

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

Program: BA-ART & ART ALL LEVEL

Assessment Period Covered: March 1, 2008 to January 31, 2009

Program Coordinator (Preparer of Report) R. Wright

List Other Program Faculty:

A. Haertlein
J. Krueger (retired in Summer 2008)
Nicole Foran (arrived in August)
ADJUNCTS: K. Walton, R. Njaa (left in summer), D. Poindexter (arrived in Aug.), A. Holmgren, G. Rocha (left in summer)

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.

The former cycle was evaluated and analyzed, with actions explained and recommendations made, in the 2007 AIERs for the ART and ARTA degree programs, if I understand the request here correctly. I can re-supply those reports for the previous cycle again if necessary. Basically, in the 2007 reports (to focus specifically here on the recommendations we came up with for our program at that time): we felt that criteria/benchmarks on a couple of the outcomes had needed tweaking to come more realistically into line with the performance levels of our most typical, non-outlier students (as opposed to exceptional or subpar students, in other words); that writing assignments needed to be better designed; and that I needed to do a better job of administering and managing the data and paperwork.

For the present cycle (March 2008-January 2009), outcomes were modified during the Academic Program Retreat held in late February 2008, because we as a faculty felt that the emphasis in our assessment process was centering too much on writing and not enough on learning phenomena related to actual art-making—that there was too much emphasis in assessment being placed on ‘writing about doing’ instead of on ‘doing,’ in other words. The ‘writing’ orientation had originally emerged because we felt means of assessment would be more easily verified by outsiders lacking backgrounds in Art by means of writing-based and quantifiable/numerical sorts of outcomes. As our experience has grown with the assessment process, we now have greater confidence with designing means of assessment for creatively based disciplines like ours. Moreover, the QEP already gives us ample opportunity to assess writing within our program.

Thus, moving forward in this current cycle, we have implemented new outcomes, eliminated some, and modified others, as our write-ups from the 2008 Academic Program Retreats of last February should indicate. (Again, as with the 2007 AIERs, I can re-supply the Retreat Reports if needed.)

****PLEASE NOTE: The outcomes below are common to BOTH our degree programs (ART and ARTA); the means of assessment on one outcome differs between the two degree programs—that’s the only difference now between the two programs overall.

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)
- 4.
- 5.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

Outcome(s)

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

#3 will be the focus.

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.*

Holistic grades, averaged out and assessed by committee of at least three visual arts faculty (only two of which are full-time TAMIU faculty in studio art) on student's senior exhibit (as an individual section on display within the overall Senior Show) encompassing quality of work, professionalism of display and artist's statement (in ARTS 4333 only, which is required for degree); post-grad survey.

Indicate when assessment(s) will take place

In October; committee members already have compiled notes on the aforementioned 'quality' and 'display' criteria for the various individual exhibit sections within last spring's Senior Show, and clean copies of artist statements accompanying those individual exhibits will be assessed in relation to our review notes of the exhibits. The sample of graduated students who are two or more years past graduation is still too small to warrant the 'gearing -up' yet of any post-grad survey mechanism. (The degrees in Art have only been in existence since 2003.)

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.]*

We will begin with a 60% benchmark—success will be measured in terms of whether or not 60% of the participants in the 2008 Senior Show achieve an average score of 3.0 or better on a 5-point holistic scale from the members of the committee. In 2007, we had an outcome similar to the one described above that was, however, focused solely on the student's written statement, and in the 2007 AIER we noted that the 60% benchmark was not met (i.e., as based only on the statement). With a broader-based outcome, focusing not just on the artist statement but on the totality of the artist's exhibit, we predict the scores will be better overall, and so the benchmark should be met. If the benchmark is too easily met, then of course we will re-assess the benchmark for the next cycle.

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.

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 on the factors mentioned above.

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.tamiau.edu/integrate/docs/Minutes-Template.doc>. Once completed, submit the minutes to [assessment @tamiau.edu](mailto:assessment@tamiau.edu).

The professors mentioned above met several times in 2008—all three did so informally in May and August, and then Haertlein and Wright met in October and late January (2009). Krueger retired in the summer of '08, and we were unable to meet as a trio after that point, although two-way discussions were held over the phone in Fall '08 between Krueger and Haertlein, and then between Krueger and Wright. A five-point holistic scale was used, based on the criteria described near the top of p. 3. With our discipline being so qualitative to judge (i.e., rather than quantitative), and problematic to judge from an objective, consensus perspective, we discussed most of the individual cases at several points, but ultimately scored each student individually, after our various discussions ended. Wright then averaged the scores. We did not revisit our individual decisions once the scores were recorded, nor did we try to dissuade each other of the decisions we each reached individually. Results will be disseminated to Dept. Chair (who is also head of Assessment for DANC), Dr. Soto (head of assessment for MUSI programs), and ARTS faculty this week.

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.

The emphasis for the near term will be on “maintaining” the current standards of student learning—in part because our outcomes have recently been redesigned, 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) feel that our Senior Show keeps getting more impressive with each passing spring—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. For 2009, 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 next Senior Show is installed.

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
Yes
- Reallocation of current funds

Physical

- New or reallocated space
Yes

Other

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

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

The ARTS program is doing very well considering our modest resources and facilities. We have far outstripped the growth projections presented in our original degree proposals to THECB over five years ago—projections that the Coordinating Board agreed should lead to significant growth of faculty by this time. We will be in desperate straits if some of our adjuncts leave, since crucial parts of our degrees are taught by these part-timers, and they cannot be easily replaced since the pool of credentialed adjuncts in Art available to us in or near Laredo is so limited. We have no fulltime (or even reasonably credentialed adjunct) faculty in three-dimensional media like sculpture or ceramics, for example, and an art degree cannot be offered if courses in 3-D areas cannot be offered regularly. As predicted in our original degree proposals (and has been supported by the growth patterns in ARTS over the last few years), there is clearly a demand for our major and our classes (Strategic Plan Objective [SPO] 1.5), so additional growth should ensue if we can offer more and varied courses. More fulltime, fully credentialed instructors (SPO 1.5) should also lead to better and more effective teaching, leading to better retention and preparation of students for their chosen careers (SPOs 1.3 and 1.4).

An addition to the FPA Building has received some initial consideration, and of the three discipline areas in our FPA Department, it would especially help Dance and Art the most. Art faculty at LCC continue to advise their students against matriculating at TAMIU because of our small and limited facilities compared to theirs, and because of our limited course offerings compared to theirs. (This is not rumor; the LCC faculty tell us this to our faces [“it’s nothing personal, but...”], and students verify it, as would even the most cursory examination of their expansive course listings [at least at the lower levels] and facilities.) While many students transfer in to TAMIU all the same, in many of these cases it’s because of the need to stay in the area; we are losing some top students in Art who instead transfer out of the area on the advice of LCC faculty.

On the other hand (and as our assessment data here would suggest), the “products” of our modest program are surprisingly impressive—and LCC faculty have grudgingly admitted this to us as well, because the Senior Show has been as impressive in quality to them in recent years as it has been to us.

Thus, a new faculty line or two (we should have five FTE by now according to the THECB-approved projections we originally submitted), and eventually a new wing to the FPA building, would do wonders for the continued growth and increased quality of the ARTS program (SPOs 1.3-1.5; 6.1). The faculty are definitely doing their part; we need the institution now to begin to follow through. Whatever constriction our growth faces now is structural (cf. SPOs 6.1, 1.5).

Additionally, new facilities that are designed from the ground up with safety in mind (especially ventilation) instead of expensively retrofitted would enhance the safety of the educational environment (SPO 6.3) and would allow us to expand our outreach in Art to area children (SPO 3.2) with more ease than we are able to currently, when classes for both children and paying students have to juggle access to rooms and time blocks.

We also have some technological issues (SPO 6.2) that accompany these plans—the teaching in our digital art lab would be greatly enhanced by the addition of a digital projector and/or ‘smart’ podium—in its current state, the lab set-up necessitates the movement of the professor from computer to computer to make pedagogical points, and obviously this inhibits classroom delivery.

Finally, a vibrant gallery program is considered an essential educational component to any serious art program (SPOs 1.3-1.5)—especially so in communities like Laredo that are hours away from any large-

city art venues. Currently, our gallery is somewhat hindered by lack of predictable funding and fulltime staffing. The NEA clearly states that galleries of our size are better off applying for funds and exhibits at the local and state level, but there are few funding opportunities at the state level in Texas to meet gallery operating expenses—funds are available for individual exhibits, but the logistics and administrative demands that such shows entail typically are based on the assumption that there is a fulltime director present to oversee such programming. Prof. Haertlein has done a fine job securing grants for shows from local sources on an ad hoc basis—and an especially fine job administering the gallery with NO course release—but what galleries like this typically have is a budget line and a salaried director (who could also do some occasional teaching [SPO 1.5]), so that a consistent flow of resources can be counted on (and thus gallery programming that enhances our educational mission [SPOs 1.4-1.5] can be planned for properly). While we are certainly grateful for the funding that has come our way on a year-to-year basis from the Administration, a regular budget line of even \$12,000 would help this aspect of our educational mission tremendously—and this is by far the normal procedure for any university gallery at this size of institution (and with a space as presentable as ours): it has a regular budget (and a director, either full-time or with occasional part-time teaching responsibilities) that can be counted on each year without having to make special pleas for funding (and without having to guess, thus, at what we will be able to plan for one or two years out).

Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:

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

We will rotate to a new student learning outcome that was implemented at the 2008 Retreat but not yet assessed—it is #1 on our report from that retreat, focused on the work done by students in our Intro Drawing class (ARTS 1316).

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

Outcomes were redesigned at the 2008 Retreat and have not yet been fully cycled through even once.

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

Nothing in this report indicates that the outcome reported on here needs modification per se; the process of assessing it merely needs some fine-tuning, and the benchmark needs adjusting.