

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF ART AND DESIGN

## Visitors' Report

### San Francisco State University

San Francisco, California

Gail Dawson, Chair, School of Art  
Steven Kovacs, Interim Chair, School of Cinema  
Jane Veeder, Chair, Department of Design and Industry  
Nancy J. Rabolt, Chair, Department of Consumer and Family  
Studies/Dietetics

April 29-May 1, 2015

Kate Wagle (chair), Associate Dean and Director  
School of Architecture and Allied Arts, University of Oregon  
Vaughan Judge, Director  
School of Art, Montana State University

#### **Programs or degrees for which renewal of Final Approval is sought.**

##### **School of Art**

Bachelor of Arts – 4 years: Art (Art History, Studio Art)  
Bachelor of Fine Art – 4 years: Studio Art; Art and Visual Culture Education  
Master of Arts – 2 years: Art (Art History) (On temporary suspension)  
Master of Fine Arts – 2 years: Art Studio

#### **Programs or degrees for which Plan Approval and Final Approval should be sought**

##### **School of Cinema**

Master of Arts-2 years: Cinema Studies  
Master of Fine Arts-3 years: Cinema

##### **Department of Design and Industry**

Bachelor of Science-4 years: Industrial Design (Industrial Technology, Product Design and Development); Visual Communication Design  
Master of Arts-1 year: Industrial Arts

##### **Department of Consumer and Family Studies/Dietetics**

Bachelor of Science-4 years: Interior Design; Apparel Design  
Master of Arts-1 year: Consumer and Family Studies (Interior, Apparel); Industrial Arts

## **DISCLAIMER**

The following report and any statements therein regarding compliance with NASAD accreditation Standards represent only the considered opinion of the visitors at the time of the visit. Definitive evaluation of compliance and the accreditation decision will be made by the Commission following a complete review of the application, including the Self-Study, the Visitors' Report, and any Optional Response to the Visitors' Report submitted by the institution.

## **INTRODUCTION/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Visitors would like to thank faculty, staff and administrators at San Francisco State University for attending to our needs during the visit. Our visit was very pleasant and all our needs were attended to in a timely manner. We met with faculty in all areas, students in all areas, and staff and administrators. We would like to extend special recognition to Art Department Chair Gail Dawson and Elizabeth Post Musgrove for managing many of the logistics of the visit. We met with and would also like to thank Provost Sue V. Rosser, Jennifer Summit, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and Daniel Bernardi, Dean of the College of Liberal and Creative Arts, for their frank and informative discussion of issues facing the College and University.

NASAD guidelines indicate that the visitors should receive the Self Study at least one month in advance of the visit. The Self-Study was received in time and the visitors were able to read the report and to prepare for the visit.

NASAD accredits institutions, not individual programs. Its purview is all art and design programs at an institution that have at least 25% of curricular content in art and/or design programs. The visitors have prepared one Visitors' Report (not four) and it will be the institution's responsibility to ensure that all art and design units get copies of the report. Should the institution choose to prepare an Optional Response, one integrated and coherent report is recommended. Generally this is the responsibility of the official institutional representative, but the institution may decide how it wishes to assign the task and prepare the document. The same would be true with regard to the preparation of the HEADS Report and other official NASAD correspondence, all efforts that needs to be coordinated locally. The visitors recommend that all facets of the institution work with each other to put some structure in place to make sure that information flows smoothly and in an integrated manner.

Prior to the visit it became apparent that there might be three additional programs with more than 25% curricular content in art and design at SFSU; Cinema, Design and Fashion. These programs were not addressed in the previous NASAD review. The Visitors interviewed the chairs of all three programs on site, and it does appear that these programs fall within the purview of NASAD. The Visitors extend special appreciation to Jennifer Summit, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, who prior to our departure, provided Self-Study materials for all three degree programs that allowed the team to state here that curricula, policy and practice in all three programs appears to be appropriate and even exceptionally strong. Interviews with the chairs of each program also suggested possibilities for partnership with the Department of Art in the future. The Visitors thank Provost Sue V. Rosser and Jennifer Summit for providing complete and thorough documentation, and Steven Kovacs, Interim Chair of the School of Cinema, Jane Veeder, Chair of the Department of Design and Industry, and Nancy J. Rabolt, Chair of the Department of Consumer and Family Studies/Dietetics, for their time and the generous and forthright discussion they provided on short notice.

### **A. Purposes**

## References

*San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study*  
*SFSU Cinema, Design and Industry and Consumer and Family Dietetics self-studies*  
*SFSU web resources*  
*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, II.A pp 54–56, IX.E., p 104, X.A. – F.*  
On site interviews with administrators and faculty

San Francisco State University was founded in 1899 as a normal school, became a 4-year school in 1930, and received university status in 1972. The University now awards bachelor's and master's degrees and participates in several joint doctoral programs with the University of California.

During the last NASAD accreditation review (2002) the Art Department was a part of the College of Creative Arts, which included the departments of Cinema, Art, Dance, Music, Broadcasting and Electronic Communication Arts, Design and Industry. In 2010, in response to unprecedented budget cuts to the 23 campuses California State System (CSU) San Francisco State University convened a University Planning Advisory Council (UPAC) to find ways to streamline university structures to save funds. The result of a second referendum in April 2011 was the reduction of the number of colleges from eight to six on July 1, 2011. The 2011 merger joined the College of Humanities, the College of Creative Arts and four departments from the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

The Art Department Mission states that the programs attempt to, “mirror the cultural and scholarly spectrum of the Bay Area through an inclusive learning environment”, and to “promote critical thinking and scholarship, in studio practice, art history and art education,” which appears to be compatible with the Mission of the College of Liberal and Creative Arts; “to explore the identities, ethics, aspirations, arguments and imaginations of individuals and societies through art, myth, literature, language, philosophy, religion, public and private discourse; as well as San Francisco State University’s, “commitment to quality teaching and broad access to undergraduate and graduate education.

The diversity of the local community and a student population that includes many first-generation college students was noted in written materials, statements, and conversations with students and faculty.

The Department of Art is also adjusting to a new administrative structure within the College of Liberal and Creative Arts, which seems to be a positive and generative location for their programs. However, due to this and many other changes, there are some inconsistencies within the materials submitted and current circumstances. The most notable is that the **Department of Art** has become a **School of Art** since the report was submitted. However, for the sake of consistency with the Self-Study, the Visitors have used ‘department’ throughout our report.

While the Visitors were unable to complete a detailed review of all aspects of the programs in Interior and Apparel Design, Cinema, Industry and Design, it appears that the missions, curricula and structures of these programs are appropriate to the degrees offered.

Regarding the B.S. in Interior Design, from the 2012-13 Program Assessment for Consumer & Family Studies/Dietetics, the program mission is to prepare students for a career in the interior design industry. Students have “both hands on and theoretical approaches to the study of residential and commercial interior design. Curricula, facilities and faculty appear to be appropriate and sufficient to support this program”.

The program mission for the B.S. in Apparel Design, from the 2012-13 Program Assessment for Consumer & Family Studies/Dietetics, is that “students will understand apparel industry processes and exhibit technical and professional garment design and merchandising skills depending on their program emphasis”.

An MA program in **Consumer & Family Studies/Dietetics/Family and Consumer Sciences**, also offers concentrations in Apparel and Interior. The mission of the MA Program in Family and Consumer Sciences is to prepare professionals who engage in scholarly research and service in an effort to improve the quality of life for individuals, family, communities, and in the institutions, industries, and businesses that serve them. The Family and Consumer Sciences MA program has four sub-disciplines: (a) Apparel, (b) Family Studies, (c) Interior design, and (d) Nutrition/Dietetics. The graduate program averages about 5.8 MA graduates per year.

As stated in CFSD’s most recent, Fall 2013 program review, “the mission of the MA program aligns with the mission of SFSU”. External reviewers recently reviewed the program and indicated that the MA program is a small but well-functioning graduate program. The external program reviewers further stated the following: “While small, the program operates on a small budget turning out graduates who go on to teach at SFSU and local community colleges, or work in industry.”

It appears that more than 25% of the curricula in both Interior and Apparel Design B.S. programs can be classified as art/design.

The **Design and Industry** program Self-Study dates to 2010. The Mission of the Design and Industry (DAI) Department is to offer a strong, well-rounded, interdisciplinary education to a diverse population with an emphasis in Interdisciplinary Studies, Design Education, Industrial Technology; Product Design and Development; and Visual Communication Design. The Bachelor of Science in Industrial Design (BSID) Concentration in Industrial Technology; and Concentration in Product Design & Development; along with the Bachelor of Science in Visual Communication Design were new programs in 2010, intended to prepare students for careers in product design, industrial technology, and visual communication design industries.

Concentration requirements address fundamental design principles, elements, processes and problem-solving methodologies relative to aesthetics, technology, materials, and human factors. Major courses of study employ a broad-based range of applied learning outcomes through the introduction of practical hands-on, computer-based and theoretical interdisciplinary approaches to the study of design, technology and development applications.

There were approximately 520 active majors registered in the DAI Department in the Fall Semester 2009. There were approximately 30 actively enrolled graduate students in the Master of Arts in Industrial Arts (MAIA) program during this period.

The DAI Department offers from 2 to 3 Graduate-level courses each semester, which constitutes about 8 – 11% of the overall course section offerings for the semester. This is a relative proportion in support of the 6% of students in the department who are actively enrolled graduate majors.

These programs have since been declared impacted, and the department is engaged in restructuring related to high demand and extreme budget cuts. It appears that more than 25% of the curricula in both undergraduate and graduate programs is art/design.

The **Cinema Department** Self-Study dates to 2012 and states that, “students take classes from a diverse group of over 20 tenure-track faculty committed to exploring all dimensions of film and media production and studies: from independent filmmaking to experimental animation to critical and cultural theory. Faculty in the Department continue to make films, write books on film and media culture and give talks around the world on such diverse topics as Chinese Cinema, digital culture, television aesthetics, experimental narrative, screenwriting and the politics of documentary film. Currently there are approximately 700 students enrolled, the majority in the undergraduate program”.

There are two graduate degree programs in the Department, MFA Cinema, a three-year program focused on professional training in film production and MA Cinema Studies, a two-year program focused on film history, theory and criticism. The current faculty totals 16 tenured/tenure-track faculty which includes 7 in the MA program and 14 in the MFA program (some teaching in both programs), plus 4 full-time lecturers. Both the Self-Study and the external consultants’ report emphasize the integration of theory and practice in the curricula of the MA and the MFA.

It appears that more than 25% of the curricula in both undergraduate and graduate programs can be classified as art/design, particularly in the animation tracks.

As the Self-Study focuses on the Department of Art, unless otherwise mentioned, the following pertains to the Department of Art.

## **B. Size and Scope**

### References

*San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study*

*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, II.B p 56*

On site interviews with administrators and faculty

The Department of Art has 15 or 16 full time, active, tenured and tenure-track faculty, with approximately two thirds male and one third female full time faculty. Seven part-time faculty have credentials appropriate to degree program coursework. Though there appear to be inconsistencies within the Self-Study and between the Self-Study and website information related to accounting for the full and part-time faculty, gender and ethnic breakdown of the full time faculty, the faculty appears to be fairly diverse, though that diversity does not appear to currently align with the greater University population.

The graduate program is an interdisciplinary Art degree, with 15 students currently enrolled. There is some confusion in the materials submitted regarding the number of faculty, undergraduate art and art history majors. While the Self-Study states that student enrollments peaked with 725 majors in 2009, they have since dropped due to budget shortfall measures. The number of current majors is difficult to ascertain, as current data is expressed in degrees awarded and/or SCH production. Courses offered to non-majors appear to have been reduced by 50% in the restructure, but still comprise a significant amount of SCH overall.

The Provost noted that the Department has now become a School. Museum Studies has joined Art to augment and collaborate. Regarding administrative efficiencies, SFSU has shifted from eight to six colleges. In a presidential decision, Creative and Liberal Arts has become a huge college. The Provost is not entirely comfortable with the variation in scale between the Colleges. However

some interesting synergies seem to be evolving between departments and schools. There are new opportunities related to museum space, with a resulting bigger presence for Art and the Museum.

## **C. Finances**

### References

*San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study*

*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, II.C p 57*

On site interviews with administrators and faculty

As in many parts of this visit and report, the financial situation can be characterized by rapid change, streamlining and economies. SFSU is recovering from a 40% state funding cut, related program down-sizing, enrollment limitations and subsequent reorganization. In consultation with the Provost it was indicated that a substantial recovery (40%) of this loss of funding had been made and an optimistic outlook for the future was indicated.

The University is focused now on retention, and developing capacity for General Education requirements. State support for CSU is 49%, so students can graduate with very low or no debt. The rest of the budget will come from a combination of tuition, grants, and a first-ever fundraising campaign.

Previous budgets were less transparent than the current. Chairs are only now starting to understand. Further complications result from a unionized campus, within which chairs are in the bargaining unit. Many managerial issues cannot be discussed with them. Lay-offs are an example.

The working budget consists of a general fund for salaries, facilities, supplies and services is subject to legislative negotiations in Sacramento and is often not set by the start of the academic year. Salary from the State for tenure-track faculty and for staff has been reliably allocated in recent years. General Fund allocations are not made directly to departments. Additional revenue may be available by mid-year and end-of-year, particularly for equipment orders. In an attempt to balance budgets, the College has instructed department chairs to downsize class offerings, return salary savings to the College unit, and raise student/faculty ratios.

The budget situation reflects the CSU system cuts and a certain level of unpredictability. The budget appears to be austere, but sufficient, to support the restructured programs. The Dean and Provost both indicated that new earnings from increased SCH production will return to the Department.

## **D. Governance and Administration**

### References

*San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study*

*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, II.D pg 57–58*

On site interviews with administrators and faculty

### **1. Overall Effectiveness**

Administrative structure is clearly addressed in the Self-Study and appears to be the structure of administrative responsibilities evidenced in the site visit. Issues arising out of site visit are:

- Diversity – the student population is diverse, but this is not mirrored in the faculty. Gender issues... women, ethnic diversity of student body, or regional diversity are not represented in any meaningful way, through faculty, technicians or administration. Awareness of national initiatives on diversity was not apparent in conversations with the faculty; who could make up search committees or administration of the Department of Art. The Department uses a standard national search process, which does not yield many candidates of color. This is a University protocol. Special effort to recruit is a question that needs to be addressed, given a low percentage of female and ethnic faculty. There appear to be no recruiting incentives if a hire can be made. The current Dean in the new college is aware of this issue, positive, good at negotiating, and supportive.
- Excessive workload was cited as primary to a limited capacity to plan and move forward, for all faculty. Art History faculty have been particularly impacted. Faculty and Chair are trying to build a new structure together, but faculty have little time to address. It appears that the Curriculum Committee is making substantive change. Writing in the discipline and digital media are focus subjects. New faculty want to work across disciplines, working smarter, not harder. A possible model would be the ADVANCE initiative in the sciences.
- Curriculum planning needs to be closely examined and related to futures planning. Potential unintended consequences are related to workload issue outlined in section E, MDP1 E1 “Principles for Defining Normative Workloads at San Francisco State University”.
- Quantifiable, comprehensive assessment criteria and outcomes need to be defined and articulated by faculty.

## **2. Policy-Making**

- The University’s mission is perceived by the faculty as not clearly related to the teaching and research mission and values. There appears to be no history or structure to support a research culture. This is in contradiction to Section E, MDP1 E1 “Principles for Defining Normative Workloads at San Francisco State University” (Self-Study section IV Workload – 3/3 and 4/4).

## **3. Art/Design Executive’s Load and Responsibilities**

- The Chair has created a culture of shared governance and transparency; and has successfully led the department through a period of considerable change.
- The term of office for department Chair is three years beginning in fall semester. The chair can be re-appointed to additional terms subsequent to the normal nomination and faculty ballot process every three years, but not exceeding three consecutive terms unless by mutual agreement of the majority of department faculty and Dean prior to the normal election process. The current Chair clearly has positive support from both faculty and interim Dean: indicating confidence in the current Chairs leadership and administration. The current duties and responsibilities of the chair are appropriate to Load and Responsibilities spelled out in San Francisco State University’s Academic Senate Policy #F-11-145 – Policy on Department Chairs and Equivalent Unit Directors.
- Regarding the work of the chair, support was needed to make change, and the chair has had strong support from the Dean of Liberal and Creative Arts and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. However, the chair’s professional growth has been impacted, given the scale and complexity of what appears to be a seismic shift in the structure and nature of the department.

The chair could be more active administratively if additional course release was available possible.

#### 4. Communication

- From interviews/discussions with faculty and staff, the relationship of the University's mission to teaching, research and service related to mission and values is not clear.
- Faculty are trying to address all three, but it does not appear that there is a sense of success (Self-Study section IV Workload).
- Overall good communication from the Provost office was demonstrated throughout the visit; as individuals moved quickly to set up meetings with other units within the College. i.e. Cinema, Design and Industry, Interior Design, Apparel Design and Merchandising. However communication between these units did not seem consistent or robust. There was not a sense of shared or collaborative culture, both in terms of facilities and academic vision. Each unit was very siloed, not recognizing possible shared curriculum perspectives.

### E. Faculty and Staff

References:

San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self-Study, pp 20-25, HEADS Data Surveys, IV, MDP I B: 1, HEADS Data Surveys, SECTION IV, MDP I E: 7 & 8, SECTION IV, MDP I E: 1).

NASAD *Handbook 2014-2015*, II.E. 1- 9.

On-site interviews with faculty, students, staff and administrators.

#### Qualifications.

All tenure/tenure track and part time Studio Art Department faculty are required to have the terminal degree (the MFA) or its equivalent; and Art History faculty, the PhD. Some exceptions are made for art history lecturers with MA degrees. NASAD standards regarding faculty qualifications appear to be met.

#### Number and Distribution

There is some confusion about number of full-time faculty (one distribution spread adds up to 15 and another to 16, *SFSU Self-Study p 21*), but generally there are twice as many male to female faculty, a high proportion of white to other groups represented, and more than half of the faculty hold the rank of professor, which may result in a lack of cohesion and agility in dealing with a high rate of change.

#### Appointment, Evaluation, Advancement

While the process for appointment, evaluation and advancement appear to be normative there seems to be some confusion over implementing a new emphasis on research in the faculty evaluation process. New policy appears to give equal weight to teaching, research and service. Assistant Professors are "terrified" of the process, primarily because they find it to be ambiguous. Senior faculty report they are not protected and not in a position to mentor professional practice for junior faculty.

#### Load

San Francisco State University faculty teach a 3/3-course load. SFSU faculty teaching loads are measured by weighted teaching units (WTUs). Each full-time tenure track faculty member is expected to carry the equivalent of 15 WTUs each semester. Nine WTUs represent courses, and three are reserved for advisory and committee work. The equivalent of 3 units is expected for



research activity.

Records of faculty loads are kept and reported to the College Registrar.

Faculty are committed but feel overtaxed. While funding has been cut, class and student numbers and demand for services has increased, and there are now higher expectations for research. Faculty generally embrace the emphasis on research, but are not sure how to get there given their overall increased obligations

Many faculty feel they have to work in the summer. Three courses each term means that many teach every single day, seven days a week. Exhaustion impacts effectiveness as a teacher; faculty members describe their level of commitment as comparable to entering a “monastic order”. The institution has experienced great change since last NASAD study - five deans and a major recession; Art History class sizes have become larger due to budget; the number of TA’s has been cut. Art History faculty report reading 80 student papers on a regular weekly basis. While programs have been reconfigured, faculty are clear that they haven’t sacrificed rigor. They are grateful to the current Chair for bringing back tech support and new assistants, and seem to be able to get to their to-do lists.

Faculty view their primary role as guides to the students. They expose students to many different experiences in the classroom, including rigorous peer review. They show students how art fits into their lives, and forms their experience. They teach students how to see. One way in which the institution measures success is by how many student change majors. Many move into Art. Few leave, and it is now difficult for non-majors to get classes. Student growth is another measurement. Over time students become colleagues in the community.

There is strong support from the Chair for research and career advice for Assistant Professors, though they are struggling with the realities of the new importance of research to the university. Assistant professors college-wide are asked to be active, and as a result are asking chairs to protect and explain issues around percentage of teaching/practice/service. Associate and full professors do not have as many resources as Assistants. Sabbatical competition is a new reality and an issue for all, as is support for continuation of research at upper levels.

Faculty say that they have a voice and that the new Dean is a good listener. All faculty engaged in the Self-Study process report that the Self-Study “feels accurate” to them, and describe their condition as “battered dedication”.

Due to a lack of staff and/or TA assistance, the Art Historians suggest they must constantly scan images for classes, which may be an inefficient use of their time. Full-time staff used to accomplish this task. Subscription services for images are limited as well. Non-western art history is a critical interface with multicultural histories and futures.

Issues such as timely notification of teaching assignments and sabbatical leaves appear to be another result of change and budget exigencies. Faculty do not have studio space, which in San Francisco constitutes a unique expense required to complete research. There is no annual stipend to buy materials and/or books. Faculty observed that art creative practice proposals do not do well in university-wide grant competition with sciences and other disciplines. Whether their work is undervalued or not understood is a question to consider. Faculty engaged with digital practice have lost funds that might keep their research and teaching on the leading edge.

## **F. Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety**

References:

San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self-Study, pp 29-36,  
*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, II.E,F, pp 62-64*

On-site interviews with faculty, students, staff and administrators.

- Most facilities are spacious, well organized, and appropriate to purpose.
- Emerging Media and Technologies (formerly CIA) seem under supported in terms of contemporary technologies, social media platforms, diversity of diffused technologies, i.e., computers, tablets, smartphone technology, software.
- Textiles and printmaking facilities were particularly well organized for optimal student use.
- Faculty is strong, productive and committed to the success of the program and students through stewardship of the studio facilities and classrooms in which they teach.
- Graduate students spaces appear to be adequate to support their work. But not all grads have studio space. There is a plan for summer 2015 to reallocate and rededicate studio spaces.
- Painting studios were adequately ventilated. In all of the studios there did not appear to be dedicated “blade” (Stanly, scalper) or disposal place(s).
- Photography spaces were excellent, but seemed disproportionate allocated given the work in analog and digital practice. There is concern that the lighting studio will be lost and converted to general use. The institution may wish to consider repurposing the redundant darkroom space.
- Ceramics spaces were problematic and did not appear to meet NASAD standards. Issues of concern include silica abatement, jerry rigged electrical systems (lighting), an absence of OSHA signage, no available Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), etc. There exist many handmade and inappropriate signs, ineffectual in giving required and workplace compliance information.
- Sculpture is undersupplied in electrical power, and therefore is in need of an overhaul. No Material Safety Data Sheets were evident.
- Ventilation for welding needs to be reviewed related to downward and floor ventilation of heated contaminants. No Material Safety Data Sheets were evident.
- Lecture space projectors appear inadequate to represent the detail and specificity of visual language for art history.
- Classes are crowded and over-enrollment in some areas as reported by faculty and students. There does not appear to be any real sequencing of courses - from basic to advance which results in no shared visual language.
- There is concern about the loss of dedicated space for Digital Media Arts Emerging Technologies which appears to have created a loss of identity and community for students engaged in this medium.
- The gallery spaces are of high standard.
- A review of three classes was very positive and provided evidence of engaged learning, discovery, and student-centered learning. However, syllabi lacked learning outcomes and assessment criteria. It is recommended that the institution review syllabi and develop clear learning outcomes and assessment criteria for both teaching assessment clarity (robust assessment) and student guidance and expectation.

It is unclear how the institution meets NASAD standards regarding Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety (NASAD *Handbook 2014–2015*, II. F.1.a., b., c., d., e., f., g., h., and i.)

## **G. Library and Learning Resources**

References:

SFSU Self-Study, pp. 37-39; SECTION IV, MDP I G.  
NASAD *Handbook 2014-2015*, G1 – G7

The J. Paul Leonard Library is an impressive and accessible facility with solid art book and journal holdings related to all of the media areas represented in the Art Department. A digital media studio supports multimedia production. The library is fully staffed, with a solid budget for acquisitions, and provides appropriate support to faculty and students.

## **H. Recruitment, Admission-Retention, Record Keeping, Advisement, and Student Complaints**

References:

Self-Study, pp. 40-45; SFSU web site Bulletin

NASAD *Handbook 2014-2015*, II.H. pp. 66-67.

On-site interviews with faculty (individual and group), students (group) and administrators (individual).

### **Recruitment**

It appears that most undergraduate recruiting efforts are aimed at internal or local populations. Many of the department's routine activities, including exhibitions, serve as undergraduate recruitment tools. Gallery exhibitions and department activities are promoted on campus and through university/college/department social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

Recruiting is handled the same way for all four undergraduate concentrations. The University Admissions Office represents the Art Department in most matters of recruitment. Degree programs are publicized in the University Bulletin and the department website.

Recruitment occurs more specifically through University publications and designated visiting days. Sneak Preview – a designated visiting day devoted to students who have been accepted to the University, and their parents - presents information about the University itself and General Education, and departments provide presentations about their programs throughout the day. Parents and prospective students often visit and seek information about the program at these times, as well as independently.

Regarding broader recruiting efforts, Art Department faculty are active locally, as well as nationally and internationally and attract many students – both undergraduate and graduate. Outstanding students are encouraged to apply by faculty.

### **Admission**

The University did not admit any undergraduate or graduate students to its programs in Spring 2010 and Spring 2013. There are no portfolio requirements for undergraduate admission. In Fall 2009, the department had nearly 750 declared undergraduate majors and minors. At that time the department began to manage the number of enrolled students in response to budget cuts, and a 12-unit “core” requirement served to reduce the number of majors. This process allows the department to both manage enrollments and assess students' aptitude and prospects. This process appears to be working. While “core” students are not yet declared majors, their status appears not to impact Art budget allocation within the larger institution.

Graduate admission requires application and portfolio review. Until 2014 review and decision making was made within media disciplines, but is now a two-step disciplinary presentation/departmental review and decision making process, requiring group conversations about all applicants before they are accepted into the program (<http://www.sfsu.edu/~bulletin/current/genadmit.htm>).

### **Record Keeping**

Record keeping is thorough and appropriate to the department and institution (<http://lca.sfsu.edu/students/student-achievement-andresource-center>).

### **Retention**

The University policies on Retention appear to be appropriate and functional. The University Registrar outlines grade point average benchmarks required for students to remain in good standing on its website and publishes the information in its “Academic Standards”. The university sends emails with resources and support information to students whose grades appear to be falling. When a student’s GPA falls below 2.0, departments get involved directly (<http://www.sfsu.edu/~admisrec/reg/probation.html> and <http://www.sfsu.edu/~bulletin/current/acadstnd.htm#ppg26>).

### **Record Keeping**

Appropriate files are kept on each undergraduate and graduate student from application and acceptance to graduation. Files contain letters of recommendation, a statement of purpose, transcripts, petitions, waivers, review forms, graduate approved program forms, examination results, grade slips, and award of degree forms.

### **Advisement**

Undergraduate advisors meet with their advisees a minimum of once a semester according to individual needs. All advisers are expected to advise students for major requirements and to keep records of their meetings with students. Students are encouraged to seek career guidance about graduate schools and alternative courses of action for career advancement. Students may also receive further guidance through the Advising Center related to problems in General Education requirements. The department currently has one certified General Education Adviser, with whom they can meet. The department plans to appoint an undergraduate coordinator to address any gaps in faculty advising, and the College of Liberal and Creative Arts created an advising center in Fall 2014, which promises to provide more accessible, personalized and wider support for students in the college.

Graduate student advisement process is normative. Students are expected to choose an adviser in the first weeks after starting their program. The adviser confers with the student about their research over time, and often follows up as Chair of the student’s thesis or creative work committee. MA and MFA advising packets describe all department policies regarding record keeping, retention and advisement for its graduate programs.

### **Student Complaints**

The Self-Study did not address student complaints, though SFSU has a detailed and informative web page dealing with complaint process and advice.

## **I. Published Materials and Web Sites**

### References:

San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study, p 46  
NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, I.I pp 67–69  
On site interviews with administrators and faculty

In examining the Self-Study, published materials and web sites, it was difficult to see that the Art Department has become a School of Art, though this information was confirmed verbally from a number of sources. That said, the visitors encourage the institution edit and align the published and interactive materials as soon as possible.

There was a range of published materials supporting the courses offered and promoting the special events of the schools galleries and visiting artists. The website is comprehensive and informative. Problems relate to links not connecting to appropriate sections of information i.e. “Faculty + Staff” - connects to “Masters of Fine Art Application Procedures”, several broken links need to be addressed. This maybe the result of lack of placement and assignment of appropriate responsibilities (web master) within the current administrative structure at department or university level.

Creating a “San Francisco Fine Arts Gallery” presence on social media is an excellent idea. The institution may wish to this consider this and other avenues of social media to reach out to communities, Alumni and Donors. These visual language services, known to this current generation are worth considering and using as ways to enhance outreach strategic engagement.

### **J. Branch Campuses, External Programs, Use of the Institution’s Name for Educational Activities Operated Apart from the Main Campus or the Primary Educational Program (if applicable)**

While some faculty described community involvement, there are no external programs described in the Self-Study nor were any confirmed during on site interviews.

### **K. Community Involvement; Articulation With Other Schools**

SFSU has comprehensive articulation agreements within the California state system and appears to be in compliance with NASAD standards.

### **L. Non-Degree-Granting Programs for the Community (if applicable)**

NA

### **M. Review of Specific Operational Standards for (1) All Institutions of Higher Education for which NASAD is the Designated Institutional Accreditor and/or (2) Proprietary Institutions (if applicable)**

NA

### **N. Programs, Degrees, and Curricula**

References: *San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study*  
NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, II.I pgs 68c–II.L.pgs70  
[http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/policies/grading/Grading\\_Policy\\_and\\_Systems](http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/policies/grading/Grading_Policy_and_Systems)

## **1. Credit Hours**

### **a. Definitions and Procedures**

#### **1) Definition of Credit and Methods of Assigning Credit**

For all CSU degree programs and courses bearing academic credit, the “credit hour” is defined as “the amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or

At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.” A credit hour is assumed to be a 50-minute period. In courses, in which “seat time” does not apply, a credit hour may be measured by an equivalent amount of work, as demonstrated by student achievement.

Within the Department, it appears that all syllabi indicate how course credits correspond to various types of activity (lecture/discussion, studio, studio and recitation) and how much time out-of-class can be expected on a weekly basis. Based on an examination of sample syllabi, it appears that methods of assigning credit regularly meet standards.

#### **2) Procedures Used to Make Credit Hour Assignments**

Required credits for degrees offered in the Department of Art are as follows: The Department of Art offers three degrees: a 46-unit liberal arts Bachelor of Arts in Art degree with four concentrations; Undergraduate Art History, Art Education, Studio, Dual Studio/Art History. The mission is

To provide a broad, inclusive understanding of art in its myriad iterations including skilled creative production, research and writing, and art education in liberal arts context.

To enrich the general education of non-art majors.

To supply instruction in the visual arts, art history, and art education for students who study art as a second major or minor.

Transcripts were available for inspection and reviewed at onsite visit. Transcripts were consistent and appropriate. Transcripts match listings for each of the degrees/major-minors offered.

As noted in the Self-Study, lecturer funds have been unpredictable and are awarded by the college dean as the budgets unfold. The number of classes the department is permitted to offer remains subject to the demands of the budget, rather than the needs of the students. Lecturer taught classes vary and Department faculty have been asked to carefully consider the rotation of courses in their respective disciplines to address student need for meeting major requirements.

The Department largely controls space allocations for Art classes with the exception of a large, university-held lecture hall, FA 193, in the newer section on the Fine Arts building. Studio

classrooms are specialized with specific equipment for the seven areas of studio emphases, and remain under the jurisdiction of the department.

The undergraduate program, curriculum/s goals and objective described and documented in the Self-Study; and observed onsite appears to meet NASAD standards in all areas.

#### **b. Evaluation of Compliance**

The institution appears to with NASAD standards

### **2. Specific Curricula**

#### **b. Individual Curricula**

##### Baccalaureate Programs

References: *San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study, pp 71- 149*  
*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, IX. A-P, pp 98-113* <http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/programs/lca/art>

#### **Bachelor of Arts – 4 years: Art (Studio Art): 120 units**

Status: Renewal of Final Approval for Listing

The curriculum described and documented in the Self-Study appears to meet NASAD standards in all areas. The BA degree, 120 credit hours in total, requires a minimum of 46 units in the Art Department. Students in all four concentrations are required to take 12 units of introductory courses in art history and studio, referred to as a “core,” before undertaking upper division work in their selected concentration.

#### **Bachelor of Arts – 4 years: Art (Art History): 120 units**

Status: Renewal of Final Approval for Listing

The curriculum described and documented in the Self-Study appears to meet NASAD standards in all areas.

#### **Bachelor of Fine Art – 4 years: Studio Art: 125 units**

Status: Renewal of Final Approval for Listing

The curriculum described and documented in the Self-Study appears to meet NASAD standards in all areas. The BFA degree requires 125 credit hours in total. The visitors observed students engaged in a printmaking class. The students were clearly productive and worked within a range of printmaking activities which were on display, evidencing a robust program of printmaking, publication and creation of artist books. Instruction was on a one-one basis with students evidencing engagement, discovery and learning.

#### **Bachelor of Fine Art – 4 years: Art and Visual Culture Education: 125 units**

Status: Renewal of Final Approval for Listing

The curriculum described and documented in the Self-Study appears to meet NASAD standards in all areas. The BFA degree requires 125 credit hours in total. The visitors observed two classes, one in printmaking and one in exhibition and curation. Both classes were robust, with evident student engagement discovery and learning. Class size was appropriate to space.

As stated in the Self-Study and confirmed in onsite interviews with undergraduate students (page 8 section B1), the length of time to complete the degrees in Studio and Art History are inconsistent. One conclusion is that there are simply not enough sections of courses in general, and studio courses in particular to meet demand. This is supported by comments in the 2013-14

Senior Exit Surveys. Graduating students say they have experienced difficulty enrolling in courses required to complete the major; more than half stated that there were not enough sections and that courses were not offered with reasonable frequency (Fall 13, pages 15, 16, 18, 24). Courses students had the most difficulty getting into were lower division studios, the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR), which is taught in the major, and all painting and drawing courses (Fall 13, pages 8, 11, 12, 22). At the same time, many of those same students indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of instruction, the average ranking of studio courses was 1.7 and art history 2.2 (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being positive)

### Graduate Programs

#### **Master of Arts – 2 years: Art (Art History)**

References: *San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study, pp 47- 60*  
*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, XVI. B, pp 136-137* <http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/programs/lca/art>

Status: Renewal of Final Approval for Listing

This program is currently on temporary suspension due to declining enrollments and budget shortfalls, resulting in an inability to staff necessary seminar offerings. Faculty are engaged in considering the curriculum and structure of the program for the future.

The curriculum described and documented in the Self-Study appears to meet NASAD standards in all areas, including title/content consistency, recent student work samples, development of competencies. Given the status of the program, effectiveness cannot be assessed at this time.

#### **Master of Fine Arts – 2 years: Art Studio**

References: *San Francisco State University, Department of Art Self Study, pp 59-70*  
*NASAD Handbook 2014–2015, XIV. A,B,C. pp 131-136 XVII A. p142*  
<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/programs/lca/art>

Status: Renewal of Final Approval for Listing

The MFA program at San Francisco State University is an intensive three-year program that immerses students in the practice, theory, and criticism of contemporary art. Title and curriculum is normative. The curriculum is interdisciplinary within the Art unit, with a strong emphasis on studio experience. Major areas in studio art comprise 45 units (75%), Art History 6 units (10%) and Academic Electives at 9 units (15%) culminating in the standard 60 units for the MFA in Studio Art. There is no written thesis required, instead in its place is a required public exhibition of culminating works in the Thesis Exhibition. All MFA students design their course choices with a faculty advisor.

Courses appear to be appropriate to the degree, including critique-seminars, studio electives, and classes in art history and theory. The Art History requirement is only 10% of the degree requirements and an additional 15% of ‘academic electives’ are not specified but described as “concerned with visual media”. The institution may wish to specify the coursework required in these areas and therefore the competencies students are expected to develop.

Visiting artists’ lectures, internships, and teaching assistantships, and multiple opportunities for on campus exhibitions enhance the curriculum and prepare students for professional careers and teaching at the college level. The interdisciplinary program supports diverse approaches to artistic medium and process, while stressing technical and conceptual rigor in all aspects of studio practice. The small scale of the program provides students wide access to one-on-one interaction



with all faculty. The faculty supports art practice as visual research and encourages experimentation across media in the department, and within the larger university community.

There are approximately fifteen graduate students enrolled in the MFA program, representing all three years of the curriculum. A number of students are from local communities, but there are also students from other parts of the country, attracted to SFSU for different reasons, including strong ethnic studies, non-traditional photography program, strong painting faculty. All agreed that the cross-disciplinary approach of the program is very important. The diversity of students on campus and the small program seem to be a draw. Students describe themselves as a tight knit community the members of which work with each other and feel 'close' to the faculty, who expose them to "many points of view." Students report that seminars taken during all three years cause professors to know their work, and often direct them to appropriate professional opportunities.

Students appreciate the faculty who represent a "huge" range of art approaches and media, and as professionals who understand the world students are entering. Students also cited important coursework beyond the studio, including a writing course, specific to art that has taught them to be clear communicators. They described the teaching seminar and an annual New York trip in which every graduate student participates (meeting with a spectrum of art professionals, including curators, artists, gallerists, preparators among others) as critical opportunities to understand and demystify careers in art. Students say that they value the freedom to explore ideas and media across disciplines in the program, and opportunities available to conduct directed research and establish helpful methodologies.

Students expressed a desire to bring curators, gallerists and other professionals to visit and speak on campus. They would also appreciate paid teaching opportunities. As GTA's they get credit, but no salary. However, generous scholarships, residency opportunities, and facilities were noted as excellent. All of the graduate students appeared to agree that the faculty are "super supportive", open minded, and broadly knowledgeable, delivering "harsh critiques", but treating students with respect, though they wished for more graduate students in the conversation.

As noted above in this report, the visitors discovered that the institution offers the following programs by unit as noted. Comprehensive operational and curricular information was not included in the institution's Self-Study.

### **School of Cinema**

Master of Arts-2 years: Cinema Studies

Master of Fine Arts-3 years: Cinema

### **Department of Design and Industry**

Bachelor of Science-4 years: Industrial Design (Industrial Technology, Product Design and Development); Visual Communication Design

Master of Arts-1 year: Industrial Arts

### **Department of Consumer and Family Studies/Dietetics**

Bachelor of Science-4 years: Interior Design; Apparel Design

Master of Arts-1 year: Consumer and Family Studies (Interior, Apparel); Industrial Arts

The institution is asked to review NASAD requirements outlined in the *Handbook*, specifically the Rules of Practice and Procedures, Part II., Article I., Section 3. and to submit for review (Plan Approval and Final Approval for Listing) all programs which fall under the purview of NASAD.

### **3. Study of the Transcripts of Recent Graduates and Comparison with Catalog Statements**

Transcripts were available for inspection and reviewed at onsite visit. Transcripts were consistent and appropriate. Transcripts match listings for each of the degrees/major offered.

### **4. Exhibition**

Exhibition is a visible and robust aspect of the SFSU Art programs. There are three main objectives for exhibition in the Art Department, all related to its curriculum. Exhibitions augment the department's studio, art history and art education curricula student work and provide a means for assessment in a professional context. Exhibitions of the work of professional artists, both contemporary and historical, provide examples of professional achievement and highlight different approaches to art making, and exhibitions provide a vehicle to showcase faculty research and interests.

The Fine Arts Building is home to three formal venues which assist to meet curricular objectives - the Fine Arts Gallery, the Martin Wong Gallery and the ARTery. Informal exhibitions occur in the glass-enclosed cases that line the second floor halls, and spaces outside of the Fine Arts Building where ceramics and sculptures are temporarily installed. A new museum space is in planning stages.

#### Fine Arts Gallery

The Fine Arts Gallery program of exhibitions provides the most formal qualitative and evaluative approach to the department's goals and objectives for exhibition. For graduate MFA students the culminating exhibition at the end of the third year provides faculty a means to assess professional presentation and evaluate the work in the presence of the student, as well as to present their work to the campus and general public for viewing and critical feedback. Observable student work in the MFA Exhibition was solid and demonstrated outcomes of interdisciplinary study and practice. Work was competent and ambitious related to craft, media and content.

Exhibitions of professional work alternate with the student shows each semester, often involve Art Department faculty who participate as members of a constantly rotating Gallery Committee. Exhibitions reflect the diverse nature of the campus and community. Although not proscribed, the university mission of social justice and cultural inclusiveness is an important factor in how content is developed.

#### Martin Wong Gallery

The Martin Wong Gallery provides a venue for student exhibitions proposed by faculty and students. ART 670 Art As Inquiry, uses the space as part of a studio/exhibition experience in which graduate students present their research and undergraduates respond to their work by generating work in the same theme.

#### The ARTery

The Artery, under the supervision of Art Department faculty in Printmaking, has become a venue for work from the areas extensive student print collection as well as student work from current printmaking classes. The displays rotate frequently, changed by students who take classes in the discipline.

Informally, student artworks are presented in glassed-in cases that line the second floor of the art building, and in the garden outside the building. Faculty mount "pop-up" exhibitions in outdoor locations on the SFSU campus. Sculptural textile installations, and robotics and sculpture exhibitions appear in Fine Arts building halls, and on the deck that surrounds the newer section of

the Fine Arts Building. However, during the visit it was difficult to ascertain the quality of this student work as it was not identified by major or level and therefore a sense of how students were progressing at every level was not readily evident.

The Art Department presents exhibitions in other places on campus. In the Cesar Chavez Student Center, the student-run, student-funded Cesar Chavez Student Art Gallery shows both student and non-student artworks and is not affiliated with the Art Department.

In addition, recent off-campus exhibitions have been held at Pacifica Art Center, Magnolia Press, Artists Television Access and the annual California Ceramics conference in Davis, CA, and SFSU alumni are prominently featured at the annual ceramics exhibition at Fort Mason Center.

## **5. Art/Design Studies for the General Public**

NA

# **O. Art/Design Unit Evaluation, Planning, and Projections**

## **1. Evaluation, Planning, and Projections Development**

Massive change, planning, and projections were part of every conversation at the faculty, chair, dean and provosts level. Most are nascent, but with broad support from upper administration and faculty.

- Faculty is nervous but positive about the changing environment, and excited to embrace change.
- The new scale of faculty and programs is problematic in some areas, in others these changes present new opportunities for re-imagining programs; a shift in faculty scale allows for agility of thinking about relevancy and has the potential to create better communication between the disciplines.
- Faculty and administration are working to create an inclusive working environment.
- Faculty links to professional creative community support students in professional practice with outside world. These connections and interaction opportunities for students created through the faculty “demystify the artist and art world”.
- There is a strong sense of community among the undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of Art. This is directly related to the faculty being role models for students and their commitment to professional practice within the creative community of San Francisco and broader national and international creative communities.
- The recent introduction of technician support in printmaking and sculpture was noted and is deeply appreciated, freeing faculty to pursue curricular goals. This is echoed by students and faculty.
- The work of textiles to proactively bring in donations/material for student use is an example of good practice.

## **P. Standards Summary**

It is unclear how the institution meets NASAD standards regarding Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety (NASAD *Handbook 2014–2015*, II. F.1.a.b.c.d.e.f.g.h.i.).

It is not clear that all curricular programs have been submitted for review (NASAD *Handbook 2014-2015*, Rules of Practice and Procedures, Part II., Article I., Section 3.)

## **Q. Overview, Summary Assessment, and Recommendations for the Program**

### **1. Strengths**

- Most facilities are spacious, well organized, and appropriate to their purpose.
- Textiles and printmaking facilities were particularly well organized for optimal student use.
- Faculty is strong, productive and committed to the success of the program and students.
- Faculty are nervous but positive about the changing academic environment. At the same time they appear to be excited to embrace change.
- Shifts in faculty scale and demographics present legitimate opportunities to re-imagine programs.
- The new (smaller) scale of faculty and programs is problematic in some areas, in others it presents new opportunities for re-imagining and agility.
- Faculty and administrators are focused on creating an inclusive working environment.
- Faculty have strong, working links to professional creative communities at the regional, national and international levels.
- Faculty support students in professional practice, and describe the many options for entry into the profession. They work actively to demystify the artist and art world.
- There is a strong sense of community between undergraduates and graduates within the Department of Art.
- Faculty are role models for students, exhibiting their deep commitment to professional practice.
- The recent introduction of tech support in printmaking and sculpture is deeply appreciated, freeing faculty to pursue curricular goals.
- Materials costs for students are low.
- The Library supports the curricular programs offered.
- The Gallery spaces operate at a very high level.
- The full-time gallery director/faculty member is a terrific asset.

### **2. Recommendations for Short-term Improvement**

- Website and publication materials, as well as social media must be robust, well-design, and exciting and represent values of art practice, particularly as the institution commences its upcoming capital campaign.
- Photography spaces were excellent, but seemed disproportionate allocated given the work in analog and digital practice. There is some concern that the lighting studio will be converted to general use given that it is potentially an excellent and versatile workspace for its current purpose and its use might extend to other media disciplines. Redundant darkroom space might be better repurposed.
- Sculpture is undersupplied in electrical power and requires a general overhaul.
- Lecture space projectors are inadequate and therefore do not enable students to realize the detail and specificity of visual language offered in Art History courses.

### **3. Primary Futures Issues**

- The student body is very diverse although this diversity is not mirrored by the faculty. There are disparities in gender balance as women are not well represented. The Dean supports proactive recruiting initiatives in the future.
- The recovery from the 40% state funding cut and subsequent downsizing issues.

- Heavy workloads are problematic and could be addressed pro-actively in curricular restructuring.
- Clarity regarding progress toward promotion and tenure should be addressed. Based on conversation with faculty the University mission and related policy seem unclear in their relation to teaching, research mission and their respective values. There appears to be no history or structure to support a research culture, which appears to have favored teaching until relatively recently. New policies appear to give equal weight to teaching, research and service. Assistant Professors are concerned about the process, primarily because they find it to be ambiguous. Senior faculty report they are not protected and not in a position to mentor professional practice for junior faculty.
- Curriculum planning should be closely examined particularly given the current futures planning process and potential unintended consequences related to faculty load, curricular structure and revenue development.
- There appeared to be no real sequencing of courses (basic to advanced) resulting in the absence of a shared visual language.
- The institution may wish to define and articulate quantifiable, comprehensive student assessment criteria and outcomes.
- Graduate students spaces appear to be adequate to support graduate work, although not all graduates students have access to space. This situation could become an equity issue.

#### **4. Suggestions for Long-term Development**

- Develop high enrollment course options, beyond those offered by Art History, which will generate high SCH.
- Consider the excellent opportunities for collaboration and partnership with the Department of Design and Industry.
- Ensure all facilities are OSHA compliant.
- Undertake aggressive student and faculty recruiting, including identifying and visiting target national and international institutions.
- Focus on optimizing advancement and development efforts in the upcoming capital campaign in the context of strengths and futures planning for the academic programs.
- Consider investment in communications and development staff. The Art Department has many exceptional assets that could be made visible, to the benefit of the department and the university.
- Develop policy and resources to support faculty research.
- Identify and strengthen alumni, community and business relationships.