



Northern Illinois University

2016 Program Review Report

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Reporting Institution: Northern Illinois University
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Program: B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education (13.1302)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Science in Education (B.S.Ed.) in Art and Design Education prepares students for careers teaching art and serves as the foundation for Illinois Type 10 Special Licensure (K-12) in art. Program learning objectives are based on national and state standards for art and design teacher education. Globalization and changes in the use of technology and communications media have impacted art and design education resulting in the addition of new courses emphasizing the use of technology. The Illinois Department of Employment Security predicts stable demand for K-12 art educators from 2012 to 2014. Additionally, in 2014, the Chicago Public School District adopted a new cultural policy that commits CPS to providing opportunities for its students to study the arts each week. Beginning in fall 2015, students seeking licensure in the state will be required to meet a minimum baseline score on the edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment) administered by Pearson Publishing Company. The program has been adjusting its curriculum to ensure that students are prepared for this high-stakes licensure assessment. Finally, the program is offering a new general education course in strategic visual thinking.
- Major findings and recommendations: The NIU B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education has the largest enrollment (approximately sixty-five percent) of comparable programs at public universities in the state. In addition, the program accounts for approximately thirty-three percent of enrollments at all Illinois institutions offering the bachelor's in art education. In 2012, fifty-two percent of the degrees awarded by public institutions in art education were granted from NIU. Similarly, thirty-five percent of all art education bachelor's degrees awarded in the state were granted by NIU. The first cohort to take the edTPA assessment trial averaged eleven points higher than the Illinois cut score and higher than the Stanford University cut score for distinction. Graduates' placement rates in K-12 art teaching programs have been at or near one-hundred percent during the review period. The program engages students in program outreach through its Saturday school for K-10 students in the community.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, the program introduced a new course (ART 200) to better prepare students for the Entrance Portfolio Review. This has resulted in improved preparation for this review and students' Exit Portfolio Review is satisfactory as well. The program completed an employer survey to identify employers' preferences for specific course content and has adjusted its curriculum in response to the

findings. External feedback of students' performance on the edTPA has prompted a realignment of program standards. The program has worked to strengthen its ties with the Chicago Public Schools by having faculty serve on the CPS Higher Education Advisory Panel. It is anticipated that this relationship helps the program recruit a more diverse student body that will benefit the program as well as the whole School of Art and Design.

- Actions taken as a result of this review: In this review, the department is encouraged to enhance its marketing efforts to better publicize the outstanding employment prospects for its graduates. The program is encouraged to continue involving alumni in recruitment and placement efforts. The program is encouraged to consider whether it is possible to reduce credit hour requirements to be more comparable with those of other state institutions without impacting program quality. The program needs to continue to develop strategies that assure student success on the edTPA.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (review in five years to align with disciplinary accreditation).

Explanation: The B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education serves an important role in the state of Illinois, with a large percentage of enrollments and graduates compared to other public and private schools offering degrees with a similar CIP code. The program provides excellent training and opportunities for engagement that prepare students well for careers in art education. The program was judged to be very effective in the most recent visit of National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Program: M.S. in Art (13.1302)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Science (M.S.) in Art provides continuing professional education in the field of art education. Students are either already certified in K-12 art education and seeking additional credentials or have an undergraduate art-related degree and are seeking K-12 certification. Beginning in Fall 2015, certification in K-12 art education will require passing the edTPA, administered by Pearson Publishing Company. Assuring that students are well prepared for this licensure requirement has been a major focus of the program. The Illinois Department of Employment Security projects job stability with a small growth in the demand for K-12 teachers from 2012 to 2024. In addition, the Chicago Public Schools have adopted a new cultural policy that allows all CPS students opportunities to study each of the arts each week which has created additional demand for art teachers.

- Major findings and recommendations: NIU's M.S. in Art is a high quality program that offers diverse co-curricular learning experiences including community art exhibitions and its Saturday school for the local community. Students have won state and national teaching awards. Students' performance on the trial edTPA has been above the Stanford University mark for distinction. Student employment rates have also been approximately one hundred percent throughout the review period. However, enrollments in the M.S. in Art program have declined steadily throughout the review period (from thirteen students in 2009 to seven in 2012). The percentage of enrollments at NIU relative to other public institutions has remained relatively constant at approximately fifty-five percent. Enrollments at private institutions with on-line programs have been increasing and the attractiveness of on-line programs is likely to increase.
- Actions taken since the last review: In order to counter the loss in enrollments and better meet the demands of teachers who are currently employed and looking for increased credentials, the program is increasing its on-line offerings and offerings at NIU's Hoffman Estates and Naperville locations. The program has expanded relationships with middle schools in the community enabling it to provide engagement opportunities in the form of art education clinical experiences. The program has also worked to incorporate technological applications into art education. Finally, the program has adjusted its curriculum to better prepare students for the edTPA assessment.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program is encouraged to continue to explore increasing its on-line offerings and enhancing its offerings at NIU's suburban locations. The program needs to be more aggressive in its marketing efforts to better differentiate itself from its competitors, particularly on-line programs.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (An enrollment follow-up report is due in 2019).

Explanation: The M.S. in Art provides quality education that serves the continuing education needs of currently employed art educators and those with an undergraduate art-related degree that wish to obtain licensure to teach in K-12 art programs. The program maintains synergies (primarily faculty) with the B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education and Ph.D. in Art Education degrees. Declining enrollments have spurred the program to develop on-line offerings. An enrollment follow-up report assessing the effectiveness of the program's efforts to increase its on-line offerings is warranted.

Program: B.A./B.S. in Art (50.0701)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Art/Bachelor of Science (B.A./B.S.) in Art is one of two entry level baccalaureate degrees in the School of Art and Design (the other is the B.A. in Art History). The program provides a liberal arts education with flexibility for interdisciplinary coursework. The program is intended for students who have an interest in art but do not plan to become professional artists, designers, or K-12 educators. Graduates do find employment in arts-related fields, however, and are well prepared for careers in museums or art galleries, arts administration, and art journalism. Their liberal arts background provides a broad understanding of the audiences and context in which art is practiced. Graduates are also well prepared for advanced study in professional fields such as law.
- Major findings and recommendations: Shared with the B.F.A. in Studio Art degree, program faculty are a strength of the School of Art and Design. Faculty productivity is evidenced by high numbers of both solo and group exhibitions as well as invited presentations at other universities, museums, and galleries. The art museum, student organizations (Historia Artis and Arts Nova) within the School of Art and Design, and the visiting arts professor series provide numerous engagement opportunities for students.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review the program has introduced a number of actions intended to help boost enrollments. A recruitment coordinator position was established with responsibilities for conducting portfolio reviews for potential students, making high school and community college visits, organizing open house events, publicizing the program through social media, and managing the school's scholarship program. Over the review period, enrollments have increased from thirty-two students in 2010 to fifty-one students in 2014 with an increase in the percentage of minority students across this period (eighteen to thirty-one percent). The program has implemented a revised assessment plan which includes the addition of a capstone seminar where program student learning outcomes can be assessed.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Following this review, the B.A./B.S. in Art will be used as one of two entry points for study in the arts and a feeder program for the school's two limited admissions baccalaureate programs. In part, this change is intended to counter perceptions that the B.A./B.S. in Art is solely a landing pad for students who could not succeed in either the B.F.A. in Studio Art or B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education programs. It is anticipated that this change will help decrease stigmatization of the B.A. in Art degree and increase retention of students who are not accepted into either the B.F.A. in Studio Art or B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education degrees. Retention data will be monitored closely in coming years to determine the effects of this change. The recent addition of the B.S. in Art option has been designed to further broaden the program's appeal to prospective students. As a result of these changes, the program will redesign its marketing

and recruitment materials. The program also plans to add two introductory courses for non-majors that will become part of NIU's general education offerings.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (A follow-up report on the retention of majors who are not accepted into the school's limited admissions program is due in 2020).

Explanation: The B.A./B.S. in Art provides broad interdisciplinary training for students interested in art, but who do not intend to become artists, designers or educators. Making the degree one of the two entry points for the B.F.A. in Studio Art and the B.S.Ed. in Art and Design Education should help with recruitment and retention.

Program: M.A. in Art (50.0701)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: During the review period, students enrolled in the Masters of Art (M.A.) in Art elected one of two specializations: studio art or art history. The program was structured to prepare students for careers teaching art in higher education or as preparation for more advanced study. In addition, some students are practicing K-12 art educators who are looking for additional credentials to advance their career and/or salary. To a lesser degree, graduates may also obtain positions in the private sector in arts administration (i.e., in galleries or museums). In 2013, students interested in the Studio Art specialization were directed to the Masters of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Art and enrollments within the M.A. in Art with the studio art specialization were suspended. Generally, enrollments in the M.A. in Art have declined throughout the review period from fourteen students in 2010 to six students in 2014. This reflects a trend occurring at other Illinois public universities and NIU's percentage of the total number of students at public universities has remained steady at approximately twenty-two percent. External benchmarking of similar M.A. programs indicates that few programs currently maintain a specialization in studio art, opting instead to only offer an M.F.A. in Studio Art.
- Major findings and recommendations: The M.A. in Art program benefits from the quality faculty and engagement activities offered through the School of Art and Design. These include the Visiting Arts Program, Elizabeth Allen Visiting Scholars, Historia Artis, the Graduate Arts Association, Arts Nova, and the Ceramics Student Association. Alumni support the program through donations, internships, and career placement assistance. A recent (2010) visit of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) raised concerns that—for those in the studio art specialization—the program appears to be a “fall

back” for those who do not pass the review to continue in the M.F.A. program. NASAD evaluators also indicated that the specialization in art history is well suited for students who wish to continue onto the Ph.D. or who plan to teach at institutions that do not require the terminal degree (e.g., community colleges).

- Actions taken since the last review: As previously noted, since the last review the program has closed the studio art specialization to new students. In part, this decision is a response to the NASAD finding that this specialization is viewed as a landing pad for those who cannot be successful in the M.F.A. in Art. The School of Art and Design has added a recruitment officer to assist with external outreach activities and foster increased enrollments.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Following this review, the M.A. in Art is encouraged to focus on recruitment and enrollment. It is not clear whether enrollment declines are a reflection of broader trends affecting all public institutions or a result of the decision to close the specialization in studio art to new students. Either way the program is encouraged to develop strategies to further differentiate NIU’s program from those of its competitors. The program is studying the market for an M.A. in Art History and assessing whether or not it would be advantageous to offer a Ph.D. in Art History or an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Art.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (A follow-up report on enrollments is due in 2019).

Explanation: The M.A. in Art with a specialization in art history provides quality training for students preparing for further study in art history and for currently employed educators looking to enhance their career/salary.

Program: B.F.A. in Studio Art (50.0702)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in Studio Art is a professional degree program for students in art and design, requiring concentrated study in a specific studio area with the objective of preparing students for professional careers in art and design. Students choose concentrated study in one of three broad areas: two-dimensional fine arts (e.g., painting, drawing, or graphic design); three-dimensional fine arts (e.g., sculpting, jewelry making, or ceramics); or, design (e.g., multi-media, photography). Students must successfully complete a junior portfolio review in order to continue in the program. Students choosing the fine arts emphases are prepared for careers as artists and are

often self-employed. Students choosing a design emphasis are often employed in commercial/industrial settings. According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the Occupational Outlook Handbook the number of artist related positions is projected to be relatively flat while there are projections of moderate growth (four to six percent) in design related professions from 2012 to 2022.

- Major findings and recommendations: Despite falling enrollments over the review period (four hundred thirty-six students in 2010 dropping to three hundred twenty-nine students in 2014), NIU has maintained a consistent proportion (approximately twenty-five percent) of the B.F.A. enrollments in Illinois public institutions. The program contributes to campus diversity by maintaining high percentages of female (approximately sixty percent) and minority (approximately twenty-three percent) students. However, an area of current concern is the relatively low percentage of minority graduates (fourteen percent in 2010 and five percent in 2014). The program maintains a good balance between native and transfer students. The program also provides many opportunities for student engagement in external projects through its visiting artists program, education outreach efforts, and exhibitions.
- Actions taken since the last review: During the last review the program was encouraged to introduce a freshman portfolio review to provide more formative feedback for students in advance of the sophomore portfolio review. The freshman review was implemented as a capstone-like experience for students completing their first year. Sophomore portfolio reviews are used to assess students' readiness for specialized advanced work and to limit retention. As of fall 2015, the program will become a limited admission program where incoming freshman first declare the B.A. in Art and then are admitted to the B.F.A. based on their performance in the sophomore portfolio review. The School of Art and Design now has a dedicated recruitment officer to manage social media, external informational events, and pre-enrollment advising.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review the program is working on ways to increase student graduation rates with a particular emphasis on minority student degree completion. Pursuant to a finding of the school's accreditor, the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), the program has hired an external consultant to review the visual communications emphasis of the B.F.A. program. The program has also eliminated the distinction between the 2-D and 3-D Studio Arts in favor of a single studio emphasis with an enhanced set of core requirements. The program is implementing more robust rubrics to assist with assessment and continuous improvement efforts. The program is also encouraged to continue to focus on recruitment and find ways to involve alumni in its recruitment and retention efforts. Lastly, the program is encouraged to develop strategies to further differentiate NIU's program from those of its competitors.

Outcome

- Decision:

__x__ Program in good standing (review in five years to align with disciplinary accreditation).

Explanation: The B.F.A. in Studio Art is one of the largest B.F.A. programs at a public institution in Illinois. The program makes important contributions to the overall diversity of the student body at NIU, provides numerous engaged learning opportunities, and prepares students for a variety of careers as artists and designers.

Program: M.F.A. in Art (50.0702)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The primary objective of the Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Art degree is to develop professional, productive artists and designers. The degree is also recognized as the terminal degree for students planning careers in higher education as artists or designers. Students choose an emphasis in either fine arts or design. Some of the demand for the program comes from teachers who are currently employed in K-12 public schools or community colleges that are seeking to advance in rank or salary. Program enrollments have declined somewhat over the review period from fifty-two students in 2010 to thirty-seven students in 2014, however, NIU's share of students enrolled in Illinois public institutions has remained relatively constant (at approximately twenty-four percent). According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the demand for college level arts teachers is expected to rise approximately fourteen percent and the demand for art and design workers in the commercial sector is expected to rise about six percent.
- Major findings and recommendations: The M.F.A.in Art provides a diverse array of co-curricular learning experiences for students. Students are given the opportunity to showcase their work across varied venues within the university and in the Chicagoland region. M.F.A. students have had their work accepted in numerous regional, national, and international exhibits. Graduates have excellent employment prospects and find work teaching art in institutions of higher education, as curators in museums/galleries, and as professionals in the private sector.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review the program has implemented procedures to help improve degree completion including: increased faculty advising, a revised student handbook, and changing the number of credit hours for studio art courses from three to four. Implementing these measures did produce a bump in the number of graduates beginning in 2012 and increased NIU's share of graduates from Illinois public institutions from eighteen to thirty percent. Findings from the 2010 accreditation review of the School of Art and Design by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) that have also been addressed include: increasing the number of classes offered for graduate students and hiring an external evaluator to recommend changes to the visual communications emphasis in the B.F.A. and M.F.A. degree programs. Recommendations from the external review that have been implemented include: changing from a limited

retention to a limited admissions process and publishing criteria for the admissions portfolio review.

- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review the program is encouraged to develop marketing strategies for attracting students and increasing enrollments. The program needs to continue to work on differentiating itself from competitors offering the M.F.A. in Art degree. The program has identified the need to update facilities to incorporate new technologies in digital fabrication and multi-media design. New rubrics have been developed to help improve assessment of student learning outcomes. Data collection using the revised rubrics is underway.

Outcome

- Decision:

__x__ Program in good standing (review in five years to align with disciplinary accreditation).

Explanation: The M.F.A. in Art is a terminal degree for those wishing to teach art in colleges and universities. Graduates develop mastery of techniques and technology within a chosen media that prepares them well for future employment.

Program: B.A. in Art History (50.0703)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: Students electing the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Art History acquire an overview of the history of world art and visual culture. Students gain research skills that include sophisticated visual analysis, analytical reasoning and effective visual, written and oral communication. The degree prepares people for careers in museums, libraries, arts journalism and conservation, as well as sales. The American Bar Association reports that students with a B.A. in Art History tend to do well in law school. Art history courses are required of all majors in the School of Art and Design and the program provides substantial offerings in the university's general education program. Enrollments in the major are down over the review period (from twenty-eight students in 2010 to eleven students in 2014) reflecting a trend occurring at other Illinois public institutions with the same major. Indeed, the program's share of state enrollments has remained relatively constant at approximately eighteen percent throughout the review period.
- Major findings and recommendations: The program makes significant contributions to NIU's general education program. Historia Artis provides a means for students to get

involved in an arts history organization. The program has numerous opportunities for student engagement through field trips to Chicago area museums, work with local galleries, and involvement in faculty research. Responses to the university's annual alumni survey indicate that art history graduates are satisfied with their degree, satisfied with the time to completion, and that the degree prepared them well for their present jobs. In 2010 the National Association for Schools of Art and Design reaccredited the program for the maximum ten-year period.

- Actions taken since the last review: In the last review the program was encouraged to revise its student learning outcomes to more clearly define the skills that students will acquire during the program. This review has been completed. The assessment methods have also been modified to include additional formative measures and capstone experiences.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Improved recruitment of majors (both native and transfer students) is a priority for the program. Art history faculty are expanding workshops for regional high schools and offerings of Advance Placement (AP) Art History courses. The program is encouraged to increase alumni involvement in recruiting and fundraising. The program is encouraged to consider offering the degree and service courses in an on-line format to help bolster enrollments.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (A follow-up report on enrollments is due in 2019).

Explanation: The B.A. in Art History is a quality program with good student and faculty accomplishments. The program has strong internal demand through its general education courses and the art history requirements of other majors in the School of Art and Design. Enrollments of majors are a concern.

Program: Ph.D. in Art Education (50.0799)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Art Education was initiated in 2008. Prior to the formation of this program within the School of Art and Design in the College of Visual and Performing Arts, interested students chose an art education specialization within the Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction offered by the College of Education. Since this transition, enrollment in the program has grown from twelve to sixteen students. The program requires sixty semester hours beyond the master's, emphasizing rigorous research training, art theory and its philosophical development, and applications of

new technologies and pedagogies in art education. The degree enables graduates to conduct original scholarship concerning teaching and learning within the fine arts and other forms of visual culture. Students must pass a qualifying exam upon completion of their coursework and must complete a dissertation of original research. Program graduates are prepared to become scholars and researchers at colleges and universities as well as being prepared for careers in leadership positions in various aspects of visual arts education. Both the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics project modest job growth in art education. Many countries serving as benchmarks for high levels of K-12 educational achievement (such as Finland) emphasize infusion of the arts in their curriculum. Graduates of NIU's Ph.D. in Art Education find employment in national and international higher education institutions.

- Major findings and recommendations: The program is experiencing steady enrollment demand and is able to be competitive in recruiting both nationally and internationally. External benchmarking of graduate stipends versus NIU's recruitment rivals (Ohio State, Arizona State, Pennsylvania State, and Columbia Teacher's College) indicates that the program could be more successful in recruiting with increased graduate stipends. Program faculty have been productive with scholarly publications, presentations, external grants, and exhibitions. There is a high level of student involvement in faculty scholarly productivity. Since 2008, one hundred percent of program graduates have been successful in finding employment in higher education. Students and faculty have formal collaborative relationships with external entities such as the Chicago Public School System and National Changhua University of Education in Taiwan.
- Actions taken since the last review: The Ph.D. in Art Education was initiated in 2008 and, therefore, this is its first full review. However, the program has initiated its own alumni survey as a means of maintaining close contact with its graduates and obtaining feedback that could impact curricular design and delivery. As a result of these efforts, program faculty are emphasizing research methodology as a means of better preparing art educator scholars for future employment.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review, the program is working to increase both total number and diversity of students enrolled in the program. The program is exploring ways to increase graduate student stipends in order to be more competitive with other well-regarded programs.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (review in five years to align with disciplinary accreditation).

Explanation: The Ph.D. in Art Education is a relatively new program, but has experienced steady growth in student enrollments, strong demand for its graduates, and high levels of faculty productivity.

Program: B.A. in Theatre Studies (50.0501)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Art (B.A.) in Theatre Studies provides broad exposure to theatre arts within the context of a liberal arts education. Graduates are prepared for a wide variety of positions in the entertainment industry including performance, technological support, as well as management of facilities and productions. According to the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, the demand for actors, designers, performers, and related entertainment workers is expected to grow at a rate that matches the average for all occupations. Enrollments in the program have declined somewhat from thirty-nine to thirty-two students despite moving from a selective admissions to open enrollment process. Because the B.A. in Theatre Studies shares the same CIP code as the B.F.A. in Theatre Arts it is difficult to say what proportion of Illinois public enrollments in B.A. programs are at NIU. However, the B.A. accounts for approximately twenty percent of NIU combined B.A. and B.F.A. enrollments and this percentage shrank across the review period. During the review period, renovation to Stevens Building were approved and construction has commenced, but has not been completed. A modern facility is expected to enhance recruitment in the program.
- Major findings and recommendations: Students in the B.A. in Theatre Studies contribute to seven major theatre productions each year. These productions not only provide tremendous engagement opportunities for students, but also are important cultural events for the members of the DeKalb community. Faculty maintain strong ties with the performing arts community in Chicago which helps provide opportunities for program graduates. Although promising methods for assessing student learning outcomes are present within the program (e.g., a competency exam and required portfolio), little quantitative data are being collected and analyzed. Greater rigor in collecting and analyzing data related to these student work products could produce valuable insights into the program's strengths and areas for improvement for student learning.
- Actions taken since the last review: The previous program review (in 2007) primarily focused on deficiencies with the School's facilities, raising issues related to safety, antiquated classrooms, and out of date technology. The Stevens Building renovation should address most of these concerns. The program has updated its curriculum with the addition of a voice over class and more intensive stage management emphasis within the program. As previously mentioned, the program also removed its limited admissions requirement.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program is encouraged to further differentiate the B.A. and B.F.A. degrees. Recruitment materials and events should emphasis the career options that are available with a B.A. in Theatre Studies. The program is encouraged to be more systematic in its compilation and analysis of assessment data for program improvement.

Outcome

- Decision:

__x__ Program in good standing (A follow-up report on enrollments and on the systematic implementation of the program's assessment plan is due in 2019).

Explanation: The B.A. in Theatre Studies is an accredited program that broadly prepares students for a variety of careers in the theatre arts. Renovation of the Stevens Building should positively impact student enrollment faculty recruitment. Monitoring of enrollments and assessment is needed.

Program: B.F.A. in Theatre Arts (50.0501)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor's in Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in Theatre Arts provides professional training for students who are in careers in theatre and dance. Students choose an emphasis in one of the following areas: acting, dance performance, or design and technology. Two of the emphases are limited admissions (acting, and design and technology). Students are recruited from all over the country, primarily through the School's participation in United Auditions and events held in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Increasingly, the B.F.A. is seen as the entry level requirement for a professional career in theatre arts. Enrollments in the program have remained relatively steady across the review period, with the B.F.A. accounting for eighty percent of the joint B.A. and B.F.A. enrollments reported for this CIP code. NIU's program is the second largest among public institutions offering the B.A. or B.F.A. within Illinois.
- Major findings and recommendations: The B.F.A. in Theatre Arts has a strong experiential learning component through internships and on-campus theatre productions. The program is nationally accredited and able to attract quality students from across the nation. The program has a substantial budget devoted to recruiting students but only approximately sixty percent ultimately graduate. Although the program has established an assessment committee, gaps in the reporting of data make it difficult to see trends that can aid in program improvement efforts.
- Actions taken since the last review: As noted with the B.A. in Theatre Studies, findings from the previous program review (in 2007) focused on the inadequacies of the program classrooms and production facilities. Renovation of the Stevens Building which were initiated, but not yet completed, during the review period should help address these issues. The only major curricular change has been the addition of a voice over class. During the review period, the school was reaccredited by the National Association of Schools of

Theatre.

- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program is being more aggressive in its efforts to retain students in the program. First and second year students are assigned to individual faculty members for academic and career advising. During renovation of the Stevens Building, the program holds “family” gatherings to help promote a sense of belongingness among students. The program is encouraged to continue the work begun by its assessment committee and be more rigorous in the collection of data so that the program can discern trends and see issues that need improvement. Given the expense of recruiting students, the program is encouraged to track students who enroll but do not graduate in order to see whether these students leave NIU or switch to another major (such as the B.A.).

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (a follow up report on retention and on the systematic implementation of the program’s assessment plan is due in 2019).

Explanation: This nationally accredited program is the second largest of public institutions in Illinois offering this degree. Graduates are well trained and experience success in their careers. Monitoring of retention and assessment is warranted.

Program: M.F.A. in Theater Arts (50.0501)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Theater Arts is the terminal professional training degree intended to provide intensive artistic instruction in theatre arts for students preparing for careers in theatre and theatre-related areas. The M.F.A. program is a three year curriculum intended to provide professional studies in one of the specialization areas of: acting or design and technology. The U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook states that overall employment of actors, designers, performers, and related workers is expected to grow about as fast as the average. The School of Theatre and Dance is well supported within the College of Visual and Performing Arts as well as within the university. M.F.A. students take full advantage of the academic offerings across campus while maintaining their centrality to the life and work of the School
- Major findings and recommendations: The M.F.A. program relies on the talents, skills, and passion of the faculty. M.F.A. students benefit greatly from faculty in all the areas of instruction, as their education depends upon a breadth of knowledge. Graduates of this

program are well known throughout the industry and the NIU “stamp” bespeaks solid preparation, strong work ethic, and a genuine professionalism both in skills and attitudes. The faculty maintains strong professional contacts (primarily in Chicago). This allows the program to both adjust curriculum and help maintain a strong network with alumina in the area. The program includes promising methods for assessing student learning outcomes (e.g., juried performance reviews and a required final portfolio), however, little quantitative data are currently being collected and analyzed. Greater rigor in collecting and analyzing data related to these student work products could produce valuable insights into program strengths and areas for improvement. Across the review period, alumni report, on average, one hundred percent satisfaction with the program. The delay in the renovation of the Stevens Building has been detrimental to the program, as reflected in a dip in enrollments in the latter part of the review period, but the return to the Stevens Building promises even greater visibility and improved instruction for students.

- Actions taken since the last review: Since the previous review, the program underwent a successful accreditation process through the National Association of Schools of Theatre resulting a full renewal of accreditation for the program (ten years). On the heels of a number of retirements, some successful hires have also taken place since the last review. No substantial curriculum changes were warranted or took place.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review, the program is encouraged to increase retention activities and diligence in assessment processes. While the program has an approved assessment plan in place, there are some gaps in assessment data that make it difficult to see big trends in student learning that may need attention.

Outcome

- Decision:

__x__ Program in good standing (a follow up report on retention and the on the systematic implementation of the program’s assessment plan is due in 2019).

Explanation: The M.F.A. in Theater Arts program is a well-established program with a strong reputation, satisfied alumni, and relatively stable enrollments. Monitoring of retention and assessment is necessary.

Program: B.A. in Music (50.0901)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Music provides a broad

foundation in music for students interested in a liberal arts education that positions them for a range of careers in the music arts. The degree is geared toward a broad coverage of music rather than intensive concentration on a single segment or specialization. Students collaborate in a variety of diverse ensembles (classical, jazz, world) and have frequent opportunities to perform both on and off campus. Careers in music increasingly call for developing skills in areas such as entrepreneurship and self-marketing; technology; and creativity. According to the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, job growth rates for careers for which the B.A. prepares students (e.g., musicians, music directors, composers, sound engineers) are anticipated to range from five to eleven percent in the next six years. The B.A. in Music graduates are also prepared to pursue further study, opportunities in arts administration, or work in non-profit organizations.

- Major findings and recommendations: The B.A. in Music program is rigorous and incorporates a number of high impact practices such as performances and ensemble work. Music faculty regularly assess student performance through end-of-semester juried performance exams, sophomore proficiencies, and the senior recital. Program enrollments have remained steady throughout the review period. The program accounts for approximately one to two percent of all music student enrollments in Illinois public institutions. The percentage of degrees awarded, however, is roughly four to five percent of all Illinois public institution degrees.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, the program has revised its assessment plan such that there are now separate assessment plans for the B.A. in Music and the Bachelor of Music (B.M.) in Music degrees. In addition, the scoring sheet for juried performances has been redesigned to more clearly specify target levels of performance and help reduce rater subjectivity. The program hosted a successful site visit by reviewers from the National Association for Schools in Music (NASM) and was reaccredited in 2013 for the maximum length, ten years.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review, the program plans to implement a portfolio requirement for all students. The program intends to create a recording arts specialization within the degree to meet student demand that is currently being fulfilled through the college-level contract major. The program is encouraged to revise its marketing materials to more clearly differentiate the B.A. in Music from the B.M. in Music degree. Finally, the program is evaluating the structure of the curriculum to make it more attractive to transfer students.

Outcome

- Decision:

 x Program in good standing (review in eight years to align with disciplinary accreditation).

Explanation: The B.A.in Music is a high quality, nationally accredited program staffed by

renowned faculty that provides substantial opportunity for engagement in high impact practices.

Program: M.M. in Music (50.0901)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Music (M.M.) students seek advanced, focused study beyond the baccalaureate degree to advance professionally, whether as performers, educators, or sound engineers. Students pursue the M.M. in Music with one of three specializations: music education, performance, or individualized study. Students pursuing the M.M. in Music with an emphasis in music education are typically already employed and frequently wish to pursue continuing professional development requirements for teaching licensure renewal and/or promotion to a higher salary. To adapt to changes in occupational demand, the School of Music has added more courses in the recording arts (audio, video, and internet/webcasting) that incorporate recent technological changes. To develop greater flexibility as performers and educators the school has added a Middle Eastern Music Ensemble, an Afro-Cuban Music Ensemble, and various ad-hoc ensembles.
- Major findings and recommendations: The M.M. is a demanding program that provides advanced study for students with a broad array of musical interests. Students have numerous co-curricular opportunities to perform and participate in ensembles. The program is a leader in Internet2 technology, hosting performances and masterclasses in partnership with institutions world-wide. The program was reaccredited by the National Association of Schools of Music in 2013 (for ten years until 2023). Enrollments in the program have fluctuated somewhat during the review period, but NIU's share of M.M. in Music enrollments among Illinois public institutions has held relatively steady between nineteen and twenty-one percent. Over the review period the NIU program has accounted for approximately twenty-five percent of M.M. degrees from Illinois public institutions.
- Actions taken since the last review: The program is changing its delivery of summer courses to make them more attractive to both degree seekers and in-service teachers seeking additional professional development. In 2012, the program revised its assessment plan. Of note, a final portfolio option that incorporates state standards for in-service teachers has been created for students with a music education emphasis. In addition, for all students, an electronic portfolio system was adopted to help foster timely degree completion.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The School of Music is beginning a study of opportunities for on-line course delivery targeting music education students. The program is exploring ways to increase recruitment and considering options such as: targeted recruitment, increased graduate student stipends, and greater alumni involvement. The

program is revising its student learning outcomes and anticipates that this process will require additional changes to its assessment plan.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (review in eight years to align with disciplinary accreditation)

Explanation: The M.M. is a high quality program that was reaccredited in 2013. It is the second largest program at an Illinois public institution in terms of both enrollments and degrees conferred.

Program: B.M. in Music (50.0903)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Music (B.M.) students pursue one of three emphases – music education, performance (including jazz), or composition – within the context of an intensive, specialized music curriculum. This professionally focused program is designed to prepare students for careers as K-12 music teachers, musicians, music directors, composers, or sound engineers. Students gain admission to the program through a successful audition. According to the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012 to 2022 growth rates for careers for which the B.M. prepares students are anticipated to range from five percent (for musicians and singers) to twelve percent (for K-12 educators). A recent report by the College Music Society noted that successful performers and music educators need greater emphasis on entrepreneurship, self-marketing, and technology. This has prompted revision of the undergraduate music major curriculum and co-curricular activities to address these topics.
- Major findings and recommendations: The B.M. in Music has a curriculum that is filled with high impact practices such as performances and ensemble work. The program is nationally accredited by the National Association for Schools in Music (NASM). Enrollments have declined somewhat during the review period from one hundred ninety-eight students in 2009 to one hundred seventy-nine students in 2012. However, NIU's share of enrollments at Illinois public institutions remains fairly constant (ranging from thirty-six percent to thirty-three percent during this period). NIU awards approximately thirty-three percent of all B.M. degrees in Illinois public institutions. Students choosing the music education emphasis have had a one hundred percent pass rate on the edTPA exam (a national teacher performance assessment required for state licensure). The program has experienced a decline in degree

completion rates for minority students and is studying this issue to identify its causes.

- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review the program has conducted a curricular review to update course offerings. Enhancements to the jazz curriculum have been proposed and a possible emphasis in jazz is being considered. The School of Music has separated its assessment plans for the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Music and B.M. degrees. The School has developed and is implementing a more structured juried performance rating form. The program instituted a proactive advising intervention for students earning less than a “C” in any music course or any College of Education course required for music educators. The impact of this intervention on retention and degree completion are being evaluated.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review, the program is working to streamline the requirements for its jazz emphasis to make them comparable to its classical emphasis. A portfolio requirement for all B.M. majors is being implemented. The program is encouraged to incorporate more opportunities for students to gain entrepreneurial skills. The program is encouraged to benchmark the credit hour requirements of its competitors to determine whether the current requirements (one hundred thirty-six to one hundred thirty-eight credit hours) are appropriate.

Outcome

- Decision:

__x__ Program in good standing (review in eight years to align with disciplinary accreditation).

Explanation: This nationally accredited program provides rigorous training for music educators and those seeking professional careers in music. The program is one of the largest in the state of Illinois and accounts for approximately thirty-three percent of all enrollments at public institutions.

Program: Performer’s Certificate in Music (50.0903)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Performer’s Certificate (P.C.) in Music is a limited admissions, professional program that primarily trains musicians for performance-related careers. It is intended for highly skilled performers who wish to continue beyond the master’s level in a concentrated period of advanced study. Some performers are judged to be capable of entering the program after completing a bachelor’s degree. The program is designed to be completed in one year, however, some students (particularly international students) elect to

take two years. While the core of the training (individual lessons, complementary independent research, and ensemble participation) remains unchanged, P.C. students increasingly need to develop practical skills to market themselves as independent, often freelance, musicians following graduation.

- Major findings and recommendations: The P.C. in Music is a nationally accredited program that competes with renowned programs such as the Juilliard School, the University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and Indiana University. As with the other programs in the School of Music, students in the P.C. program have numerous performance opportunities and ensemble options. NIU is the only public institution in Illinois to offer the Performer's Certificate in Music. The School of Music is a leader in Internet2 technology enabling P.C. students to reach audiences across the globe. The P.C. program complements the Master of Music program with migration of students occurring between the two programs as students' goals change.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last program review, faculty have revised the assessment plan for the Performer's Certificate to allow for the collection of more objective data on student learning. Implementation of that plan is in the early stages. The program has worked to broaden its appeal to performers outside of the classical genre and has awarded two certificates in the jazz genre. Although NIU has held relatively steady in its number of P.C. students with an average of about twenty-five over the review period, a recent anomalous low of fourteen was reported in Fall 2014. The School of Music is monitoring applications and admissions to investigate this anomaly.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review, the program is encouraged to continue to focus on recruiting and enrolling students. The program is also encouraged to enhance its fundraising efforts in order to provide more support for students. Finally, the program is encouraged to continue implementation of its assessment plan and to use the resulting data for continuous improvement efforts. A follow up report on assessment outcomes is requested in fall 2019.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (follow up report on assessment due in fall 2019).

Explanation: The P.C. in Music is a high-quality program that is unique among public institutions in the state of Illinois. Outcomes of new assessment processes are needed.

Program: B.A./B.S. in Economics (45.0601)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science (B.A./B.S.) in Economics is designed to help students obtain the knowledge and ability to identify the main components of contemporary societal problems of an economic nature using skills that will contribute to their professional success; the ability to use models of the aggregate economy to make predictions about the effect of government policies on economic variables; the ability to use models of economic behavior to make predictions about the economic behavior of individuals and firms; and the ability to communicate in writing their understanding of underlying economic principles of an economic situations, issues, and policies. There are many careers which economics majors can pursue including economist, financial analyst, personal financial advisor, and credit analyst. Demand is high for these occupations as evidenced by the relatively high salaries. In addition, at both the state and national levels, demand for personal financial advisors is expected to grow strongly through 2022 and demand for the other occupations is expected to increase at a moderate rate.
- Major findings and recommendations: There has been a decline in the number of Economics majors since the fall of 2010. The number of majors reached its lowest point in the fall of 2013, with a decline of twenty-three percent. However, there has been a slight increase (up five percent) between fall 2013 and fall 2014. The decline in enrollments is consistent with the trend at other public and private colleges and universities in Illinois, as many other programs have experienced similar or greater enrollment declines. The percentage of undergraduate majors in Economics who are female has remained steady (at around fifteen to sixteen percent during the review period) but the percentage who belong to minority groups has increased substantially (from twenty-seven to forty-one percent during the enrollment period). According to the NIU Alumni Survey, during the review period, employment of graduates ranged from eighty-five to ninety-five percent. A high percentage of graduates expressed satisfaction with their degree, the time needed to complete their degree, and opportunities to participate in culminating senior experiences. Assessment processes are in place and are informing program improvements.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, the program underwent a review by an external reviewer and, as a result of that appraisal, made changes in faculty composition including hiring a second specialist in public sector economics, and hiring a second econometrician who specialized in micro-econometrics to support research in the labor and public economics fields. Also as a result of the review, the program increased course sizes for two lower-level courses.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: Following this review, the program is encouraged to continue to advocate for more faculty members and to offer a wider variety of elective courses for majors. The program has indicated that they would like to offer, on a regular basis, courses in areas such as economic development, economic history, mathematical economics, law and economics, and history of economic thought, to expose students to more

areas of economics.

Outcome

- Decision:

__x__ Program in good standing (review in eight years).

Explanation: Overall, the undergraduate program in economics is very strong. A key strength of the program is the quality and intellectual rigor of the courses which is demonstrated by the data from the assessment of student learning outcomes.

Program: M.A. in Economics (45.0601)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Arts (M.A.) in Economics program is suitable either for students intending to pursue a Ph.D. in Economics or for those seeking a practical program of study to prepare them for technical or administrative positions in business or government. Graduates of the program develop a comprehensive understanding of relevant theory, acquire a mastery of econometric techniques, and analyze applied problems and communicate the results effectively. A strong quantitative and theoretical core provides the foundation for work in one of the three applied fields in which the department focuses (labor economics, public sector economics, and financial economics). There is ongoing demand for economists and they are relatively well paid. In 2014, the median salary for economists in Illinois and in the United States as a whole was about \$120,000. Occupational demand for economists is expected to grow at the same pace as most other occupations over the next decade according to the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. A master's level degree is needed for most professional economics positions.
- Major findings and recommendations: Enrollment levels and degree production during the review period have fallen slightly compared to the previous review period with an average of nine students a year in the M.A. program with approximately twenty percent of those students being minority students and significantly less than that being women. The decline in the M.A. is primarily driven by the fact that financial resources for funding packages must be shared between the M.A. program and the Ph.D. program. Over this review period, the number of students enrolled in the Ph.D. program has increased leaving fewer resources for the M.A. program. Additionally, a larger percentage of the students entering the Ph.D. program hold M.A. degrees from other universities further limiting the enrollment in the

M.A. program from those students seeking an M.A. degree en route to their Ph.D. Of the students enrolled in the M.A. program during the review period, ninety-two percent of them have completed the requirements and have been awarded the degree. Assessment processes for student learning are robust.

- Actions taken since the last review: In addition to some degree of faculty hires, the programmatic changes implemented since the last review include closer monitoring of all students enrolling in independent study courses by the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure the quality and usefulness of these courses. Additionally the program has created a Concentration in Financial Economics as part of the M.A. program to utilize faculty expertise in this area and to attract more students seeking terminal M.A. degrees. Finally, the Department of Economics has joined the new NIU School of Public and Global Affairs (SPGA) linking with the Department of Public Administration, the Department of Political Science, the Center for Government Studies, and the Center for NGO Leadership and Development. SPGA connections are expected to increase interdisciplinary opportunities for students and faculty in the M.A. program.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program is encouraged to continue in their advocacy for additional faculty hires to replace recently retired senior faculty and work to increase program enrollment, in part, through the promotion of the new Concentration in Financial Economics.

Outcome

- Decision:

__x__ Program in good standing (review in eight years).

Explanation: The M.A. in Economics program has robust assessment practices, high graduation and alumni satisfaction rates, and has been developing innovative means to increase enrollments.

Program: Ph.D. in Economics (45.0601)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Economics prepares graduates to teach economics at the university level and to do original research in academe, government, and the private sector. The doctoral program features a strong core of courses in theory and econometrics and a focus on the four applied fields of labor economics, public finance, financial economics, and econometrics. The Ph.D. program also offers a concentration in econometrics and statistics in which a student specializing in econometrics may earn an M.S. in Applied Probability and Statistics while enrolled in the Ph.D. in

Economics program. There is strong continuing labor market demand for economists and they are relatively well paid. In 2014, the median salary for economists in Illinois and in the United States was about \$120,000. Occupational demand for economists is expected to grow at the same pace as most other occupations over the next decade according to the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics with a master's level degree being required for most entry level professional economics positions and a Ph.D. for academic positions as well as most upper level government positions.

- Major findings and recommendations: Average enrollment in the Ph.D. in Economics program was about twenty-seven students over the review period. Women accounted for about thirty percent of the student body and individuals belonging to minorities about twenty percent. This is similar to national averages. Recruitment is greatly aided by the use of Rhoten A. Smith Assistantships for underrepresented groups. Average time to degree completion during the period under review was just under six years with the number of degrees averaging around three per year and attrition rate of just under ten percent. Assessment processes in the program are robust and used for program improvements.
- Actions taken since the last review: Faculty hires have been made since the last review, particularly in the areas of public sector economics and econometrics. As with the M.A. program, there has been closer monitoring of all students enrolling in independent study courses by the Director of Graduate Studies to ensure the quality and usefulness of these courses and the entrance of the Department of Economics into the School of Public and Global Affairs is expected to increase interdisciplinary opportunities for students and faculty.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program is encouraged to continue in their advocacy for additional faculty hires to replace recently retired senior faculty and to reconsider their current policy of not allowing assistant professors to serve on dissertation committees.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (review in eight years).

Explanation: The Ph.D. in Economics program has stable enrollments, a relatively diverse student population, and robust assessment practices used for program improvements.

Program: B.A./B.S. in History (54.0101)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science (B.A./B.S.) in History program prepares students for a wide variety of careers in varied settings, such as business, politics, foreign service, administration, public service, libraries and museums, research, publishing, the law, business, medical school, and teaching. In some of these cases, such as business and medicine, students are encouraged to take significant coursework in areas directly related to their career choices, such as business or science courses. Employment projections for entry-level positions in many of these areas remain strong. Although most available jobs will likely not be directly related to the discipline, history majors should encounter adequate employment opportunities. Graduates of the program are well prepared to go on for advanced degrees in history. In addition, the program makes significant contributions to the education of non-majors. The percentage of baccalaureate enrollment that occurs outside the major has stayed steady throughout the review period at around seventy to seventy-two percent. The department serves numerous minors, certificates, and interdisciplinary majors.
- Major findings and recommendations: The diversity in available coursework is one of the major strengths of the B.A./B. S. Faculty offer courses on most areas of the world. There are numerous research opportunities for majors because many faculty act as official and unofficial mentors. Majors have participated in a range of engaged learning opportunities offered by the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning such as Research Rookies, Undergraduate Research and Artistry Day, Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program, Undergraduate Research Assistantships, and Undergraduate Special Opportunities in Artistry and Research. History faculty also serve many non-majors through courses offered for general education and as components of other majors, minors, and certificates. Majors in the program, however, are on the decline with only about half of the number of majors (two hundred forty-five) in 2014 compared to the number enrolled in the previous review. Annual assessment data show that students consistently meet or exceed expectations for the program's eleven student learning outcomes. Alumni report high levels of satisfaction with their degree (ranging from eighty-six to ninety-seven percent across the review period) and with their writing skills development (ranging from ninety-six to one hundred percent across the review period).
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review the department has reflected on its undergraduate course offerings, both in light of the review and in response to the major findings of the assessments concerning the capstone course, History 495. In recent years improvements have been made in ensuring better preparation of students for the capstone course with successful results. One specific example, in 2013, as a result of evident student problems with citation and English usage, the department as a whole approved a standard departmental writing guide in order to provide greater consistency of writing and citation expectations across all courses. Other changes include encouraging transfer students to take HIST 295 in their second semester at NIU and implementing a mid-major assessment tied to HIST 295. Faculty have also increased active learning at all levels.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program is encouraged to focus more on recruitment of majors in the program. Recently, the department received an extremely generous donation. Revenue from this foundation account will be used to provide

scholarships for recruitment and/or retention, including diversity recruitment and/or retention, and to support student research which are the top priorities for improvements to the program. The new scholarships and research funding for majors will be implemented during coming two to three academic years.

Outcome

- Decision:

 x Program in good standing (review in eight years).

Explanation: The program has demonstrated successful assessment of student learning outcomes and the use of results for program improvement. The program also has both the funding and planning necessary to address changes in enrollment.

Program: M.A. in History (54.0101)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Master of Arts (M.A.) in History program is designed to provide its graduates with the abilities to demonstrate command of a primary field and the historiography related to it; to read historical works with comprehension and evaluate historical arguments critically; to locate and evaluate historical sources; and to communicate effectively. The M.A. program in History features a balanced curriculum designed to help students develop the critical reading and research skills central to the discipline and to prepare them for a variety of careers. Graduate seminars are small (limited to a maximum of fifteen students) and highly interactive. Instructors concentrate not only on providing field coverage but also on fostering skills of analysis, synthesis, and effective communication. Students are given ample opportunity, both inside and outside of the classroom, to debate a range of historical interpretations with their instructors and with each other and are encouraged to polish their research papers for presentation at conferences or for publication in professional journals. The program also offers options in public history and global history. While knowledge in the discipline of history is always evolving, no major shifts in the discipline have occurred in recent years that would impact the program.
- Major findings and recommendations: Enrollment in the M.A. program has fallen somewhat in the last five years (from thirty-four students enrolled in 2010 to twenty-five in 2014). One possible reason for declining M.A. enrollment in History is the rise of online graduate education, an area that has grown in the field substantially since 2015. However, the M.A. program has robust enrollment from women (ranging from thirty-eight to fifty-six percent of the enrollments during the review period) and minorities (increasing dramatically over the review period from six to twenty percent). Since 2009, twenty to twenty-five M.A. students

have presented their work at the NIU History Graduate Student Association Conference. Students from other programs also attend this conference affording an opportunity for professional networking and peer interaction. M.A. graduates regularly find employment related to their training or go on to Ph.D. work at prestigious institutions, and alumni report very high levels of satisfaction with the program (nearly one hundred percent throughout the review period).

- Actions taken since the last review: No major changes have occurred since the last program review, which occurred right after the department had passed major program reforms. In an effort to improve degree progress and completion, the department introduced mandatory advising for all M.A. students.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program has identified and is encouraged to work on the following areas for improvement. First, the program will work to identify, recruit, and retain diverse students by coordinating with the B.A./B.S. program, continuing to use university resources, and leveraging a new Foundation fund that has become available. Second, the program will work on utilizing alumni as a resource for program improvement to understand strengths and weaknesses and to help provide internship and clinical placements. Third the program will explore expanding professional development for teachers. In part this can take place via expanded online or blended courses, a process the department has initiated in Summer 2016.

Outcome

- Decision:

 x Program in good standing (review in eight years).

Explanation: The program has demonstrated a record of program improvement and has both the funding and planning necessary to address changes in enrollment.

Program: Ph.D. in History (54.0101)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Doctor of Philology (Ph.D.) in History program prepares students primarily for the academic job market, but some Ph.D. graduates have found employment in other, history-related areas. Most recent Ph.D. graduates teach in a variety of institutions, and many continue to be active researchers. The history Ph.D. program also prepares students for a wide variety of careers in varied settings, such as business, politics,

foreign service, administration, public service, libraries and museums, research, publishing, the law, business, medical school, and teaching.

- Major findings and recommendations: The Ph.D. in History program has a long record of student career success. It efficiently assists students in completing the degree on time and with significant acquisition of knowledge, skills, and abilities as demonstrated by assessment data showing that the majority of students meet or exceed all program learning outcomes. The program promotes excellent research, and the outcome of this strength is evinced by the fact that Ph.D. students and graduates frequently present papers at regional and national conferences. The graduate programs engage the larger disciplinary community by hosting an annual scholarly conference that brings other graduate students from across the region and nation, offering considerable professional development opportunities. The program also has a good record of recruiting, retaining, and graduating women in a discipline that is still largely populated by men. Throughout the review period, the female student population was nearly half of the total student population in the program. The number of students from minority groups is much smaller, ranging from only two to three throughout the review period. Time to degree completion varies widely and is an area of concern.
- Actions taken since the last review: No major changes have occurred since the last program review, which occurred right after the department had passed major program reforms. In an effort to improve degree progress and completion, the department introduced more regular advising for all graduate students and increased teaching of independent sections to foster professional development and improve employability. Through the auspices of the History Graduate Student Association, faculty regularly offer workshops on different aspects of professionalization.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The program is encouraged to work to identify, recruit, and retain students to maintain and strengthen the diversity of the graduate student community. In part this can be done by reaching into the M.A. program and by advertising more heavily at institutions that traditionally serve underrepresented populations. The program is also encouraged to work on various matters internally to strengthen the learning process and degree completion in the Ph.D. program. While previous curricular reforms have strengthened the Ph.D. program, concerns about improving degree progress and completion remain and the department will continue to work on this important matter.

Outcome

- Decision:

___x___ Program in good standing (follow up report on diversity recruitment and student time to degree completion due in fall 2020).

Explanation: The program is robust and has plans for increased diversity recruitment and improvement of student time to degree completion.

Program: Center for Burma Studies (60.0501A)

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The Center for Burma Studies (CBS) mission is to assemble, curate, and exhibit collections for the study of Burma and to provide access to those materials for instruction, research, and scholarship nationally and globally. CBS publishes the *Journal of Burma Studies* and the *Bulletin of the Burma Studies Group*, organizes exhibitions and local and international conferences, manages an endowment for Burmese librarianship, and secures grants for Burmese studies.
- Major findings and recommendations: The CBS provides unique opportunities to study Burma, its language, and its culture that do not exist anywhere else outside of Burma/Myanmar. The Center supports thirty-one courses with more than twenty-five percent content on Burma. The Center has received funding from the Asia Foundation, the Asia Art Council, the Royal Thai Fund and the U.S. Department of Education as well as Elizabeth Plotnick Endowment, the Cobb Grant, the NIU Foundations, and a Venture Grant totaling \$93,680.00 since 2008.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, the CBS engaged a professional conservator to assess the storage facilities for the fine art collection. The report issued by the conservator in February 2016 indicated needed adjustments. The CBS is in planning with Facilities to implement the recommendations. Since the last review, *The Journal of Burma Studies* has been made available as an online publications and the CBS is currently in the process of putting the *Bulletin of the Burma Studies Group* online as well.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: The Director of the CBS will be preparing a comprehensive catalogue on the NIU Burmese Art Collection to be completed by 2018. The Center is encouraged to create an Advisory Board Committee.

Outcome

- Decision:

 x Program in good standing (review in eight years).

Explanation: The Center for Burma Studies is a unique asset to NIU with a stellar reputation regionally, nationally, and internationally. It supports research and artistry, teaching, and service at NIU.

Program: Art Museum

Major Findings and Recommendations:

- Major changes in the program: The NIU Art Museum has been impacted by state financial cuts and yet the Museum has found a balance of operational funding through related organizational support via collaborative partnerships with other units on campus and of external support through grants and increased earned income, most recently, from having added fees for exhibition entry calls, and the development of extended weekend excursion programs. Challenges have been met and dealt with through innovative internal restructuring including alteration of the museum's program calendar in an attempt to maintain quality with fewer resources yet offer more programming.
- Major findings and recommendations: Demand for the activities and services of the NIU Art Museum is demonstrated through tallied attendance records for exhibitions, educational programs, excursions, group tours, membership records and requests for collection loans and professional consultations. The Museum serves on average, close to ten thousand visitors and program guests per annual exhibition season with approximately seventy percent of its group tours coming from within the university. Membership levels are renewed at an average of eighty-five percent with increasing levels of membership at the higher giving levels. As evidence of its outcomes and achievements, the Museum has maintained a minimum of four out of five as final average score from the Illinois Arts Council Agency (IACA) Visual Arts Program Peer Panel Review. Peer Reviewers are comprised of Directors and Curators of cultural arts institutions around the state. The Museum has been awarded over \$56,000.00 in general operating support from the IACA during this review period.
- Actions taken since the last review: Since the last review, the NIU Art Museum has continued to maintain its reputation as a respected institution serving the campus, local community, and the region. It has demonstrated creative and flexible problem solving in dealing with budgetary and human resource limitations. It has continued to innovate and collaborate with a growing number of academic and community partners. During this time, the Art Museum has become increasingly involved with the NIU Interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies program through its commitment to regular partnerships and through its staff engagement in teaching and presentations.
- Actions taken as a result of this review: As a result of this review, the NIU Art Museum is encouraged to continue to seek out alternative fundraising activities and outreach to NIU students. The Museum is encouraged to increase engagement in cross-promotional and collaborative activities with other community organizations and university units to promote awareness of the Museum.

Outcome

- Decision:

___ x___ Program in good standing (review in five years).

Explanation: The NIU Art Museum is a respected institution serving the campus, local community, and the region. It has addressed budgetary and human resource limitations in a creative and flexible manner and continues to develop innovative partnerships.