

Department of Art

Assessment LO1 and LO2

6.2018 by Curriculum Committee (Professors B. Gillis, D. Morgan, and R. Silva)

The following assessment was done by the Department of Art Curriculum Committee of the 2018 annual Undergraduate Exhibition, *Spring Storm*. Our primary focus was on the first two learning outcomes; LO1 – Demonstrate Technical and Material Competency and LO2 – Demonstrate Visual Literacy. Because we offer undergraduate degrees in **Art** and **Art & Technology**, we conducted assessments for each and laid them out separately below.

ART

LO1: Demonstrate technical and material competency (ART)

There is a wide range of technical approaches in the work being exhibited. This varies from highly wrought traditional and conventional skills (academic plein air painting, very adept ceramics, more than competent black and white photography) to more “deskilled” or experimental aesthetics. This range exist throughout all media represented in this exhibition; Painting and Drawing, Printmaking, Sculpture, Fibers, Ceramics, Jewelry and Metals, and Photography. In terms of material competency, there is evidence of many “hybrid” approaches, indicative of experimentation resulting in part painting / part sculpture artworks, for example. There is also evidence of competency in the traditional use of materials, which range from mastery of ferrous and nonferrous metals and woven structures, to sensitive painting and prints.

In some instances, it was hard to tell if a “deskilled aesthetic” was intentional or not. Some of the installation work feels a bit too slap dash or rushed. Overall, the committee feels that this year’s work is not as strong as other *Spring Storms*. Possibly due to scheduling or to the structure as a credit bearing course taken in tandem with advanced studio.

LO2: Demonstrate visual literacy (ART)

The work shows a wide range of material and formal approaches, and sensitivity to aesthetics that show evidence of a high degree of visual literacy for the most part. This is manifested in both discrete, more traditional approaches to image and object making and/or things that are functional and not within the scope of a specific discipline such as sculpture and painting, and in works that show hybridized approaches that may combine video and sculpture, etc.

Many of the didactic panels accompanying art works are heavily autobiographical. The committee feels like these could be more rigorous and speak to the work at hand, as this indicates, in some cases, an inability to effectively employ basic interpretive or analytical language used in discussing art, an important component of basic visual literacy.

Art & Technology

LO1: Demonstrate technical and material competency (ART)

Students in the Art & Technology Program are experimenting with a range of digital and computer-driven techniques; from programmed LED displays and projection mapped sculpture/installation to digital animation and digitally illustrated prints. The projects reflect the students' overall experimentation with multiple mediums, versus having an expertise in one. Some of the works also mirrors a trend within both and Art and Art & Technology to have participatory or social element.

Generally, installations are a bit rough around the edges, likely due to the short set up time and duration of the *Spring Storm* exhibition. Overall, there was not much representation of video art. Furthermore, not all digital art projects work well in traditional exhibition spaces and could be interesting to have an online version/option of *Spring Storm*.

LO2: Demonstrate visual literacy (ART)

The Art & Tech projects display a keen awareness of 21st century aesthetics. Multiple projects misuse, or hack, commercial software and hardware to reframe, or subvert its intended use, a dynamic and valuable current in contemporary practice. Much of the work shows a level of aesthetic sophistication and an awareness of historic precedent and ways that it can be updated in relationship to current trends and social discourse.

As a whole, the content seems to generally be more about formal aesthetics, or narrative, rather than culturally critical or biographical. It might be good to examine what parts of departmental curriculum and/or dialogue and be adjusted to challenge students to seek greater conceptual depth and criticality of technological forms and strategies.