

**Texas A&M International University
Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)
for Academic Programs**

Program: ARTS (ART and ARTA degrees)

Assessment Period Covered: January 1, 2009 to January 31, 2010

Program Coordinator (Preparer of Report): Richard Wright

List Other Program Faculty:

Haertlein
Foran
Walton (assessment-relevant adjunct); A. Holmgreen (spring—adjunct)/Moon (visiting prof.—fall)
David Poindexter (visiting adjunct, 2008-09)

Reviewed by Chair: Name _____ **Date** _____

Reviewed by Dean: Name _____ **Date** _____

The Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review for Academic Programs is directed at Goal 1: Academics of the Texas A&M International University 2006-2010 Strategic Plan:

Develop, maintain, assess, and improve academic programs, administrative/educational support services and student services, to admit, retain, and graduate students who achieve established learning outcomes designed to prepare them for success in their chosen careers.

Institutional Mission

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

Academic Program Mission

To fulfill the University mission in offering baccalaureate programs in the arts, as well as the commitment to the preparation of students for leadership roles in professions related to the fine and performing arts. (1) The students' knowledge and appreciation of culture, fine arts, social integration, and self-realization.

Provide summary of the last cycle's use of results and changes implemented

Program faculty should evaluate the former cycle. This statement should specify if the outcomes addressed were a continuation of previous ones, new outcomes, or modified versions of previous outcomes. In addition, the statement should include a concise analysis of the assessment data collected during the previous year, a brief explanation of actions taken to address specific outcomes, an evaluation

of how these actions contributed to the improvement of the program, and any recommendations formulated. Assessment data—including actual samples of student work—must be viewed and discussed by program faculty during this process.

We focused on Outcome 3 last cycle (see listing of outcomes in next sub-section). 9 of 11 participants in the 2008 Senior Show (81.8%) received average holistic scores of better than 4.25 out of 5 on this criterion—easily exceeding the projected benchmark. The scores were averaged from holistic grades given by Profs. Wright, Haertlein, and Krueger after conferring together. (See 2008-09 AIER for more detail.) Changes to be implemented: The emphasis for the near term will be on “maintaining” the current standards of student learning—in part because our outcomes have been redesigned since early 2008, and in part because the program is succeeding in the eyes of TAMIU and the community. We say this because we (and others beyond the ARTS program, such as some LCC art professors and community artists; see exhibit-specific visitor-log entries for TAMIU Art Gallery) feel that our Senior Show generally keeps getting more impressive—especially so given our small number of faculty and relatively modest facilities. Clearly, though, this first-time run with a score of 3 constituting the 60% benchmark was too low. The next time we focus on this outcome (either CY 2011 or 2012), we will instead use a benchmark of 80% receiving average scores of 4 or above. We will also re-discuss what the grades of 3, 4, and 5 constitute, and then commit to a consensus on the wording of a grading rubric for these grades BEFORE the Senior Show is installed in the year selected for the next focus on Outcome 3 (CY 2011 or 2012).

Selected list of program-level intended student learning outcomes (*It is recommended that programs rotate through their entire set of outcomes over a multi-year period. Programs may focus on one or two outcomes each year, as deemed appropriate.*)

- 1. Design elements/drawing techniques (as measured in ARTS 1316)**
- 2. Technical proficiency in more than one medium (at 2000 level)**
- 3. Continued growth, along with emerging professional coherence and effectiveness in exhibiting work (at 4000 level)**

Section I: Planning and Implementation

Outcome(s)

Identify the outcome(s) that will be focused upon this year.

Outcome 1

X (yes, partially) Please indicate if the outcome(s) is (are) related to writing (QEP).

Methods of assessment to be used: *The explanation should identify and describe the type of assessment(s) that will be used (e.g., survey, questionnaire, observation instrument, test, rubric to evaluate performance, standardized examination, action research, interviews, etc.), who will provide the information, and how the data will be obtained.*

Evaluation of student-work portfolios (in ARTS 1316) by a minimum of three visual arts faculty, only two of which will be full-time TAMIU faculty in studio art; written self-critiques (i.e., by students) in 1316. (NOTE: Means of assessment for this particular outcome are identical both for ART and ARTA degrees.)

Indicate when assessment(s) will take place

May 2009; December 2009: after classes are over, but before work is made available by the section's professor for final pick-up by students.

Criteria/Benchmark(s): *[Specify, if deemed appropriate to assess outcome(s). Criteria/ benchmark(s) may be optional, especially if qualitative measures are used for data collection.]*

Each section of ARTS 1316 in a given semester will be assessed as a whole (via the m.o.a.'s listed directly above on p. 2) to ascertain if success was generally achieved overall in meeting the learning outcomes articulated in the specific syllabi for each section of ARTS 1316. Since most of the assessment depends on evaluation of drawings, we are indeed utilizing "qualitative measures...for data collection"; quantitative benchmarks would not be of much analytical worth (or of demonstrably transparent value to non-arts professionals) in such a situation. Student self-critiques will be evaluated as each student's portfolio is reviewed.

Section II: Analysis of Results

What were the results attained?

Describe the primary results or findings from your analysis of the information collected. This section should include an explanation of any strength(s) or weakness(es) of the program suggested by the results.

Spring 2009: Two sections of ARTS 1316 were taught, with approximately 12-15 portfolios to examine for each section. The evaluators spent the better part of an afternoon looking at the portfolios, and found the student work in each section to range on average from passable to good (scoring mostly from 2 to 3 in holistic terms if a basic 4-point scale had been used, in other words). The evaluators realized that the instructors were designing the assignments of their sections from different bases of expertise: one instructor was a printmaker, the other a non-representational painter. Prior to the 2008-09 school year, the two visual artists at TAMIU were both representational painters, so there had been more natural consistency in how ARTS 1316 had been taught up to that point. The Assessment process thus led the evaluators to realize fairly quickly that ARTS 1316 would need relatively more pedagogical coordination among instructors now, since ARTS is becoming a somewhat more diverse program in terms of the talents and orientations of the instructors. In the fall (and without much difficulty at all), the evaluators and the instructors reached a general consensus on how assignments should be structured consistently, with aspects of observation, gesture, composition, proportion, foreshortening, tonal value, texture, and perspective being given importance. Fall 2009: Two sections of ARTS 1316 were again taught, again with about 12-15 portfolios per section. Both sections were taught by the same instructor, which simplified the issue of pedagogical coordination across the sections. The evaluators (who were the same as in the Spring) found the work to be more consistent in addressing the newly agreed-upon set of aspects or criteria for the assignments, and to be of higher quality as well—with scores that would have projected more in the 3-to-4 range on a 4-point holistic scale if such a scale had been used (instead of in the 2-to-3 range, as had been the case in the spring).

Self-critiques, done by the students and not graded or evaluated by the instructors, were not consistently done in the spring due to a lack of effective communication on the part of the evaluators. Consequently, this means of assessment was not employed in the earlier semester. However, end-of-term self-critiques (26 in all) were collected along with the portfolios in the fall, and they were all universally positive in stating that they had improved, gained confidence, and enjoyed the class. When asked for comment on areas where further improvement was needed, again, every student had constructive things to say about what they needed to work on to get better.

What were the conclusions reached?

Should include a brief description of the procedure used for reaching the conclusion(s) based on the evidence collected and describe the process used to disseminate the information to other individuals. For example, if the discussion took place during the annual spring retreat, include a summary from those deliberations using the Meeting Minutes template found on the Project Integrate web page at <http://www.tamtu.edu/integrate/docs/Minutes-Template.doc>. Once completed, submit the minutes to assessment@tamtu.edu.

This new outcome definitely has heuristic value for assessment, and should be continued as an assessment tool for our program—especially since Drawing is a fundamental cornerstone for a program in ARTS.

The evaluators examined each drawing in each portfolio, and discussed their observations as they went. They summarized periodically on a general level about the quality of the work overall as seen up to that point, and discussed each section in total as soon as the evaluation of a given section was finished. Information was communicated informally and verbally with the instructors after the spring term, but not after the fall term. The written report was circulated to all fulltime ARTS faculty upon its completion, with editing comments sought.

Only two evaluators were used on this outcome; only one was a fulltime TAMTU professor in studio art. We are too small to use three evaluators at this point without the potential for conflicts of interest (adjuncts evaluating the work of fulltime professors and vice-versa), and there are too few people in town qualified enough to do the work—plus we would have to impose on them to come to campus to do the work for an afternoon. That would be fine on a one-time basis, perhaps, but such kindly help from outsiders is obviously not something we could expect or depend on year-in, year-out at this point in the program's development.

Describe the action plan formulated. (The plan may be multi-year in nature.)

Based on the conclusion(s), describe the action plan to be implemented to improve or maintain student learning, including a timeline for implementation.

ARTS wants to continue focusing on this new outcome for at least one more year, with the aim of trying to ensure that the current level of learning in the course is sustained, across different instructors in different terms for the course. Being at the 1000 level, it is taught by different teachers, sometimes by adjuncts, as is the case this spring. We will orient each new instructor to our assessment goals in the coming year (CY 2010) as they cycle through their assignment to the course. Since adjuncts play an important role at the Introductory level in most TAMTU programs, outcomes focused on the Introductory level like this one are crucial in establishing instructional consistency and excellence from the outset in ARTS, and success in these introductory contexts obviously portends well for success at subsequent levels in the program.

Section III: Resources

Resource(s) to implement action plan:

Describe the resources that will be needed to implement the action plan. Also indicate if the resources are currently available, or if additional funds will be needed to obtain these resources.

Funding

- New Resources Required
- Reallocation of current funds

Physical

- New or reallocated space

Other

- Primarily faculty/staff time
- University/rule procedure change only

Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan)

A trusted and experienced adjunct who has worked for us for a number of years, teaching primarily at the 1000 level, somewhat unexpectedly announced in 2009 that she would be leaving TAMIU for non-academic reasons. This caught us a bit short, insofar as we have extremely few fallback plans to replace her—experienced, talented, credentialed adjuncts in Studio Art are extremely hard to find in the Laredo area, or anywhere near Laredo. A lectureship or tenure-track line in Art Foundations (i.e., someone who would focus their teaching primarily on Introductory Drawing and Design) would prove extremely valuable as a result; it would give us much more stability and continuity for the planning of course offerings at the “front door” of our program. Such a hire would also be important because the small size of our classrooms means that many sections of these gateway courses must be taught every term in order to move majors and potential majors through the stages of the ARTS program in an efficient manner. (See Strategic Plan Goals [SPGs] 1.1-1.3, 1.5, 3.3) This strategic switch to a Foundations hire represents a departure from past long-term strategic goals, where we were looking to hire specifically in a specific media area. We realize now that our needs are more crucial and pressing now in the Foundations area than they are in expanding the range of media offered in our classes (because of the depletion of our adjunct possibilities locally).

More long-term goals: added faculty would bring us to a threshold where we would be large enough to be approved to offer the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), the standard professional degree in Art nationally. (SPGs 1.1-1.3, 1.5, 3.1) Also long-term: an annex for Art and Dance is needed to provide larger classroom spaces that would allow far more efficient use of faculty in moving students through the program in ARTS. (SPGs 1.1, 1.2, 6.6)

Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:

Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation):

Is a new outcome, and was not completely implemented in CY 2009 (i.e., student self-critiques were only implemented halfway through the Assessment cycle, for the fall only [see p. 4 above]). See also Action Plan, in Part II (p. 4).

New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below):

N/A

Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification):

N/A

Date Completed: March 11, 2010

Submit completed form to integrate@tamiu.edu.

Updated 09/03/2009