



November 29th, 2016

Subject: Art Department response to 10 Year Review submitted October 21st, 2016 by Committee Chair Carolyn Henne.

In general, we find the review to be thoughtful and on point. The review committee did an excellent job parsing the materials they were given and incorporating faculty and student interviews with classroom and site visits. We feel they were understanding of the challenges we are working with as well as the measures we have taken to address many of those issues over time and in the present. We would like to comment on a few items from the review in this response.

Response:

At large, the arts have been deeply affected by a cultural shift that has devalued the experience of a fine art education at the university level. The overwhelming interest in STEM education and the financial downturn of the last few years coupled with local state and national politics have made the study of art less desirable as a long term career goal. The Art Department has undertaken a number of measures to alter the outcomes of this situation including developing on-line courses, better outreach, and recruiting and re-working our pre-requisites and course content.

On page 3 the review notes:

Graduate Program: Interviews with faculty and graduate students provided insight into both the strengths and concerns regarding the Graduate Program. Since the hiring of a full-time Associate Student Services Coordinator, positive changes have been made to increase the

Program's professionalism.

In the graduate program, changes to our TA application process and general incoming application process have been applied to streamline the process and make it less cumbersome for students. We have consolidated the incoming application process so that prospective students complete one application that includes all potential funding opportunities (TA, TA-SS, PA, fellowships, & scholarships). Not only is this less stressful for students, it is more efficient overall for the department and staff. We have also adjusted our graduate student hiring procedures toward a more equitable process.

We are also implementing new procedures and initiatives focused on recruitment. To that end, we have formed a recruitment committee to address our needs related to both undergraduates and graduate students. They are charged with designing recruitment strategies on behalf of the department to employ consistency and uniformity in recruiting and to find creative ways to reach out to a broader range of potential students.

Also on page 3:

Many students should be encouraged to consider a double major or minor in a related area.

While we do not have minors as such, we do allow double majors and we promote the BFA program to students with an interest in art as it offers the most breadth and highest credit production to the Art Department.

Over the past few years we have developed a robust certificate program in the Art Department that has significantly affected our credit production. Additionally, we have created a number of on-line courses for the summer term, the first of which went live last summer and three more will go live this summer. Finally, in regard to credit production, we have built our first version of a CommB course, using a pre-existing special topics/seminar number which was announced for the Spring term. It immediately filled to capacity (20 students) most of whom are from outside the Art Department. We are in the process of seeking a permanent course number and are confident this course will scale up with multiple sections possible in the future.

On page 6, the review states:

Graphic Design: The Department should consider being more inclusive of Graphic Design by supporting the building of enrollments in this field.

We agree that this is as a growth area, and to that end we have hired a new lecturer at the start of the 2016 academic year who has helped to build credit hours. We are expanding the offerings in Graphic Design at present as well and looking at ways to offer even more courses.

On page 7 the review states:

We strongly recommend shifting the focal point of the Department's studio program from the George L. Mosse Humanities Building to the Art Lofts Building. With this in mind, the Art Lofts would become a new vibrant gateway for the Department.

We agree with that statement and have been moving forward with a two-part plan that will consider moving the Art Department offices to the Art Lofts for the first phase, followed by moving printmaking and sculpture to the space vacated by Tandem Press at the rear of the building in the second phase. This would give bring tremendous state and national attention to our department and give us the opportunity to compete with peer institutions at a much higher level.

On page 9, the review addresses safety concerns:

Identifiable health and safety concerns the may impact programmatic goals.

Building security during off hours has been a recent problem for students and faculty in the Humanities building. We plan to continue working with the Campus Police Department to identify and implement creative solutions to this ongoing issue.

The ongoing need to address long-term health and safety issues for both the Humanities building and the Art Lofts remains one of our most pressing needs. Several areas, such as sculpture, Metals and Printmaking have ongoing issues related to inadequate ventilation for a safe working environment for both faculty and students. In order to insure safe working environments,

ventilation requirements need to be prioritized. The possibility of retrofitting adequate ventilation in the Humanities building is being pursued with Facilities, though the costs are seemingly prohibitive.

On page 9 the review states:

The second health and safety concern has to do with the Department's technical devices and mechanical equipment. With a facility comprised of so many different devices and equipment, it is imperative that maintenance and supervision are available. Having appropriate technical staff to oversee the physical plant and equipment is not a luxury but must be viewed as an essential part of a professional program.

In conversations with the review committee and in the review document, it is evident that we are made less competitive with peer institutions as a result of a lack of technical support staff to assist in keeping our facilities well-maintained and safe for students.

In strategizing how to move forward in acquiring technical support, our end-goal would be to have five technicians, split into the following areas:

1. Printmaking and Photo, including Digital Print Center
2. Digital technician, to serve 4D and Graphic Design
3. Glass and Ceramics
4. Sculpture, Wood and Metals
5. Painting and Drawing, Gallery

This allocation of responsibilities assumes the current distribution of areas across Humanities and the Art Lofts, and attempts to minimize any one technician straddling both facilities. Any progress towards this goal should prioritize dedicated technicians with true expertise in understanding the equipment and how it interfaces with our programmatic needs. This would positively impact both students and faculty and have a profound impact on our overall excellence as a program. Such measures directly affect our ability recruit and retain students and also affect

the long-term health and safety of faculty and students alike.

Additionally, we are looking at ways to elevate the value of portfolio review in the admissions process and initiating discussions outside of the department in order to assess possible models for doing so. We have been adjusting our pre-requisites where possible in order to remove obstacles for potential students who wish to study art and have been collectively looking at ways in which we might add new courses and/or update existing courses to build on the strengths of the faculty and attract new students to the Art Department.

Finally, we are taking measures to increase our sensitivity to climate. We have initiated an open forum for both graduate and undergraduate students as a way to better listen to the needs of our students and to be more responsive as well. In that same dialog, we are discussing ways to make our department more diverse both at the student level and also at the faculty level. We are thinking about strategies in both hiring and in recruitment and hope to move forward on some new initiatives soon.

In closing, the review offers us a number of positive observations about the overall strength of the Art Department and underscores important concerns about safety and recruitment. We feel very positive about the review committee's perception of the current and future promise for growth and excellence in the Art Department.

Sincerely submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Douglas Rosenberg', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Douglas Rosenberg

Department Chair

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