



UMass Amherst's Educational Effectiveness Plan (EEP) provides departments with an ongoing structure for conducting systematic inquiry into the effectiveness of their efforts to support student success. Departments initially developed and submitted their EEP inquiry plans and evidence gathering strategies in spring 2018 and are asked to provide updates on their progress on a regular basis. EEP activity is also incorporated into the University's strategic planning process – with departments including their EEP progress and findings into their 2021 Strategic Planning Refresh. What follows is the department's most current reporting, as synthesized by the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment (OAPA).

History of Art & Architecture EEP

Identify the evidence you currently use (beyond GPA) to determine that your undergraduates have achieved the objectives you have for them.

We look at students' written work in AH 370 and AH 415, and students' oral presentations in AH 370 and AH 415.

Please describe the focus of your inquiry and explain why this inquiry is important to your department right now.

Line of Inquiry 2018: We are in the process of determining how best to use the written assessment provided by the instructors of the two courses required for all majors: AH 370, Junior Year Writing, and AH 415, the departmental IE course. Our current plan is to use our checklist of objectives and to review student performance annually in these courses. We will also review individual student performance in other departmental courses they have taken.

Progress your department has made toward addressing your line of inquiry, and the types of evidence that you have collected to inform your inquiry.

We created a standing Curriculum Committee consisting of half of the faculty members in the department for ongoing evaluation and other issues. We created our Fall 2018 EEP document and created a rubric sheet to use in the two focus classes, in the F18 and S19 iterations of the two courses, AH 370 and AH 415 (IE). A copy of the rubric evaluating individual student skills in each of these courses will be placed into the student's file in the department office at the end of each semester. We chose these two focus courses because they are the only two courses that all majors take. 415 is a Gen Ed (IE) course in which 1/3 of the material is not art history, but devoted to general reflection. But only these two courses are taken by all majors so they give us the same evaluative information for each student.

A major issue for our department is that the students usually declare our major as juniors and take the 370 and 415 courses either out of order or together in their last semester. We had to

edit and simplify the learning objectives on the learning outcomes assessment rubric because the SLOs were too long and complicated. We are revising the undergraduate program information on our department website to reflect this by February 2020. We want to continue the process of evaluating the rubrics for two years to see any patterns that emerge before making any across the board changes. We added new SLOs to the syllabi for 370 and 415, where they are explained, and are posting them to the Department website as of February, 2020. We are also adding them to the faculty handbook, currently under revision. We also created a curriculum mapping matrix for the first time in 2018 and updated it in 2019; we plan to update the mapping matrix annually.

What are your department's next steps regarding your continuing and/or upcoming EEP line of inquiry?

We discussed at the Fall 2019 retreat and will continue to discuss results of the assessments at each Spring retreat. We believe that after collecting data for the next two years we may be able to discern patterns in student learning outcomes. Our first round of data collection and faculty review has already proven beneficial, as faculty have agreed to reinforce formal analysis skills throughout the curriculum; increase emphasis on student use of diverse source materials in construction of knowledge; and investigate the availability of online resources to help students develop research skills. In the meantime, we also intend to incorporate or take note of the new Student Learning Objectives in all of our individual syllabi, and make use of the assessments in our individual advising where relevant, as student rubrics for the 370 and 415 courses will be placed in each major's file in the department office for purposes of advising.

In Spring 2020 and Spring 2021, at mid-semester, faculty will use completed rubric sheets in students' files as aids in advising students on course selection. At the May retreat each year, 415 and 370 instructors will report student assessment data and analyses to the entire department faculty for review and discussion. Any recommendations for department actions will also be presented for review, discussion, and decision-making on the assignment, course, or curriculum level. A summary of retreat presentation of data, discussion, and decisions will be available to all faculty via retreat minutes distributed on paper and electronically.

In Fall 2020, the Curriculum Committee will review and revise the department's curriculum mapping matrix as appropriate. It will be distributed to the entire faculty on paper and electronically.

What are the Student Learning Objectives for your department or program(s)?

Art History, B.A.

- **Art History majors will demonstrate visual literacy.** Visual analysis of a work of art is foundational to art historical thinking. Students must be able to look closely at a work of art to discern how particular meanings, contexts, and functions are conveyed through

formal and material elements. They should be able to use this method as the basis for inference and interpretation of individual objects and when comparing multiple objects.

- **Art History majors will be able to effectively communicate visual phenomena.** Because viewers rely on visual and other senses to experience a work of art, students should be able to translate these perceptions into clear, specific language that effectively communicates their observations and ideas to others. Students must be able to correctly apply specialized vocabulary used to describe artistic techniques, effects, and concepts, and to construct written and oral arguments that cite visual and/or scholarly evidence to support interpretations of a work of art.
- **Majors will be able to evaluate sources and evidence.** Students must be prepared to conduct art historical research appropriate to the undergraduate level. They should be able to assemble primary and secondary sources and evaluate their academic credibility. In addition to applying visual analysis to interpret works of art, students should be able to distinguish common methodologies used in art historical scholarship, to critically examine the evidence used to support an author's thesis, and to identify strengths and weaknesses of an art historical argument.
- **Art History majors will demonstrate relational thinking.** Art historical study benefits from critical analysis that explores connections between works of art and a range of human innovations and cultural ideas throughout history. Students should be able to compare objects produced in different cultures, time periods, or geographic regions and make inferences regarding relationships of style, technique, function, and meaning. Students should further recognize relationships that may exist between art and other fields of study, and suggest how these might contribute to our understanding of art's broader significance as a form of human expression.
- **Majors will be able to demonstrate digital literacy.** Students should demonstrate digital literacy skills essential to art historical practice in the 21st century. Throughout its history, the discipline of art history has relied on technology for access to distant and destroyed objects, to create reproductions and circulate images, and for methods of scholarly communication. Students today should be able to recognize and critically examine distinctions between a material work of art, its digital reproduction, digital or multi-media objects, and artworks experienced through augmented or virtual reality technologies. They should be able to locate, employ, evaluate, and produce digital resources appropriate for study and communication of academic research, and recognize ways they can use emerging technologies to contribute to scholarly knowledge, engage the public in art historical discourse, and demonstrate the discipline's social and cultural value in a contemporary world.

(From Spivey, Schulz, Hopfensperger, "Measuring College Learning in Art History" (SSRC, Measuring College Learning Project, February 2018)

Experiential Goals

- Engage in direct investigation of the object. Every art history course requires students to visit museums and historic structures to study works of art and architecture in person. Department faculty utilize campus and Five College collections as well as those of institutions further afield, especially in Boston, New England, and New York.
- Curate exhibitions in real-world settings. Students may develop research, curatorial, and other hands-on skills within the discipline by completing courses that include co-curating exhibitions as class assignments or creating virtual online exhibitions accessible to a global audience. They can also co-curate exhibitions at the department's undergraduate curatorial lab space, Greenbaum Gallery. All majors have the opportunity to co-curate at least one exhibition in Greenbaum Gallery before graduation.
- Develop and practice advanced research skills (in class, through a thesis project or IS, and/or as faculty research assistant). Majors are expected to master a wide array of research skills involving both print and non-print documentation, use of primary documentary sources and archival materials, and in some cases oral interviews.
- Develop and practice real-world communication of the ways that historical visual culture shapes our broader understanding and perception of the world in the present and future. These include public talks, blog, webpage or online venue, or completing the department's docent training and giving tours at the University Museum of Contemporary Art and other area institutions.
- Develop a command of the newest developments in digital techniques and resources. Students may develop this knowledge by working at the W.E.B. Du Bois Library's Digital Scholarship Center and/or completing a practicum on "Digital Technology for the 21st Century" (currently being revised by Digital Scholarship Center director Brian Shelburne).
- Explore career opportunities and gain career experience through completion of internships. All majors are strongly encouraged to complete three art history-related internships before graduation. A three-credit faculty-supervised internship may be used to fulfill an elective course requirement for the major. Students are encouraged to intern at art museums, auction houses, commercial art galleries, artist studios, and at historic houses and other monument sites.
- Develop and explore vocational interests by taking the one-credit "Careers For Art History Majors" practicum and/or attending "Success Stories: The World Beyond the Major," an annual spring event featuring alumni and alumnae who have gone on to various careers in Art History or related fields.
- Engage in collaborative work with peers. This includes: Complete a team-based learning course, co-curate an exhibition for the department's Greenbaum Gallery, and/or complete a major assignment in an upper-level art history course that requires collaboration with peers.

- Study Abroad: We encourage our majors to perfect their foreign language skills and explore other cultures firsthand through study abroad.

Art History, M.A.

- Historical Understanding: Overall comprehension of the fields of the History of Art and Architecture, including familiarity with diverse geographical world traditions, cultures, historical periods, works of art and architecture, their producers and users; establish awareness of how these have been defined by the discipline and other forces.
- Methods: The ability to employ new and established theoretical methods from the Humanities and beyond to analyze art and architecture; employment of methods in a creative and critical way expressed through writing, speaking, and other intentional means.
- Research: Conversance with research methods, including ability to use foreign languages, conduct archival research, analyze works in situ. Cognizance of the means and materials which have produced such works.
- Professionalism: Development of careers through teaching and internships establishing skills in pedagogy, curating, archiving, collections management, public engagement, and other related endeavors.
- Collegiality: Foster respectful working relationships with all encountered at the University emphasizing ethical awareness, leadership, and fair treatment of colleagues and all collaborators.
- Engagement: Working with the public to foster a better understanding of art and architecture and these disciplines' roles in the world in keeping with the inclusive values of a land-grant university.