

## Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program Name (no acronyms): Art History

Department: Fine and Performing Arts

Degree or Certificate Level: BA

College/School: College of Arts and Sciences

Date (Month/Year): 09/2022

Assessment Contact: Bradley Bailey

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? 2021-2022

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? 2021

### 1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle? (Please list the full, complete learning outcome statements and not just numbers, e.g., Outcomes 1 and 2.)

In the spring 2022 semester the program offered ARTH 1010 History of Western Art, which is the course that was selected to assess Student Learning Outcome 4: Graduates will be able to articulate the importance of observing art in person (see also the Program-Level Assessment Plan). ARTH 1010 is one of only three courses required for all art history majors, and therefore is a course in which we tend to have some majors enrolled.

### 2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please describe and identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

In ARTH 1010 History of Western Art, students were assigned to write a 1,000-1,500 word paper. Half of the paper was a formal analysis, for which students chose a work of art from a list of objects in the collection of the Saint Louis Art Museum. The list was given to the students in the form of digital images that they could access on their computers or cell phones. In the second half of the paper, the students followed the following prompt: "explain how the experience of viewing the object in person is different from seeing it on the computer screen. This may involve many different aspects of the work depending on the medium and presentation. For this component of the assignment, you will want to take into account size, color, texture, and other aspects of the object that may not have been visible in the digital image. How is your understanding of the object affected or changed by seeing it in person? What qualities of the work are you able to see in person that you couldn't in the photograph? Is there an aspect of the presentation of the work that doesn't come through in the photograph? How has your understanding of the work changed by seeing it in person?"

### 3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and **include them in/with this report document** (do not just refer to the assessment plan).

The art history department developed a rubric to evaluate this paper assignment (see the rubric).

#### 4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

The determination is that the students did a satisfactory and at times excellent job in identifying the difference and even the importance of viewing art firsthand as opposed to reproductions on a computer screen. As the assessment plan shows, the original idea for this SLO was to have students accompanied by faculty to discuss the difference between viewing works of art firsthand and reproductions, but this idea did not prove feasible as a group trip to the art museum was not a feature of the course, and there was no justification for requiring the art history majors to visit the museum with a faculty member if the rest of the students in the class were not required to do the same. This was a pilot assignment for testing this SLO and was not done on the Madrid campus, but the conversation regarding how to assess this SLO involved Madrid faculty.

#### 5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

The level of success the students demonstrated in expressing the difference between viewing works of art firsthand and looking at reproductions in the classroom or on a screen was clear, and it does not appear to be necessary for a faculty member to be on-site with the students for them to be able to note how the two experiences differ. What this tells us is that 1) it is critical that we continue to create assignments around the firsthand experience of works of art; 2) that the location of SLU campuses in cities like St. Louis and Madrid with major, internationally recognized museum collections is a feature of this program that we must continue to underscore; and 3) that the on-campus art museums and proximity to the museums and galleries in Grand Center could be instrumental in providing that same experience, though these institutions do not offer an experience as comprehensive as the Saint Louis Art Museum does in terms of the breadth of its collection. What is not clear from the assessment instrument used for this SLO is whether being able to identify the difference between viewing a work of art in person versus a reproduction is the same as recognizing the importance of viewing art in person versus viewing reproductions, as the current wording of the SLO indicates. The students noted that they appreciated the experience more because they were directed to evaluate the difference in the two experiences, but does that necessarily indicate that they would be able to articulate why viewing works of art in person is important. This subtle differentiation is an unexpected result of this initial assessment.

#### 6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

The results of this assessment have initially been brought up at an art history faculty meeting that involved Madrid campus faculty. We have not yet determined whether the assessment instrument needs to be changed to better assess the SLO as written, or if the wording of the SLO needs to be altered in order to better reflect whether we are satisfied with students recognizing the difference in the experience of viewing works of art in person and viewing reproductions, or if we expect students to be able to articulate the importance of the former versus the latter experience. This conversation will continue over the course of the year as we decide how to move forward on assessing this SLO.

B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies

- Course content
- Teaching techniques
- Improvements in technology
- Prerequisites

- Course sequence
- New courses
- Deletion of courses
- Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the Assessment Plan

- Student learning outcomes
- Artifacts of student learning
- Evaluation process

- Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
- Data collection methods
- Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

No curricular changes will be made. The most significant problem that was identified was the small sample of students involved in the assessment because the number of majors in that particular ARTH 1010 class was small. As it is difficult to determine how many majors will be enrolled in a given ARTH 1010 class, it may be necessary to move this assessment to the course ARTH 2000 Art History Seminar, another course all art history majors must take that is designed for art history majors and minors only. This would likely be the best opportunity to make sure that the largest number of majors are assessed for this SLO.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

## 7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

Because of the way in which many art history majors matriculate through the program, it is becoming clear that it is disadvantageous for us to think of assessing the major the way some other programs might in a linear fashion from 1000-level courses to 4000-level courses. For example, it is not unusual for a student to take the capstone course, ARTH 4900, before the student has taken ARTH 1010, which is generally considered the “introductory course.” What we are finding is that it may be more effective for us to move away from thinking about assessing a student’s progress via the level of coursework, assuming that a student was “introduced” to concepts in ARTH 1010 that the student later developed in more “advanced” courses, when the student actually took those courses the other way around. As we are starting to think less in this linear fashion, we are recognizing that our assessments need to reflect this less typical way of progressing through a program. This may be more effectively addressed with the help of someone with an expertise in assessment practices.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

No specific change has been made regarding these findings. We are in the process of discussing how to modify our assessment procedure to better reflect how the students in our program matriculate.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

See above

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We need to bring our colleagues in Madrid in on this conversation, as they would need to alter their assessment practices as we would and we will need their input. Ultimately, as we do with ARTH 4900, I believe that we will need to gear our assessment toward the courses being offered that have the most majors and not the SLO.

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**IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools (e.g., rubrics) with this report as separate attachments or copied and pasted into this Word document. Please do not just refer to the assessment plan; the report should serve as a stand-alone document.**

Paper Assignment  
 Rubric for SLO #4: Observing a work of art in person

Format

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Did the student use the font(s), spacing, and margins specified by the instructor?	Nearly always or more	Usually	Infrequently or less
Are the works of art and other relevant images and tables discussed illustrated in the text or as an appendix?	Nearly always or more	Usually	Infrequently or less
Are the works of art and other relevant images and tables discussed illustrated with captions as specified by the instructor?	Nearly always or more	Usually	Infrequently or less
Are the reproductions legible and do they successfully illustrate the point for which they are included?	Nearly always or more	Usually	Infrequently or less
Are the works of art discussed properly italicized in the text with dates and locations included when appropriate?	Nearly always or more	Usually	Infrequently or less
Is the paper legibly printed and properly bound or, if submitted electronically, is the electronic file accessible and properly organized?	Yes	Somewhat	No

## Content

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Did the student take into account the installation of the work in terms of location, placement, and, if applicable, the relationship to other works of art in the vicinity?	Yes	Somewhat	No
If appropriate, did the student comment on the work of art as a physical object, noting dimensions, materials, colors, textures, and other relevant aspects of the work as an object?	Yes	Somewhat	No
If the work of art is a performance, video, projection, or other form of media, did the student comment on the experience of viewing the work in the context of an exhibition space, and/or the experience of a work of art that takes place in space and time?	Yes	Somewhat	No
Did the student comment on the relationship of the work of art to the viewer?	Yes	Somewhat	No
Did the student address how the experience of viewing the work of art firsthand differed from viewing a reproduction of the work?	Yes	Somewhat	No
Is the length of the discussion	Yes	Somewhat	No

of viewing the work of art firsthand sufficient to effectively characterize the experience?			
	Yes	Somewhat	No
	Yes	Somewhat	No
Is the paper the appropriate length to address the scope of the thesis and/or as specified by the instructor?	Yes	Somewhat	No
Did the student utilize proper grammar and spelling consistently throughout the paper? (This includes typographical errors, run-on sentences, paragraph indentations, and other typical proofreading issues)	Nearly always or more	Usually	Infrequently or less
Did the student use the terminology of the discipline when appropriate?	Nearly always or more	Usually	Infrequently or less
	Very successful	Somewhat successful	Less or unsuccessful
	Yes	Somewhat	No