non-majors when space is available and with priority to majors. However, these courses do not seem to meet the university general education requirements.

Two additional courses are offered on a periodic basis by the Art Education program specifically for non-majors, and are directed at the needs of Elementary or Special Education majors who are required to take courses outside their department. (See Self Study, pp. 106-108)

5. Exhibitions

The School of Art has spaces available for satisfying its various purposes including the exhibition of student and faculty work, the display of art in support of its curriculum, and for sharing its exhibitions with the community. The NIU Art Museum in Altgeld Hall exhibits curated shows of works from its permanent collection and from beyond, and there are opportunities for the art/design faculty and students to engage in the planning and curatorial aspects of its programs. The Jack Olsen Gallery is the School of Art's main gallery. It is used for faculty, students and artists/designers from beyond the campus. The 214 Gallery is the main student gallery. Each of these spaces are professionally managed (or overseen), securable, formal spaces. Additionally, there are numerous glass cases in the Arends Hall hallways, and both of the graduate studio spaces have galleries.

O. Art/design Unit Evaluation, Planning, and Projections

1. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections Development

The school's processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its commitment to shared governance. In a manner that assures school-wide representation, the Acting Director works with the Executive Council to develop strategies for addressing issues of concern. This approach to planning appears to be effective, and has earned the trust of the faculty, staff, and higher administration. As with the other programs at Northern Illinois University, the School of Art undergoes an intensive institutional review every seven years, and provides annual assessment updates that analyze student achievement against expected standards (including any curricular adjustments these may necessitate.) Student achievement is assessed through admission and final portfolio reviews, capstone courses, comprehensive examinations, and thesis examinations. There is every indication that the program does an excellent job of using student achievement indicators in an ongoing fashion to identify and address its needs.

Projected improvements and future issues, as outlined in the Self-Study, are well considered, practical responses to the conditions facing the program. The school is commended for its ability to confront its problems as opportunities. In general, its responses to problems appear resourceful, creative, and innovative. Several plans are not problem-driven and instead represent exciting efforts to build upon program and institutional strengths. Most notably are the plans to develop international online curricula in Art Education and the headway made

with ARTLAB to foster interdisciplinary thematic programming. Further comments about projected improvements and future plans will be provided in Sections P. and Q. of this report.

2. Completeness and Effectiveness of Self-Study

The Self-Study is an excellent document. Exemplifying thoroughness, completeness, and effectiveness, it demonstrates the school's commitment to sincere introspection, self-analysis, and objective reporting.

P. Standards Summary

1. It is not clear that "ventilation and safety treatments appropriate to" the Arts Building painting studio, sculpture facility, ceramic glaze area, and art annex are provided (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010* October 2009 Edition, II.F.1.g.; Visitors' Report, Section F.).
2. It is not clear that the Art Annex, Pleasant Street building, and Arends Hall are absolutely "accessible, safe, and secure and meet the standards of local fire and health codes" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, II.F.1.h.). This refers to outdoor lighting, emergency evacuation access/signage, water leakage, and supervision (re: 4th floor woodshop) as enumerated in Section F. of this report.
3. Regarding the Master of Arts and Master of Fine Arts, it is not clear that "at least one half of all graduate classes must be intended for graduate students only" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010* October 2009 Edition, XII.C.1.a.; Visitors' Report, Section N.).
4. It is not clear that there are sufficient enrollments in the Master of Fine Arts - 2 years: Art (Visual Communications) program to create a viable "community of students and faculty to permit the formal sharing of experience, ideas, and knowledge" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: October 2009 Edition*, XIII.BA; Visitors' Report, Section B and N.).

Q. Overview, Summary Assessment, and Recommendations for the Program

1. Strengths

- A strong and capable upper administration that seems to have an appreciation for the School of Art-its programs, faculty, majors, and contributions to the general education of the institution overall. Included among these are the Executive Vice President and Provost; Dean, College of Visual and Performing Art; and Deputy Provost and former Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts.
- A strong and capable administrative team within the School of Art. This includes a Director (acting) who has earned the trust, support and appreciation from both faculty and staff, as well as one with a strong record of scholarship and professional service. The Assistant Director (acting), who demonstrates excellent administrative capabilities coupled with the ability to work well as a part of the team. An excellent Executive Council comprised of the Director and Assistant Director along with the Division Heads (Art Education, Art History, Design, and Fine Arts), and the Graduate Coordinator, that works together effectively in a spirit full representation and shared governance.
- An outstanding faculty, distinguished by such important characteristics as recognized prominence in the professional arena, dedication to the education and professional

- preparation of students, overall sense of collegiality and shared intentions, and a collective appreciation for both, school and institution.
- A capable and loyal administrative staff that effectively undertakes an array of key responsibilities in an environment centered around student needs.
 - Of the staff members, the school's advisor was frequently singled out for praise by faculty, students, and administrators.
 - A well organized, highly developed and successful curriculum that proceeds from a strong foundation program into a variety of excellent disciplinary specializations. Some of the hallmarks of the overall curriculum include conceptual depth, cross-disciplinary experimentation, art historical depth and understanding, creative freedom, multiculturalism, and regular contact with the Chicago artistic resources.
 - A strong student body overall, one that demonstrates talent, intelligence, comprehension, creativity and dedication. There are a number of exceptional individuals whose work and accomplishments compete with the best in the country - this is true for lower division, upper division and graduate students.
 - Overall excellence of facilities, including "state of the art" equipment and well organized spaces in many instances, but with some areas in need of improvement.
 - An ample number of professional and laboratory exhibition spaces for students; a solid museum program that provides both, contemporary and historical exhibitions; and an active and enthusiastic museum studies certificate program that comprised of wide variety of students from different backgrounds.
 - Ample and excellent studio spaces for graduate students, faculty, and select advanced undergraduate students. There appear to be facility problems associated with the studio spaces that are addressed elsewhere in the report.
 - Innovative special programs: ARTLAB, the NIU Community School of the Arts including Saturday art classes, regular field trips to Chicago, and online coursework utilizing "Second Life".
 - Most disciplines have observable strengths and demonstrate themselves to be among the best in the country. The following list outlines some of the more noteworthy examples:
 - An internationally recognized art education program that is widely considered to be among the country's top programs. The Art Education faculty exert a global influence on the field, and it attracts outstanding students from around the world.
 - A professionally active, highly motivated, and diverse art history faculty with particularly unique strengths in a variety of non-western disciplines. The reviewers were impressed with this program's philosophical commitments to critical reasoning, inquiry, and understanding - for their majors, the other art/design majors, and the university's broader general education populations,
 - A highly esteemed printmaking program, recognized nationally for its quality, current faculty and a legacy of excellence. The student work observed was of consistently high quality and notably diverse stylistically and technically,
 - A painting program with a professionally active and diverse faculty. The student work was represented by a large number of excellently crafted paintings that ranged from small to large scale, representational to abstract, classical to cutting edge,
 - An excellent sculpture program represented by limited number of actual sculptures in conjunction with substantial photographic documentation. The reviewers were particularly impressed with the conceptually rich, materially diverse, well crafted, and provocative themes observed in many of the works photographed,
 - The metals and fibers programs were distinguished by the excellent craft, material innovation, experimentation, and diversity of forms observed in their students' work,
 - Although the visitors were struck by the small amount of ceramic work on display, the

- o utilitarian undergraduate work observed was technically adept, and the more experimental graduate work was especially beautiful,
 - o The illustration program produces exceptionally high level work, showing a good diversity of individual styles with excellent craft and professionalism,
 - o The photography program demonstrates excellent work with commitment to traditional and digital media,
 - o Time arts shows great potential for developing a solid reputation for conceptual and technical excellence.
- An excellent University Library committed to serving to the art/design program needs and its exhaustive collection of art/design monographs and periodicals.

2. Recommendations for Short-term Improvement

The primary issues facing the School of Art and the visitor's short term recommendations for improvement fall under the broad categories of facilities, enrollments, curriculum, and appointed personnel.

Enrollments

The school has already taken immediate steps to address its enrollment declines by hiring a recruitment officer to promote the program. She does this by attending national portfolio reviews, visiting regional high schools, developing recruitment literature, and devising recruitment strategies. The School will want to track and assess enrollments as it moves into the future.

Appointed Personnel

At present, the school has several gaping holes in its permanent faculty and staff due to retirements, resignations, administrative appointments, and identified new needs. These include faculty positions in time arts, ceramic, art education (2), and foundations, plus a staff position in advising. The visitors consider each of these to be vital to the schools' ability to maintain in the respective disciplines. Indeed, very strong cases can be made for filling each of them. Given the current economic conditions, the institution has had to place indefinite freezes on all but the most critical of its vacancies. In the short term, the school is encouraged to prioritize its faculty and staff needs by taking stock of how vital each position is to the school's overall mission. Having accomplished this, the school will be best prepared when/if it can advocate for its hiring needs.

3. Primary Futures Issues

The most obvious of the school's future issues are inextricably tied to the state's economic crisis. At present, the institution knows it must prepare for budget reductions, but due to the inability of the state legislators to resolve state budgets, the institution operates in the absence of an allocated state budget. This requires planning in an environment of extreme uncertainty, one that is passed on to each of its units, including the School of Art. The recommendations from Section Q.2. above for short-term improvements, have budgetary implications and likewise do the recommendations from the following Section Q.4. for long-term improvements. As a consequence, the school must pursue its objectives with a mind to multiple economic scenarios. Accordingly, it needs to take stock of its overall mission and to prioritize its objectives along the lines of facilities, enrollments, curriculum, and appointed personnel with respect to its foreseeable economic scenarios. In this way, it can be poised to respond with deliberation and forethought when its economic circumstances become apparent. The school's administration, faculty, and staff seem to have a realistic understanding about the

interdependence of mission, size/scope, and resources, and they appear to be able to approach proactively plan for the future with experience and objectivity.

4. Recommendations for Long-term Improvements

In most cases, recommendations for long-term improvements are extensions of those listed previously under short-term improvements, and they fall under the same general categories:

Facilities

The school is encouraged to address the issues from Section G of this report regarding the Schools' Visual Resources Center by re-examining purposes, functions and timetable for the VRC's analog to digital conversion projects in order to better utilize its current staff and space. Coupled with this should be a process to determine how the VRC's current resources can be more broadly used to serve the greater School interests.

Curriculum

The school is encouraged look at several aspects of its curriculum. The Self-Study articulates how the enrollment declines in some senior classes, combined with space reductions and faculty losses, might be addressed through "a more interdisciplinary curriculum model facilitating student progress to their senior year that is not locked into specific media pathways" (See SS.p.121). The visitors concur, but offer a caution to not lose sight of the NASAD standard to prepare students with the "perceptual acuity, conceptual understanding, and technical facility at a professional level for their field(s)" (NASAD *Handbook 2009-2010: December 2009 Edition*, VIII.B.1.b.).

Similarly, as explained in Sections B. and N. of this report, some graduate programs may not have sufficient enrollments. The school may want to consider how similar curricular adjustments might address low enrolled graduate programs. In the NIU Visual Communication program appears to be philosophically isolated from photography and time arts which, in turn, are more philosophically aligned with the Fine Arts Studio disciplines. The school should consider some sort of philosophical realignment of its programs to assure larger disciplinary cohorts for its graduate students.

Although the visitors were impressed with the quality of traditional drawings and the two and three dimensional designs produced in the Foundations program, they concurred with the school's belief that an updating of the curriculum to include digital and interdisciplinary practice would better serve student and program interests. (See SS.p.121)

The school may want to consider how adjusting its curriculum and degree requirements could address its faculty teaching load issues. For examples, the school could a) reduce its undergraduate degree requirements from 122 units in most cases (120 units is not common); b) admit undergraduate studio and design students with the Bachelor of Arts as the default, while limiting the number of BFA's to a smaller number (thus reducing the number of required seats for majors); or c) identify classes which could be increased in size.

Enrollments

The school is encouraged to continue in its analysis of how enrollments, facilities, curriculum, teaching loads and faculty size impact each other, with a long term goal of determining a desired optimum balance between them.

Appointed Personnel

Faculty Recruitment and Retention are increasingly becoming visible as problems. There is evidence to suggest that uncompetitive salaries and heavy teaching loads are compromising the school's ability to recruit and retain the high quality faculty that have historically distinguished it. If the institution (or school) is unable to offer higher salaries, the school risks a lowering of faculty quality and prestige over time. While this may be an unavoidable circumstance, the institution is encouraged to keep it in mind.

The other contributing factor, heavy teaching loads, may be more easily dealt with. Teaching loads might be reduced without diminishing student numbers by making the kinds of long-term curricular adjustments suggested above. Such a move would be supported by that part of the university's mission devoted to "research and artistry", as well as with its inclusion in the Research Universities—High Activity category of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

At present, the School of Art is very fortunate to have an exceptionally capable staff employee responsible for its undergraduate advising. With over 700 advisees, this individual accomplishes the work of at least two people. She does this through careful, but tight scheduling. Based upon student comments made to the visitors as well as the transcript reviews, it appears that she does an unbelievably good job. The visitors wonder at her ability to continue at her present capacity over the long term without either suffering burnout or being recruited elsewhere. The hire of a second advisor would be a prudent action.