Program Review
Planning and Review Committee 2007-8

I. Degree: BFA in Art

Program Director: Ron Verdon

PRC Consultants: Deb Homa and Jonna Gjevre

Purpose of the Review: To assess the quality of the BFA in Art program as part of the seven-year cycle required of all degree programs at UW-Stout

Committee Findings: The committee recommends that this program continue to function as one of UW-Stout’s degree programs for the ongoing seven-year cycle, and that recommendations made by the committee be implemented.

II. Abstract The BFA in Art program at UW-Stout comprises five distinct concentrations: Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Interior Design, Multimedia Design, and Studio Art. With a total 2007-8 enrollment of 850 students (approximately 10% of UW-Stout undergraduate enrollment), the BFA in Art is the largest degree program at UW-Stout. Enrollment management is essential for maintaining the current quality of this NASAD-accredited degree program. The BFA in Art program utilizes a Mid-Program review to assess the progress of each student in the major. The program director and department chair have shown a strong commitment to continuous improvement, with the creation of a new Art and Design Professional Advisory Board (in 2005-6), with improvements to faculty advising, and with a comprehensive program revision in 2004.

III. Process Followed for Current Review

The PRC Chair met with the dean, program director and chair of the primary department to discuss the review process. In addition, the PRC consultants met with the program director several times during the process to review the procedures and offer assistance. Data regarding several aspects of the program were collected from students, key instructors within and outside the department, and program advisory committee members through surveys. The data were analyzed and returned to the program director and PRC members. Out of 360 juniors and seniors, 63 participated in the student survey. In addition, 11 key instructors within the department and 5 key instructors from outside the department responded, along with 4 program advisory committee members and 2 program graduates.

Based on PRC assessment guidelines approved in February, 2007, the program director completed the UW-Stout PRC Accreditation Assessment Rubric based on the most recent self-study document for reaccreditation review by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). The PRC consultants used
the accreditation assessment rubric to locate relevant content within the self-study document and reviewed this information for clarity and completion. Thus, information from the rubric was used in lieu of the program director's PRC self-study report. In addition, the PRC consultants reviewed the most recent Assessment in the Major completed by the program director in June, 2007. The consultants then wrote a draft program review document summarizing the consultants’ analysis of these surveys, the accreditation assessment rubric, and assessment in the major report and submitted the draft report for the program director’s review and comments.

IV. Previous Review

Recommendation for the Dean: Investigate the feasibility of separating the program direction of the Bachelor of Fine Arts and the Art Education programs. Consultant’s Summation: This separation has been completed.

Recommendation for Dean and Chair: Develop a plan for the renewal of computer lab equipment and software.

Response: “…Along with the laptop initiative and the significant support through the university cost-share program and college funding for upgrading faculty and staff computers, the department has made significant progress in addressing the needed upgrades in computer lab equipment and software.”

Consultant’s Summation: Although a continuing need exists for software and technology upgrades, stakeholder satisfaction with the computer labs and other resources is generally high.

Recommendation for Program Director: Identify advisement issues and develop a plan to address concerns where possible.

Response: “The program director routinely provides orientation for all new department academic advisors… the Mid-Program Review has been refined in regard to the clarity of communications provided to students, Students are utilizing the university Advisement Day in large numbers since registration holds are not removed until students have met with advisors. Advising seems to be improving…”

Consultant’s Summation: The program director has made strong efforts to improve advising. Because of faculty turnover, there exists an ongoing need to mentor new faculty who serve as advisors.

Recommendation for Program Director and Chair: Work with admissions to manage enrollment: Reduce class sizes where appropriate and increase student
access to courses and course sequences that enhance student movement through the program.

Response: “A focused review of class sizes will take place…to ensure class sizes are appropriate and manageable. Also, strategies will be identified to enhance student access to courses and identify ways to enhance student movement through the program.

Consultant’s Summation: Although some concerns about enrollment and access remain, the program’s efforts to manage enrollment have shown positive results.

V. Current Program Review

Program Strengths

1. The program has been proactive in responding to student needs and market demands, as evidenced by the following:

   a. Created a plan for overseeing enrollment: Enrollment management, essential to the program’s viability, was obtained through the Dean’s intervention and has been effectively implemented.

   b. Establishment of Art and Design Professional Advisory Board has been crucial to keeping the program current with changes in the field.

   c. Established a Student Advisory Council, which has been helpful in learning about potential problems.

   d. Added a concentration in Multimedia Design.

   e. Enrollment is strong, and program management is keeping enrollment size where it needs to be.

   f. Developed and piloted a new portfolio assessment procedure required for admission to the program.

   g. Revised the studio foundation curriculum.

   h. Made changes to the student advisement process.

   i. Accreditation of programs has been achieved.

   j. Program provides comprehensive curriculum with broad exposure, including both studio art and design concentrations.

Source: Student survey, key instructor survey, PRC consultant meeting with program director, program director’s accreditation report
2. Strong program leadership, as shown by:
   a. Ongoing response to staff changes resulting from numerous retirements and other losses and addition of two full-time positions.
   b. Improved mentoring process for new faculty
   c. Program director's leadership and communication

   **Source:** PRC consultant meeting with program director, key instructor survey, Assessment in the Major report

3. Expertise of faculty and staff:
   a. Instructors are accessible to students.
   b. Faculty are experienced and knowledgeable.
   c. Instructors provide current and relevant information and effectively meet course objectives.
   d. Relevance and quality of instruction.

   **Source:** Student survey, key instructor survey, program director’s accreditation report

4. Facilities:
   a. Extensive, well-maintained labs, with attention to safety.
   b. Remodeling and improvement of facilities, including numerous lab modernizations.
   c. Access to appropriate software and related equipment.

   **Source:** Student surveys, program director’s accreditation report, PRC consultant meetings with program director

**Program Opportunities for Improvement**

1. Administration
   a. Concerns about maintaining current enrollment management. *(program director’s report to PRC)*
   b. Program director and department chair workloads are unmanageable: their course releases are severely inadequate for a program of this size. *(key*
instructor surveys, program director’s assessment, accreditation report, advisory board survey)

c. Concerns about student recruitment in Industrial Design and in Studio Art. (accreditation report)

d. Desire to recruit a more diverse student population. (key instructor surveys)

2. Staffing

a. Recruitment and retention of faculty is a concern. (student surveys, key instructor surveys, accreditation report, program director’s assessment)

b. Need to reinforce and uphold teaching standards. (student surveys and accreditation report)

3. Resources

a. Need for more clerical support, including technical support. (assessment in major, accreditation report, advisory board survey)

b. Some classes are thought to be too large. (student and key instructor surveys)

c. Concerns about classroom space, lighting, and equipment. Continuing need to maintain and update older facilities. (student and key instructor surveys)

d. Continued need for additional and updated software and technology, along with ongoing training for instructors. (student surveys)

4. Curriculum

a. There are concerns about course sequencing and access to classes—these concerns have likely been addressed by the 2004 program revision. (student surveys, program director’s assessment)

b. Concern about art history courses—curriculum may need review. (student surveys, program director’s assessment)

c. Concerns about AEC 131 (Arch Graphics). Consider a dedicated section of AEC 131 for Interior Design students. (student surveys)

d. Concerns about internship opportunities and support from Career Services. (student surveys)
e. Desire for business oriented course-work and real-life design opportunities. *(student surveys)*

**Recommendations**

**Recommendations for the Department Chair**

1. Continue efforts to recruit and retain qualified faculty and mentor junior faculty.

2. Work with the program director and the dean to ensure that effective enrollment management continues.

3. Work with the dean to address the high administrative demands placed on department chair and program director.

4. Work with faculty and program director to review opportunities to enhance the curriculum in the area of history of art and design, and examine student interest in business-oriented coursework.

5. Examine student concerns about limited course offerings and too-large classes.

6. Work with dean to address need for enhanced facilities, equipment and software.

7. Work with dean to address need for increased technical and clerical support.

**Recommendation for the Program Director**

1. Work with the department chair and the dean to ensure that effective enrollment management continues.

2. Work with the dean to address the high administrative demands placed on department chair and program director.

3. Utilize the valuable industry advice provided by the Art and Design Professional Advisory Board, in order to keep the program up to date.

4. Support department chair’s efforts to recruit and retain qualified faculty and mentor junior faculty.

5. Work with faculty and department chair to review opportunities to enhance the curriculum in the area of history of art and design, and examine student interest in business-oriented coursework.

6. Continue to explore opportunities for increased internships and Career Services support.
7. Work with faculty to maintain and improve student advisement.

8. Work with faculty to recruit a more diverse student population.

9. Work to address student recruitment concerns in Industrial Design and Studio Art.

**Recommendations for the Dean**

1. Continue valuable and effective work with program director and department chair to manage enrollment.

2. Support efforts of program director and department chair to better manage their administrative workloads. Consider additional course releases for both positions.

3. Support the efforts of the department chair to recruit and retain quality faculty.

4. Support the BFA program by allocating needed funding and positions to address the need for improved clerical and technical support.

5. Support the BFA program by allocating needed funding for enhanced facilities, equipment and software, and other resources.