

Cornell College
Departmental/ Program Assessment Plan
Assessment Project Outline

Department / Program: *Art and Art History*

Person Submitting this Form: professor Anthony Plaut, chair

Date: 2011

Outcome Being Assessed:

5 -- "All senior majors will engage in a conversation (oral defense) with Department of Art and Art History faculty to explicate and defend their own creative choices or research projects"

(Aligns with Learning Objective #5 "Be cognizant of their responsibilities for individual civic and social choices")

Assessment Questions:

Given the outcome being assessed, what do we want to find out? What information will be useful to us?

- 1) Are we asking our students appropriate questions in the defense session?*
- 2) Are they adequately prepared to answer these questions?*
- 3) Is extemporaneous speaking the best format?*
- 4) Should this be a testing session or a teaching session, or some combination?*

Intended Uses of the Assessment:

How will the results of the assessment be used? How can we assure the information will be useful to us?

The results of this assessment may prompt us to maintain our current practice or the results may prompt us to entirely reconsider the value and structure of our defense sessions. We have not been fully satisfied with this aspect of our capstone for many years. We are willing and ready to assess the oral defense sessions.

Gathering and Analyzing Evidence:

What evidence will be collected?

We will review our notes and conversations from recent defense sessions to locate weak / strong student performance and match this to the student's performance elsewhere in the department.

We will learn what other schools (undergraduate and graduate) do in similar capstone sessions.

We can contact recent graduates of our department and ask them to share their perspectives on their oral defense experience.

How will evidence be analyzed and by whom?

We will handle this internally via conversations with the five faculty who have conducted these oral defense sessions.

Specifically what question is being addressed?

Do our defense session expectations align with our teaching and student learning?

What is the student's benefit from preparing for the session?

What is the student's benefit from enduring session?

When will data be collected and analyzed?

Academic year 2011-12.

Interpreting Evidence:

What strategy will be used to make meaning of the results? How will we ensure we use the information? Our plan for interpreting the results and using them to inform our practice is:

Minor improvements or experiments can be put into practice during the 2012-13 academic year. If we broadly re-structure the session, perhaps we will need to phase in the new approach so it aligns with other department practices.

Involvement:

Who will be involved in this assessment project? What role will each of us play?

These sessions are a department wide experience and we will include the entire regular teaching faculty in the assessment process. The exact division of labor is yet to be determined.