UCC Program Review Committee summary of review

Program – Art + Design

This program includes the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- B.A. Art History
- B.A. Art History, Honors Tutorial College
- Art History minor
- B.F.A. Studio Art
- B.A. Studio Art, Honors Tutorial College
- B.F.A. Studio Art, Honors Tutorial College
- B.A. Studio Art
- Studio Art minor
- B.F.A. Graphic Design
- B.F.A. Interior Architecture
- M.A. Art History
- M.F.A. Ceramics
- M.F.A. Printmaking
- M.F.A. Photography
- M.F.A. Painting and Design
- M.F.A. Sculpture
- Museum Studies Certificate
- M.F.A. Graphic Design

Recommendation

This program is found to be viable, see the report that follows for commendations, concerns, and recommendations.

Date of last review – AY 2010

Date of this review – AY 2017

This review has been sent to program director and the dean. Their reports are attached.

This report has been sent to Graduate Council. Their comments are as follows:

“A generally excellent review. Concerns were however raised regarding the negative language describing the Photography program as "mediocre at best”. This was believed to exaggerate a resources issue that could be addressed in order to support the excellent reputation of this program.”
Review Committee Members

External: Robert Shay, University of Kentucky

Internal: Orianna Carter, Krisanna Machtmes, Brian Schoen

1. Program as a whole.

Summation: The reviewers find the School of Art + Design to be viable and an important asset to the university.

a. The School of Art + Design faculty continues to provide exceptional graduate and undergraduate education and maintains a robust research portfolio despite the recent loss of several group 1 faculty lines. As described below the shortage of faculty in some content areas has strained Group 1 faculty ability to serve on the necessary number of MFA projects and fulfill other service and advising responsibilities. The current reliance on partially retired faculty might also suggest the need to find replacement positions in order to continue to provide the necessary courses and mentorship required in the School. This challenge is further complicated by the current budgetary situation and the steady drop in majors as described in greater detail below.

b. The research is very appropriate for the program and exceeds what could be expected of a program of this size and resources. It is, in fact, remarkable given the lack of faculty studio space that is available and the poor conditions of existing facilities. Despite relatively few external granting opportunities in this field, faculty have been very entrepreneurial in pursuing and receiving both internal and external grants. Most faculty maintain high productivity in their respective fields be that studio work, exhibitions, publications in journals, and or books. The School’s merit system assesses and rewards faculty who demonstrate professional achievement at the regional and national level. The School’s meritorious research has garnered accolades which continues to make it a highly ranked national program. According to US World and Report the school is the #33 top School of Art + Design in the country. It also boasts the #3 Ceramics program and the #10 Printmaking program nationwide. The faculty has also started to reach out increasingly to faculty in other disciplines (Communication and Engineering were mentioned specifically) in hopes of pooling resources and to create innovative and mutually beneficial partnerships.
c. The School of Art + Design faculty assesses and rewards service on and off campus. Levels of service appear to be appropriate. The advising of students is generally equitably shared, and students appreciated the attention they received. The school has been particularly active in organizing visiting presentations and exhibits and has been deeply involved in community events such as Honey for the Heart, the Kennedy Art Museum, and other activities. Part of their recruitment efforts also have set priorities of expanding community outreach to high schools. The school is able to fulfill its service mission to the university and the state of Ohio.

d. The biggest challenge facing the school had been the disrepair of its physical facilities and insufficient space in both Seigfred Hall and at the Ridges. The classroom spaces in Seigfred are in very poor condition with ceiling tiles collapsing, improper ventilation and air circulation, and equipment that is often breaking down. The first stage of renovations are much anticipated and needed, and faculty in the school are anxious to know that they will be part of that process to ensure that the renovations are completed with an eye towards functionality. The second round of renovations, dealing with HVAC and classroom space, will be crucial in bringing the building up to some modicum of standards. The graduate studio space at the Ridges is also in very poor condition, with some concerns over security due to inability to lock doors leading to uninhabited portions of the building. Despite these poor conditions the School continues to provide a good education and to consider how to adapt to changing disciplinary practices, including the move towards increased digital technologies.

The need to develop those resources and to update existing studio equipment require a steady source of funding that might exceed what the technology fee brings in. Alden Library has extensive resources in Fine Arts, though there is some concern about how reduced staffing of that portion of the library will affect student and faculty’s experiences in access and use of that needed material.

2. Undergraduate Program.

Overview: The School of Art + Design provides teaching excellence to undergraduate students primarily through major-specific, smaller enrollment (15-20) design and studio courses, several large survey courses chiefly aimed at non-majors, and occasionally through on-line instruction. The Q2S transition brought some major curricular reforms, the implementation of which created some adjustment but is now complete. The school faculty offers diverse courses that support their own, the college’s, and the university’s mission of advancing the “creation and study of the arts.” Undergraduate students we talked with appear to be very pleased with the faculty, though are frustrated with the facilities and equipment challenges. Moving forward, the school, with college and university support, has taken steps to enhance the undergraduate experience by expanding their use of digital technologies and plan for the creation of a “Makers Space.” This appears to be a proactive tactic which addresses current trends in art studies. Efforts are, and ought to be, focused on meeting the challenge of declining enrollments within the school.

a. Is the Department fulfilling its service role, adequately preparing non-majors for future coursework and/or satisfying the needs for general education?
Faculty instruction is chiefly aimed at meeting the demands of their majors, but the School of Art + Design provides a number of popular general studio art courses and lecture courses that help non-majors fulfill university Tier II requirements. For example, in Fall 2016 there were two sections (totaling nearly 300 students) enrolled in ART 1100: Seeing and Knowing the Visual Arts, which meets the Tier II Cross Cultural Perspective. In addition, the school offers five art history courses that meet Tier II requirements in Fine Arts and in Cross Cultural Perspectives. The school has recently started to offer ART 2501: Design History and Social Impact, a lecture, which meets Tier II Cross Cultural Perspective university requirements and has the potential to be a high enrollment course that targets non-majors. Each subfield in ART also has 11xx introductory studio courses available for non-majors. Collectively, these offerings suggest that the School is fulfilling its service role to the University and helping students to fulfill general education requirements.

b. Is the program attracting majors likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of majors appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?

The program is attracting high quality majors, who appear able to meet their 2.75 university and 3.0 major GPA requirements. Those students are interested in a diverse number of fields and potential careers. No data on the demographic or geographic breakdown of students was provided, but the general sense is that the majority of students are white and come from within Ohio, with a sizable minority coming from West Virginia. Recruitment of ethnic diversity has been challenging, though school faculty have pushed the admissions office to target recruitment towards areas with higher percentage of minority populations. Toledo was mentioned as an example. One trend noted by students and faculty is a significant shift towards an overwhelmingly female student body. Students believe that this begins in high school art programs where fewer male students see art as a desirable discipline to study. It may also be that the decline in male high school graduation rates has contributed to a demographic shift, which is campus wide, but for unclear reasons more acutely felt in this School. Either way, it may be worth considering if and how the school can attract more males to the program.

The school’s first-year retention rate over the last seven years has remained fairly consistent, generally ranging between 78% and 81% (with two exceptions of 84% in 2012-13 and 73% 2013-14). The average time to graduation has decreased since the fall 2003 cohort, a credit to the excellent and equitably-shared advising system that the School has in place. The number of students receiving UG degrees has also increased by 15% since 2008-9, though an earlier self-assessment noted some concern of only a 68%, 6-year graduation rate.

The biggest challenge facing the program in the last seven years has been a decline in enrollment from 413 students in 2010-2011 to 318 students presently, 2015-2016. This drop parallels national trends within art, but faculty also believe recruitment efforts have been severely harmed by the terrible conditions of the facilities and perhaps by having fewer group 1 faculty. The first of these reasons is unarguable; the second is more speculative as the largest decline in G1 faculty happened only in the past year (23 to 19), whereas the decline in
enrollment predated that. One puzzling aspect of the enrollment challenge, however, is that admission data suggests continuing, even broadening, interest in OU’s Art & Design programs. The number of applicants has remained relatively stable over the last seven years, and the program had a (7-year) record number of applicants in 2016 (361). At the same time, however, it had only 246 admitted students, a (7-year) record low 68% acceptance rate. The college obviously has little to no control over this low acceptance rate, but it might be worth investigating with admissions about whether this is a trend campus wide or if a higher admission rate is possible. Of those admitted, 81 students (33%) chose to attend OU’s School of Art + Design. In general, the past three years has seen a slight drop off in the yield rate of admitted students, which was previously closer to 38-40%.

The college and school appear aware of these trends and have devoted new resources to the recruitment of students. In particular they have hired a part-time recruitment specialist and increased faculty participation in recruitment events. They also are in the process of, or have recently developed, new promotional material, and high school visits, revising the visitation programs, connecting portfolio reviews with other campus events, and offering and creating high school summer workshops, and art ambassadors. Some faculty complained about the increased demands on their time, but given the nature of their discipline, it is the reviewers’ view that the effort is worth the opportunity to reverse the downward trend in enrollment. Students, staff, and faculty all stressed that the superb faculty remain the program’s best asset; one that can be usefully leveraged to recruiting more and better undergraduate students.

It is also to be hoped that the completion of much needed renovations of Siegfried Hall discussed above will provide a more enticing physical space for prospective students. In addition, there are proposals working their way through the college aimed at amplifying the use of digital technologies, something increasingly desirable for recruiting younger aspiring artists and art students. The planned resurrection of the Art-Education program (through a 4+1 partnership with the College of Education) may also bring back a program that was previously beneficial to the school but which had to be cut due to budget and faculty cuts. One suggestion that emerged from the Dean’s office is the desirability of having School of Art + Design students (incoming but also perhaps currently enrolled) more aggressively applying for scholarship funds. Indeed first and second year students we interviewed did not seem fully aware of such opportunities, though one of the seniors we met with stated they had benefited from them.

c. Does the undergraduate curriculum provide majors with an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers or graduate work following graduation?

Yes, the major curriculum is carefully designed to provide students with a broad and interdisciplinary approach in their first two years through Foundations courses. To the School’s credit, G1 and full-time faculty generally teach these courses. Focusing on initial breadth and interdisciplinary approaches gives students time to decide what degree program and specialty they are most interested in pursuing, a decision usually made at the end of their sophomore year. A large number of students then choose to continue with the BA in Studio Art, which provides the most flexibility. Others apply for the BFA degree in one of the Studio Art
concentrations (ceramics, painting + drawing, photography + integrated media, print-making, or sculpture + expanded practice) or in Graphic Design or Interior Architecture. Students also may remain in the BA in Art History. Enrollment in these areas are currently expressed in the below table:

2015-2016 Undergraduate Enrollments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA Studio Art</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA Art History</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFA Studio Art</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFA Graphic Design</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFA Interior Architecture</td>
<td>30</td>
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The Self-Study includes a thorough description of the values and learning objectives as well as the approaches taken to the curriculum in each of these fields. Also included are lists of the career options that each program is designed to facilitate. Our site visit affirmed that faculty and students are pleased with the type and quality of the curriculum they teach or are taught. Faculty devote considerable time to advising, mentoring, and assessing undergraduate students, who have received internal research awards at an impressive rate. The School of Art + Design has a well-developed curriculum that contributes to the fostering of bright and creative arts who are prepared to move into the field, pursue an advanced degree, or find a job in another area.

d. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the undergraduate program?

This issue remains a source of some disagreement between the school and the college. Recently, retirements have dropped the number of G1 faculty down from 23 (2014-15) to a low of 19. Prior to that, non-retirement departures had already reduced faculty from a high of 26 in 2010-11. This decline has increased demands on G1 faculty in teaching, mentorship, and advising and created shortages in some of the subfield areas, particularly we were told in sculpture and photography. Numerous faculty expressed a need for each of their studio areas to be staffed by at least 3 faculty, two of whom are Group 1. The school also believes that Art History needs five positions, at least 4 of whom are G1. The School has lost other important staff, including a half-time photography technician, an IT specialist, and a receptionist. The school did recently gain a Digital Fabrication Technician, a position aligned with the priority of expanding into that area. This fall the school submitted a request for 5 positions. That submission did not include a prioritization of positions. We were told this was in part because a previous dean did not honor the priorities that the school had submitted. We did not receive a clear sense from the School’s faculty about which positions were most pressing, and some faculty expressed a belief that there was a “moving target” for predicting what would make a
convincing case. Several faculty understandably expressed concern about the move away from G1 faculty and the hiring of more G2 and G4 faculty, though they were appreciative of the expertise that their G2 and G4 faculty bring, and in the Graphic Design area it appeared that a teaching heavy position was necessary to meet student demand.

Unsurprisingly, the reduction of G1 faculty has reduced the undergraduate credit hours taught by G1 faculty.

### Compendium Data: Fall Credit Hours Taught by Full Time Faculty (Group 1)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>4,314</td>
<td>4,684</td>
<td>2,331</td>
<td>2,598</td>
<td>2,796</td>
<td>3,657</td>
<td>2,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>1069</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>921</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1 Faculty</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UG FTE per G1</td>
<td>179.8</td>
<td>180.2</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>108.3</td>
<td>121.6</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>115.6</td>
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* With the Q2S shift the normal Arts + Design faculty load (for those with a research expectation) shifted from a 2-2-2 quarter load to a 2-2 semester load. Despite this, the total FTEs per G1 faculty increased after that change. This trend continued until 2015 when partial retirements shifted the credit hours taught by partial retirees from 132 to 472.

It is worth noting, however, that the decline in G1 faculty has not immediately increased the FTE ratio for G1 faculty, nor the overall faculty to student ratio. Indeed that has actually declined over the last seven years, a point that the current dean referenced when explaining the difficulty of justifying new faculty positions under the current budget constraints and enrollment situation.

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<tr>
<td>Student/Faculty Ratio</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/Faculty + G.A. Ratio</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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Under current enrollments, it will remain a subject of discussion about how many lines (and in which subfields and at what group) new faculty will need to be hired. What does seem clear, however, is that the high current number of partial retiree FTEs (472) suggests that replacement positions will soon be necessary. When those retirees are no longer teaching, one wonders if and how the school will be able to meet all of its undergraduate curricular needs. In this sense the vacant faculty lines once held in the school and now “being held” at the college provide an important resource for the school’s future. It is also clear from the self-study that OU is getting
significant “bang for their buck” in relation to their 22 peer institutions, suggesting that they might be understaffed compared to their competitors (See Self-Study, p 10).

In terms of non-faculty resources, the school faces challenges with aging equipment and also the need for new investments in digital technologies deemed necessary for their expansion in that area. Students commonly complained about broken down or limited equipment and space necessary for completing their coursework. In addition faculty acknowledge that as exciting as the Maker’s Space investment is, the enhancement of digital technologies necessary to stay current in the field will require further investment, especially in Mac-based computer equipment and the appropriate licensing software. The first place to look for that will be the School’s portion of the technology fee, but faculty express concern that this will not be sufficient for programmatic needs.

e. Are pedagogical practices appropriate? Is teaching adequately assessed?

Yes, the faculty in OU’s School of Art + Design are amongst the nation’s leading artists and scholars and teachers within their respective specialties. Their methods are appropriate and include a variety of delivery methods from lecture to hands-on studio experiences to seminars examining theory and history. The five undergraduate students (1 Freshman, 2 Sophomore, and 2 graduating seniors) that we spoke with uniformly praised their experiences in the classroom and the opportunities outside of it. One suggestion that did emerge out of that conversation was the possibility of fostering increased non-TA interactions between graduate students and undergraduates, particularly in studio classes. There are, however, facility challenges that may limit such a potential.

Student assessment has become a major priority within the school. This included a 2013-14-assessment plan, which set out clear criteria for every program within the school. Rather impressively, the school faculty exceeded their goal of assessing 50% of graduating BFA students within just one year. By Spring 2015, “nearly 100%” of graduating BFA and BA-AH students were assessed. It is not immediately clear how BA Studio Art students (the largest subfield) are being assessed. Faculty mentioned networking at events and through social media as an informal means of assessing productivity.

Every class is evaluated by students using paper assessments, a practice that has kept response rates higher than colleges that have moved to online evaluations. The Tenure & Promotion committee and School Director reviews teaching every year on a five point scale. The School of Director meets with any faculty who does not receive at least a 3 (meets expectation) on that scale.

f. Are students able to move into to discipline-related careers and/or pursue further academic work?

Yes, the program provides the training that students need to pursue graduate programs or move into discipline-related careers in a variety of fields. The self-study indicates that over 90% of
ceramic undergraduate and graduate students are active in that field. The Museum Studies Certificate, which launched in 2013, also fosters a career path for those majors seeking to work in Museums and other non-profits. Recent alumni have moved into jobs in a wide variety of areas or to top graduate programs in art and art-related fields. As is usually the case, achieving precise quantitative data on alumni can be a significant challenge with most data being self-reporting. The resurrected Art Education program will also help to ensure that those artists seeking to become teachers at one point numbering as high as 60 when the program existed in the early 2000s, will now have a clear and easier path. One issue raised at the Dean’s level was the decision to dispense with the NASAD accreditation, a decision that some top-tier Art programs appear to be making due to their overly cumbersome requirements. None of the faculty or students raised this as an issue. The question was raised about whether non NASAD accreditation is harming recruiting efforts, particularly compared with other schools within Ohio. Verifying that would require knowing more about why admitted students did not choose OU. The continued high number of applicants could suggest that the decision has not adversely affected initial interest.

3. Graduate Program.

Overview: After touring the facilities and meeting with faculty, the program review committee met at the Ridges with 25 graduate students to gain feedback on their experience and pros and cons of attending OU’s School of Art + Design. Students were strongly encouraged to attend the meeting and were openly vocal in expressing concerns, mostly related to the condition of the facilities. Curricular concerns focused on limited graduate courses. Overall, students understood that funding issues were driving the staff shortage and space inadequacy. Several expressed concerns of whether to leave the program due to the difficulties faced in working under deplorable building conditions. All graduate students gave positive comments on their faculty relationships and expressed pride in the cutting edge body of work produced within the program and its flexibility to push more conceptual, cross disciplinary methods.

a. Is the program attracting students likely to succeed in the program?

Yes, the longstanding reputation of the School of Art + Design has culminated in successfully attracting top tier graduate students. Admittance rates of students (20%; 23 out of 124 in 2015), which in the past has acquired 10th ranked applicants, are currently experiencing acceptance by 2nd and 3rd ranked applicants. Each student’s application is scrutinized thoroughly to ascertain their level of experience in creating art, managing a studio/classroom, teaching, and working in close concert with dozens of other graduate students. There is concern among faculty on whether this trend shall continue in the future, due to several infrastructure and institutional issues, which have been challenges for maintaining the department’s esteemed standing and recruiting power.

For the most part, current students do not report concern in their own placement upon graduation, including the majority of its international students who were drawn by the reputation of the program. Attractive new program options include a Certificate in Museum Studies, and a
Scripps-partnered MFA, blending media and design skill sets. The decision to relinquish NASAD accreditation did not appear to be an important consideration to students when selecting schools.

b. **Is the number of students appropriate for the program?**

The capacity to enroll additional graduates is complex, factoring in limitations in current faculty and inadequacy of the facilities and space. The graduate chair, Julie Dummermuth, felt adding additional floor space at the Ridges would allow another 10-15 graduates into the program, without increasing faculty. However, the facilities issues are pressing and would have to be resolved before program expansion can be considered. Additional faculty hires would avoid overburdening existing faculty with committee work and mentoring implicit with expanding enrollments. It does not appear feasible to add more graduate students without first restoring faculty lines.

c. **Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**

The program pools from a national and international demographic due to its reputation as a top ranked art school, particularly in ceramics.

d. **Does the graduate curriculum provide an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers following graduation?**

The School of Art + Design has two graduate degrees: the MA in Art History, and the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Sculpture, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Ceramics, and Graphic Design, available only at the main Ohio University campus. The Art Education graduate program was recently terminated.

OU’s School of Art+ Design graduates are recognized as high caliber in the industry and are successfully placed into careers upon graduation. The program is a national leader in ‘highly hybridized transdisciplinary and installational practice’, blending contemporary art with digital costume, theater and sculpture. Students can choose a focused study or an expanded skill to develop, without faculty placing hierarchy among skills selected for expertise. During their studies, students are expected to work very hard, exhibit work to network galleries, museums, design firms and apply for prestigious awards.

Program content has been reassessed after Q2S to expand subject scope, incorporate new technologies (Bb) and upgrade access to digital technologies. The Ridges gained a graduate studio, print space, tool room and more flexible installation space. All studio and art history faculty are hired to teach at both undergraduate and graduate level. Concerns from graduate students in this category were raised regarding insufficient graduate-only courses and expectation for self-funding at school-represented exhibits and shows.

e. **Does the program provide adequate mentoring and advising to students to prepare them for discipline-related careers?**
Each MA and MFA graduate student must have a major advisor who is a full-time faculty member in the student’s program of concentration. The advisor serves as chairperson on the graduate review committee. Reviews are in place to enable studies to present work in all stages of development to their committee (two occur in first year) and by exhibition in the second year in order to pass. Student crafts are assessed in support of their content, including language, contextualization of the work, and draft thesis proposal. Few students fail and they receive one-on-one mentoring. They are also required to consult with their advisor regularly, keep the advisor informed of progress, keep studio appointments and participate in progress reviews.

Graduate students did express strong commendations for their faculty mentorship and opportunities to work with exceptional top tier discipline representatives. They also reported excellent faculty feedback and access.

f. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the graduate program?

The absence of faculty rehiring has been felt at all levels within the School of Art + Design programs. Graduate student committees have recently relied upon staffing with visiting Group IV faculty, and there is some frustration on feedback received by students due to the lack of consistency in committee mentoring.

The program at the Ridges, housing all graduate students and two full time faculty members, provides a rustic, intimate graduate space, but its isolation from the main building creates some logistical issues. There is limited equipment at the Ridges and other barriers to creating a graduate student facilitative experience. Ability to stage, store and transport art objects, critical to their success, is problematic. Student projects can result in significant sculpted pieces, and accommodations for movement of large art objects between buildings remains rudimentary, with lack of forklifts and parking space for loading/offloading, and dedicated elevators has presented additional challenges.

Due to the facilities (Siegfried and Ridges) having dysfunctional electrical, heating and cooling systems (extremes in temperature), projects are sometimes compromised or at the minimum inconvenienced in ways that appear counterproductive to student success and thus dictates what type of projects can be developed. For example, building temperatures have been known to drop as low as 40 °F.

It is generally felt that more square footage at the Ridges would help alleviate some space issues, provide faculty studio space and facilitate increasing enrollments by inclusion of additional graduate and undergraduate art display critique spaces. The rationale includes encouraging more interactions between undergraduate and graduate student bodies.

g. Does the program offer appropriate financial support to graduate students?
There are 55 students funded on tuition waivers, with 54 working as TAs or other supervised responsibilities for their entire three years of study (approximately $6,000/semester for 15-20 hours/week). Other responsibilities can include serving in graphic design or the museum as interns. Graduate students in the School of Art + Design contribute to the weighted student credit hours (WSCH). OU mandatory graduate fees are not covered by subvention, and students universally stated they were unaware of any services which they benefit from under those fees. Each year, graduate students receive invitations to participate in a number of creative and scholarly activities. This year, a group of students reported no one will be attending a national exhibition due to the expense.

h. Is teaching adequately assessed?

Outcomes of students; successes, exhibition and thesis quality, constitute major assessment tools for programmatic teaching effectiveness. The high expectations of graduate students regarding productivity and professionalism is evident and positively impacts student performance. The program review team evidenced a cohesive relationship between graduate students and their educator/mentors, which involves daily interactions. Publishing creative research outcome is exhibition-based, and the quantity and quality of program individuals who consistently achieve success reflects favorably upon the School, that also seldom loses its students. Student evaluations rank their professors extremely high and reiterated to the committee they receive exceptional experience and mentoring.

i. Are students able to move into discipline-related careers?

The School of Art + Design defines its success in placing alumni by developing a professionally trained art student, who understands marketing, CV development and work ethics as part of their educational experience. There is robust placement for students graduating with a MFA from Ohio University’s School of Art + Design. Students are, for the most part, highly successful in attaining satisfactory career positions upon completion of art studies. This includes securing tenure track positions immediately upon graduation and immersion into the international theater of art and design. The MA in Art History is not a terminal degree, but graduates have a solid record of securing positions in galleries and museums and admissions to competitive PhD programs. Departmental data is mainly derived by networking within the discipline and social media as there is no formal tracking system in place.

4. Areas of Concern.

a. The most evident area of concern is the facilities. Both Seigfred Hall and the graduate studios at the Ridges have suffered badly from deferred maintenance. The new roof and windows currently being installed on Seigfred Hall will help to structurally secure the building but will play only a minimal role in terms of addressing programmatic needs from the perspective of students and faculty. Of considerably more significance will be the extensive work scheduled to begin in the summer of 2017 on infrastructure, HVAC and possible renovations to the fifth floor
studios. However, still unaddressed will be a lack of raw square footage for a number of the program areas. Particularly deficient in studio space are painting and ceramics (which is the USN&WR 3rd ranked ceramics program).

It should also be noted that there is insufficient space for faculty studios. While there is no generally accepted standard for whether or not universities should provide their studio faculty with personal studios, there are significant advantages when it does occur and in meetings with faculty, the issue was raised.

While there is apparently some discussion relative to renovating the graduate studios at the Ridges and/or assigning the currently vacant section of the building to Art, the fact remains that the studios at the Ridges are currently substandard by any measure. Of particular concern are heating, air-conditioning, ventilation, security and infrastructure. Any discussion for renovations should also address logistical concerns of faculty and students to move large objects between program buildings and to secure access to the graduate space, from uninhabited floor at the ridges.

b. Graduate enrollments have remained stable since the school’s last review but undergraduate enrollments have declined significantly. Undergraduate enrollment is down approximately 25% since 2009. The size of the G1 faculty is down approximately 20% in the same period although the size of the full faculty has remained relatively constant during the same period at approximately 28. A concern is that the full time G4 faculty positions made available to replace the retired G1 faculty will expire next year. Whether or not the enrollment decline vis-à-vis lost G1 positions is a chicken or egg phenomena, the reasons are many and complex. Suffice it to say, however that the school is well aware of the situation and has taken positive steps to address it.

c. Two centrally initiated fiscal changes appear to be having a negative impact on the School of Art + Design’s budget. In 2018, when the Guaranteed Tuition Policy will be fully implemented, the school may not be able to garner sufficient revenue from laboratory fees which provide the lion’s share of funding required to address studio needs. The distribution of course fees for graduate students will remain unchanged and thus far, the college has been passing revenue distribution to the schools based on what they would have earned through course fees historically. However, there is no guarantee that this policy will continue which is a significant fiscal concern to the School of Art + Design.

Secondly, the implementation of the RCM formula, particularly the calculation regarding space has not favored those programs that rely on studios and other relatively large teaching/research spaces which is an additional fiscal concern.

d. Due at least partially to the attrition of Group 1 faculty, two areas within the school (Sculpture and Photography) are now operating with a single tenured faculty member serving as the only faculty resource within that area. While the ideal faculty/student ratios may be debated on the undergraduate level, this situation is unacceptable for the graduate program. The graduate
program has improved its USN&WR ranking to 33rd. This trajectory is not sustainable without a minimum of two tenured (or tenure track) faculty in each program area and it should be noted that this is not merely a numbers/work load issue. It is an important qualitative issue in terms of the breadth of concepts and influences that graduate students are exposed to.

e. There is a perception on the part of a number of particularly high performing senior faculty that there has been a gradual erosion on the value placed on the research component of the faculty’s distribution of effort. They believe that this has been made necessary by an escalation in administrative and/or service chores and that it has reached an unhealthy state in terms of the long-term (or perhaps even short-term) quality and national reputation of the School of Art + Design.

f. It appears that there is a lack of communication within the school. While the cause is unclear, the fact remains that too many faculty are unaware of several important imminent initiatives. (The second phase of the Seigfred Hall renovation project and the 4+1 teaching certificate program are two examples). There may also be a communication gap between the school and the dean’s office. This was made apparent when the Review Committee heard significantly different versions of the status of the currently unreleased School of Art + Design “lines”, made available by a number of early retirements. Those lines are now simply dollar equivalents and are being held at the provost level, not the college deans.

g. Approximately 4 years ago, the School of Art + Design made a strategic but risky decision to voluntarily give up NASAD accreditation. Although there were a variety of entirely legitimate reasons to take this action, it now appears that the strategy has backfired, at least temporarily. The Review Committee was informed by the dean’s office that a university-level policy exists that recommends (but does not require) accreditation if an appropriate accreditation agency exists. Significantly, the school has now lost leveragge relative to the other units in the college which have retained their accreditation and may have therefore been the recipients of faculty lines made vacant by School of Art + Design early retirements.

h. Ohio University’s photography program enjoyed legendary status for many years (decades is more accurate). It was easily one of the country’s premier programs but for whatever reason or reasons, it now seems to be mediocre at best and probably worse than that. Whether or not its stellar reputation can be rescued is problematic but either way, the program is clearly in need of some attention.

i. Ohio University’s primary commitment is to its undergraduate student population. While the School of Art + Design shares that commitment, its graduate program would be at home in any Research 1 institution. The school has thus far been adept at walking that tightrope but there are signs that its ability to continue may be beginning to fray. By no means is the Review Committee recommending a closer alignment to the university’s central mission at the expense of graduate education or faculty research, it is merely noting that the school should be vigilant in terms of how it maintains the balance and allocates ever diminishing resources.
5. Recommendations.

a. The university should strongly consider a major renovation and expansion to the Art building at the Ridges. One idea worth considering is moving the entire painting program (including undergraduate painting) to the currently vacant wing at the Ridges, then moving some studios around within Seigfred with an eye toward increasing the ceramics program’s square footage so that it would finally have a second classroom and legitimate graduate studios. Given the ceramic program’s national ranking, these relatively inexpensive renovations could be easily justified. Other areas of renovations that would solve a number of problems, include adding a forklift to the sculpture room, updating the once nationally ranked photo room with scan technology and actively pursuing opportunities for equipment shared use collaborations with Russ School of Engineering and other schools. Faculty and students need to be able to transport large objects with a dedicated elevator and outside staging area wherever possible. In any event, the Ridges must be made safe. In the interim a secure lock barring access from the vacant wing at the Ridges, would protect property items and liberate late working hours, something Art graduate students were actively seeking.

b. The committee was led to believe that the university remains open to adjusting its existing RCM algorithms. If this is the case, more flexibility should be considered in the calculation involving the cost of space. Different academic units have intrinsically different space needs. It should be recognized and acknowledged that one size does not fit all. Similarly, some compensation should be afforded the school for the loss of funding (in student lab fees) attributed to the Guaranteed Tuition Policy. Further, although this appears to be a university wide concern and goes beyond the purview of this committee, it is worth mentioning that the graduate students in Art feel strongly that it is unwarranted and unfair to deduct the rather steep university fees from their modest stipends, the bulk of which go to the Athletics program which they have little or no interest in.

c. When possible, the college should support the school’s policy of having 3 full-time faculty in each program area but in no case should there be less than two. With the exception of those faculty who are given a teaching load reduction in exchange for specific administrative appointments, the studio faculty enjoy a 2+2 undergraduate teaching load which is consistent for academic units in Carnegie Research 2 (higher research activity) universities. However, the number of graduate committees most faculty serve on is prodigious, as is the number of undergraduate advisees assigned to most faculty. Another factor is future impact to quality education, as observed in the increasingly diminished graduate-only courses, infrequent graduate seminar offerings, and high number of visiting faculty serving temporary positions on graduate review committees. Added to that dilemma is an escalating service responsibility and the subtle but measurable result has been a gradual erosion of the school’s collective research profile. This is an unhealthy situation with significant implications. Returning the vacant faculty lines currently being held in the dean’s office will go a long way to alleviating this situation.
d. It would seem beneficial if part of the reporting line of the newly hired recruiter was put under the umbrella of Central Admissions. There is a level of expertise in that office that is currently not being taken advantage of.

e. Although the School of Art + Design appears to be well administered, there is obviously a communications gap throughout the school. Its cause is unclear but it is important that all faculty are privy to key information that impacts the school. Similarly, it is important that senior leadership (from the provost’s office down) share a clear understanding of issues pertinent to the well-being of the school. This review committee would recommend some additional effort (regularized e-mail communication, regularly scheduled school meetings, or whatever best suits department culture) to ensure that all faculty are more fully informed of the overarching goals and activities taking place within the school and the college.

f. Most schools of art are comprised of two components: the professional component (serving the BFA and MFA students) and its commitment to the non-art major segment of the student body through its contributions to the general education curriculum. Ohio University’s art school is no exception. Therefore, given the pending changes in leadership at both the dean and presidential levels, every effort should be made to position the arts at OU as being viewed as absolutely central to the mission of the university.

6. Commendations.

a. The School of Art + Design is professionally administered. School leadership and the faculty consistently demonstrate a sustained commitment to examining virtually every facet of the work of every academic unit and when necessary, to put changes in place that benefit the students and the reputation of the school.

b. HEADS data clearly demonstrate that the school is exceptionally productive and efficient. Credit hour production, the number of art majors per full-time faculty and per FTE faculty members are well above the average for Ohio University’s peer institutions. The instructional salary per credit hour, the total expenditure per credit hour and per art major are significantly below average for the same institutions.

c. The school as a whole enjoys a decidedly favorable ranking by U.S. News & World Reports. Two programs are ranked in the top ten. Printmaking is 10th and ceramics is ranked 3rd. Due to its reputation in general, its financial support levels and its success in placing graduate students upon graduation, applicant acceptance into the school’s graduate program is often considered a high priority. The yield rate is therefore high with some of the best undergraduates in the nation ultimately attending OU.

d. Financial support (both tuition waivers and stipends) for graduate students is at a consistently high level. In fact, it has been at or near 100% since the last review which is extraordinary when compared to other highly ranked graduate programs.
Undergraduate advising is an area of real strength. Every member of the faculty is assigned approximately 20 advisees. This is an unusually large number. It speaks to a significant commitment on the part of the faculty in terms of real time and dedication to the students.

e. The Maker's Space, when completed and fully operational will provide a unique opportunity for art students to engage their creative efforts in a technologically cutting edge manner. It will also help to position the school as a collaborative player within the university.

7. Overall judgment.

There is no question that the program is viable. What is remarkable is that it is not only viable but particularly on the graduate level, has earned a national reputation in spite of what are arguably some of the most deplorable facilities imaginable.
Hi David,

Thanks for sending the Program Review. I thought it was a balanced report, with two items I wish to bring to your attention:

- Paragraph c. on page 12 says the School will no longer have access to lab fees after the Guaranteed Tuition Policy is implemented in 2018. From what we’ve heard, the college will continue to received and distribute course fee money to the school.

- Paragraph d. on page 12 lists three areas within the school that are operating with a single tenured faculty member. This is true for Sculpture and Photography, but not true for Painting. John Sabraw and Julie Dummermuth are both tenured faculty in the Painting + Drawing area.

Hope this helps.

Thanks,
David
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<SubmittedProgramViewoftheSchoolofArtsandDesign-21.pdf>

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March 28, 2017

Dear Dr. Ingram,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the program review report for the School of Art + Design. I appreciate the careful attention provided by the committee in their review of the documents submitted, and in their visit with the school. I strongly concur with their assessment that the School of Art + Design is a viable program that “continues to provide exceptional graduate and undergraduate education,” with “very entrepreneurial” faculty and a “well-developed curriculum that contributes to the fostering of bright and creative [artists] who are prepared to move into the field, pursue an advanced degree, or find a job in another area.” We are very proud of the School of Art + Design’s most recent US News and World Report national ranking of #33, and with the national area rankings of our ceramics program (#3) and print-making program (#10). Below is some additional context for the recommendations that are included in the report.

a. Facilities
The report recommends that “the university should strongly consider a major renovation and expansion to the Art building [Seigfred].” Phase 1 of the Seigfred renovation is in process (the new roof is completed, and new windows will be installed over summer 2017). Phases 2 and 3 of the renovation are currently in the design process with Schooley Caldwell. Phase 2 is anticipated to begin in fall 2017. The timing and scope of phase 3 are still under discussion as the university continues to assess and prioritize its deferred maintenance needs. The design process should also reveal whether significant savings are possible by combining phases 2 and 3. The design process is also helping to clarify the need for studio spaces for each area, as well as possibilities for more shared spaces. The potential to include these spaces more efficiently in the Seigfred renovation will help determine what amount and type of space ultimately is needed at the Ridges or elsewhere. The report references an unlocked door to the studio space at the Ridges. To clarify, this door can only be reached by breaking in to a specific, unoccupied section of the building, and this door may not be locked because of fire safety issues. We are working with facilities to find a solution that is compliant with safety requirements.

b. RCM and Guaranteed Tuition
The report raises concerns about the RMC formula because of the increased space needs of fine arts, and the “loss” of course and technology fees that were wrapped into the Guarantee. It is well known that the fine arts, like engineering, need more space to support their academic programs. This is addressed in RCM through
subvention. Similarly, the equivalent of course and technology fees under the Guarantee are included in the tuition distribution to colleges; in COFA, these have been passed to each of the schools as they would have been earned before the implementation of the Guarantee. In addition, the College recently supported the purchase of new digital equipment in the Graphic Design and Painting + Drawing areas, with some matching funds coming from the School of Art + Design’s technology fee carry forward funds.

It is correct that COFA, in general, does not receive as much in fees through the Guarantee distribution as we received when fees were separate, but again, that amount is made up through subvention. One challenge is that any new course under the Guarantee that would have provided consumable materials to students using a course fee under the previous tuition + fees model does not have a way to recoup new costs; there may be a need to rethink how Art + Design handles consumable supplies in general if we do see an impact in the future.

c. Faculty
In several places, the report refers to “vacant faculty lines held at the College level” or even funds for lines held in the Provost’s office. This is inaccurate. Under RCM, there are no lines; there is only revenue distributed to the colleges based on enrollment and credit hours, or earned by the college through other revenue opportunities. The college then decides how to allocate those funds internally. While the School of Art + Design may prefer to have three full-time faculty in each area, regardless of enrollment, that preference has to be balanced against the needs of other areas in the College, especially those areas that have increasing enrollments. When Art + Design has faculty who retire or Group IV positions that expire (which they did not have this year), they will be able to advocate for prioritized replacement positions as part of the College staffing plan process.

d. Recruiter
The College supported the hire of a .5 FTE recruitment specialist for the School of Art + Design for the first time in academic year 16-17. Once this first year is concluded, we will evaluate the structure of the position, including reporting lines.

e. Communication at the school level
The structure of the leadership team in the School of Art + Design was changed in fall 2016, including a new assistant director and associate director. This pilot structure will be evaluated at the end of the current academic year. In addition, I and other members of the dean’s office staff have met with the full faculty of Art + Design, several of their governance committees, and with individual areas several times in the past year in order to help maintain multiple channels of communication.

f. Arts as central to Ohio University
There is ample evidence of the centrality of the arts to Ohio University, from the recent investments in the Seigfred renovation and Tantrum Theater, to the longstanding inclusion of fine arts in general education and the Arts for OHIO program, which keeps almost all campus arts events free for our students. Ohio University clearly says that you are not an educated person in today’s world if you have not experienced the arts in a deep and meaningful way, and I see no evidence that this will change under a new dean and president.

I also want to clarify the report’s discussion about the National Association of Schools of Art + Design (NASAD) accreditation. On page 13, section g, the report writes that a “university-level policy exists that recommends (but does not require) accreditation if an appropriate accreditation agency exists.” This is inaccurate; it is not a university-level policy. Rather, according to Mike Williford, at issue is the Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC) accreditation criteria subcomponent 4.a.5: “The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.” In general, this statement means that specialized accreditation is voluntary but also comes with an expectation that it should occur if possible. In addition, in preparation for the HLC visit last fall, the university had to prepare for a Federal Compliance Review, which has its own expectations for specialized accreditation that requires a review at the time of the site visit. The pertinent language reads as follows:

An institution has a responsibility to remain in good standing with each state in which it is authorized or licensed as well as with any other institutional or programmatic accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education by which it is accredited or pre-accredited up to the point that it voluntarily withdraws from such relationships. An institution shall fairly represent to the Commission and to the public its history or current or previous status with other institutional or programmatic accrediting bodies and with each state in which it is authorized or licensed.

The previous dean, Dean Kennedy-Dygas, wrote a letter outlining why not having NASAD accreditation was “appropriate to its educational purposes,” and the voluntary withdrawal from NASAD was not raised as a concern at the time of the HLC site visit last year. I do agree that there is a potential disadvantage to lacking accreditation when Art + Design is competing for resources with other schools within the college that are accredited, simply because of the weight that accreditation requirements confer; however, this potential disadvantage can be overcome by building a compelling argument for the school’s needs.

Finally, I want to note that the School of Art + Design has been responding strongly to its undergraduate enrollment challenges this year. The new recruitment specialist has served an important role, last fall’s Experience the Arts Day had its largest turnout of potential art majors in recent memory, the number of incoming student scholarship applications has more than doubled over the
previous year, and faculty have engaged in positively-received recruiting events, including a portfolio review practice session for prospective students. Institutional research also compiled a report that showed that even as the total number of students across Ohio who enroll in art majors has decreased, our market share of those students has increased the last several years. I wholeheartedly agree with the report that our “superb faculty remain the program’s best asset,” and know that the more that prospective students have opportunities to interact with our faculty, the more likely they will be to attend at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Thank you for the constructive feedback, and I thank you, your committee, and the reviewers for the time and expertise that you all have brought to the review process.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Sayrs
Interim Dean, College of Fine Arts