

what : Curriculum Committee, Minutes to Meeting of 7 October 2011

in attendance —

Committee Members: Gordon Arnold, Gabrielle Keller, John McVey, Marjorie Augenbraum, Caroline Bagenal

Presenting: Mark Hoffmann, Blyth Hazen, Laura Tonelli,

- 1 Blyth Hazen presented the AIM Course Change: adds one more requirement to the AIM required courses. Revision made to rationale (reference to Design Seminar prep).

All in Favor

- 2 Mark Hoffmann – Illustration: Change in program requirements: remove Survey as a requirement, but remain as an elective. It would be an opportunity as a team taught course. A new requirement may be added such as Web Authoring I.

ACTION: Correct Tally Sheet to reflect total as 63 credits – change 1 credit courses should be 1.5 credits, not 62 credits.

All in Favor

- 3 From Spring 2011: Requirement Change for name change for Painting II.

All in Favor

- 4 Art Since 1945 – change in level from 300 level to 200 level is a required course. It would be the only 200 level course.

All in Favor

discussion/concerns —

- a Course builds skills in writing at the 200 level and is a foundation for paper writing component. This would be a necessity to cover certain topics are essential to study the in depth study for the next level course. It is similar to Art History I and II – needs to be a groundwork for Contemporary Class. Need a level of understanding to take the next course proposed. This is a foundation survey class.
- b The title is outdated language: There was a suggestion to create the whole sequence by making this Art History III or 20th Century Art or Art History III: Art since 1945.
- c We need to update the course to be more global and not American. Everyone teaches it differently. Safe assumption to say that we are trying to teach on a more global level.
- d Require more recent art first.
- e Do we need the two semester survey?
- f There should not be only one 200 level course in Art History. Action: APC is talking about 200 level versus 300 level. Levels used to be by year, as a second year requirement.
- g Ripple effect to other departments (ie Graphic Design requires this course as a 300 level Art History).

h LA/AH encouraged to review course description, course title.

See appended memo from Gordon Arnold.

- 5 Contemporary Art in a Global Perspective: Deletion of phrase from first sentence. This would be an elective and provide a more in depth look. Seminar style class.
All in Favor
question for discussion —
What should everyone know about the Art History by the time they leave here?
- 6 Animation Pre-Production: Cross list with Illustration Department.
Rationale is very well written and might be added to the course description.
All in Favor (in present form or with change to description)
- 7 Art and Gender: New Course – 300 level
Replaces History of Women in Art –considered an Art Ed diversity requirement.
All in Favor
- 8 History of Women in Art –delete from course offerings
All in Favor
- 9 Committee Approved reformatted course and program requirement change forms for use in discussions in Committee, and for presentation to Faculty Meeting)
- 10 Committee agreed to add issues of discussion as feedback to chair presenting change to curriculum as part of the record for change. Attach specifics directly to the proposal.

Next meeting is Friday December 2st at 11:30.

Minutes taken by Sharon McManus, revised by John McVey (13 October 2011)

11 appendix

Communication from Gordon Arnold to the Committee, and to others involved in Art History course change proposals, 9 October 2011 (revised 11 October)

To reiterate what I said at the curriculum committee meeting, I think the time is fast approaching when the college as a whole should revisit what, exactly, it is that we collectively think students should know about art history. (Really, we could say this about any area, but art history does arguably have a more obvious central role in the training for artists.)

In a liberal arts college, I suppose such a question, when asked with regard to any specific discipline, might best be addressed within that disciplinary context – in this case, art history. Certainly such people are the experts on that worldview. At an art college, though, the question is bigger and presumably one that of more than one of hypothetical interest to people

outside that discipline, especially to the studio art folks who are the practitioners of the field that art history chronicles and interprets. I teach outside those areas and so do not have a strong opinion. But as a philosophical matter that is important, I urge some sort of discussion that will shed light on the various viewpoints (presuming there are several) about what it is about art history that our students should learn. I mean this in a “broad concepts,” “major areas,” “major eras” kind of way, not as a call to collectively micromanage the precise details of courses.

It seems to me that it’s possible we have things backwards by requiring the earliest art history — some of which I gather is even pre-history — but then getting increasingly optional as we approach the present day. Now, I personally love history in all areas and studied many remote areas and eras as an undergraduate myself. I do very much value a long historical view regardless of the topic. But no matter what we require in art history, it does seem to me that it might be a good idea to think about emphasizing the recent era more than we do, and perhaps even earlier in the usual course of studies than we do.

As practicing artists, our graduates enter the context as it is today. So if it were up to me, I would emphasize our current era at least as much as more ancient history of the discipline. And I would start much sooner. And I would do this whether or not the academic discipline of art history had this as a prevailing view.

Art history is a rather interesting case as an academic discipline. Most disciplines — actually, all that I am aware of — have a strand of scholarship dealing with their histories. Mathematicians have history of mathematics; economists have history of economics; medical doctors have history of medicine, and so forth. It is common, however, for these strands of scholarship to be either located within the discipline itself, or else quite closely allied to it. But the relationship between art history and studio art does not seem, from

what I can tell, much like this. Artists and art historians do not seem to have the same points of view, the same emphases, the same assumptions about what, in fact, is going on and about what has gone, at least in terms of what is important and what it means. I think this adds a wrinkle to our curricular situation that everybody realizes, if they think about it, but no one wishes to say aloud.

I mention this simply to encourage the studio and art history camps — and I can tell you that as an outsider, these seem like camps to me — to rethink the entirety of the art history sequence at the college, to see what agreement we do or don’t have, and to explore ways to generate some consensus where needed. I think we should then revisit the art history requirements overall, if this is deemed to be needed, rather than reconfiguring the requirements in the bits and pieces approach that is a lot easier, perhaps, but ultimately is just pushing bigger decisions off into the future.

At some point, as new knowledge and perspectives come into play, we will eventually either have to start editing what we require, or else expand the credits we mandate. It does not seem conceptually possible to think that we (or any college) can continually add more content without ever taking anything out.

I am older and will likely retire in a few years, and I have no personal stake in these questions. Moreover, I very much value both studio art and art history, even though these are not my professional areas. So I am certainly not intending to be critical of what we are doing now or dismissive of any point of view people may have. Instead, I am writing this more as a comment on the future and how we can start dealing with some things that I gather are difficult.

Just a few thoughts to take or leave, as you think best.

— Gordon