ART DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT PLAN

I. Department Goals
The Art Department is committed to continuous assessment of our students’ learning. Even though we have numerous goals, the following four goals contain a broad overview of what we are consistently striving to accomplish in our students’ lives.

#1 The Art Department strives to open students’ eyes to what the visual arts do, and have done, in our lives. Students will develop educated standards of judgment and be open to a greater understanding of the multifaceted components and diverse perspectives of aesthetic judgment, as well as utilize a wide variety of media to incorporate those standards effectively. By engaging in a variety of historical, intellectual and art making explorations, students will develop a knowledgeable critical attitude in order to make more informed decisions and judgments in a field for which there are few indisputable rules, no singular solutions, and no formula or right or wrong ways to create art.

#2 In efforts to improve the quality of students’ formal written and verbal presentations, students will learn to use the proper language of the visual arts as appropriate for critical analysis, use proper terminology of media and technique when critiquing and/or analyzing personal works of art or works of others, and use proper research and documentation skills when writing about art.

#3 Students will be helped to develop and consider the concept of a personal, Christian art that reflects an inner Christian attitude rather than a specific content or style. Students will be assisted in moving beyond the recognized popular evangelical or “religious” understanding of art as they engage in the making, understanding, and appreciation of art.

#4 Students will be given opportunities to stretch themselves beyond what is comfortable in order to purposefully seek opportunities for innovative and creative self-understanding, open-ended discovery, and new perspectives on the power of art.

II. Goal Strategies and Frequencies
In all studio assignments the Art Department is fortunate to have the benefit of a measurable product. It is easy for us to employ a large variety of assessment strategies, and we do so with great frequency in all of our classes. In history of art classes, tests, papers, discussion, and research projects aid in assessing the extent to which the course goals are being met.
A. **GOAL #1** Students will develop educated standards of judgment and be open to a greater understanding of the multifaceted components and diverse perspectives of aesthetic judgment, as well as a wide variety of media to incorporate those standards effectively. Students will develop an informed critical attitude in order to make more informed decisions and judgments.

- addressing the issue that creating art that deliberately does not last speaks to a contemporary aesthetic (ongoing: Ceramics, Crafts, Design)
- discussion/debate of the beauty of ugliness (ongoing: Crafts, Theory and Criticism, Design, Principles of Art)
- class critiques/peer critiques (ongoing: all studio courses)
- student exhibitions: Sophomore Project, Senior Show (each Spring)
- general student exhibitions: library gallery, student website gallery (start up in Spring 2004, and will be ongoing each semester)
- 20th Century Art as an added requirement to the major: educating tolerance of contemporary art forms and being open to new things (Art History: every 4th semester)
- Compare and contrast exercises (Survey of Western Art I, II)
- quick writes, reflection statements, progress statements, “position” papers (ongoing: all courses)
- student-led discussions (each spring: Theory and Criticism)
- Revelation in Genesis Project (special grant project engaged in F/S 2002-03)
- Criticism Project (semester-long project each Spring: Theory and Criticism)

B. **Goal #2** Students will learn to use the proper language of the visual arts as appropriate for critical analysis, and also use proper terminology of media and technique when critiquing and/or
analyzing personal works of art or works of others, and use proper research and documentation skills when writing about art.

- student contracts (ongoing: Crafts)
- student reflections (ongoing: all courses)
- peer critiques (ongoing: all studio courses)
- quizzes on vocabulary and tool usage (each semester: Printmaking, Crafts, Drawing, Sculpture, Principles of Art, Ceramics, Computer Graphics, Painting, Watercolor, all Art History courses)
- critique reviews of gallery exhibitions (each semester: all studio classes)
- student presentations (each semester: Design, Art for Children, Sculpture, Watercolor, Principles of Art)
- Sophomore Project: verbal and visual public critique (each spring)
- Revelation in Genesis Project
- writing artist’s statements to accompany major assignments or specific bodies of work (each semester: Crafts, Printmaking, Senior Seminar, Drawing, Watercolor, Sophomore Project)
- quick writes (ongoing: all classes)
- compare-and-contrast essays, and essay questions (each semester: Art for Children, Art History, Theory and Criticism)
- presentations to Reynolds Gallery Art Council (selected students on occasion)
- Semester Projects (Upper Division Art History classes)

**Goal #3** Students will be helped to develop the concept of a personal, Christian art that reflects an inner Christian attitude rather than a specific content or style. Students will be assisted in moving beyond the recognized popular evangelical or “religious” understanding of art as they engage in both the making of art and in their appreciation of art.

- slide lectures and informal conversations (occasionally: Theory and Criticism, Principles of Art, some measure in all classes)
• conversation and directed exercises in discussing the fact that ugly can be profound (each semester: Theory and Criticism, Crafts, Principles of Art, Design)

• aesthetics debates (each semester: Art for Children, Design, Theory and Criticism, Senior Seminar)

• thematic content assignments without the use of religious cliché (Drawing, Crafts, Computer Graphics, Watercolor, student exhibitions (library, senior show, website, Sophomore Project)

• gallery program and artists’ talks (each semester)

• creating a personal Symbol of Faith (Fall semester: Crafts)

• reflective responses to contemporary works and issues (each semester: Theory and Criticism, 20th Century Art, Crafts)

• Revelation in Genesis Project

• examination of the concept of “Christian Art” (Art and Worship)

Goal #4 Through a variety of situations and specific problem-solving opportunities, students will stretch themselves beyond what is comfortable in order to purposefully seek innovative and creative self-understanding and open-ended discovery.

• the value of studio time (ongoing: all classes)

• artist’s studio visits and visiting guest artists (each semester: Crafts, Design, Painting, Printmaking, Sculpture, Computer Graphics, Principles of Art)

• personal reflection statements directed toward risk taking (ongoing: all classes)

• journal sketchbooks as documentation of work process (each semester: Crafts, Drawing, Printmaking, Watercolor, Ceramics, Design)

• portfolio development (ongoing: all studio courses)

• student website (upcoming Spring 04)
• student exhibitions (yearly)

• student-submitted test questions (each semester: all Art History classes)

• quick writes (ongoing; all classes)

• Revelation in Genesis Project

• responses to all readings (all Art History classes)

• material culture courses (Art in Worship, Art of Travel)

III. College-wide Goals

In engaging the six Learning Outcomes the Art Department contributes in numerous ways to the outward effects of the College Mission Statement, Learning Standards, and Desires for Graduates. For the current review cycle the Art Department has decided to focus on particular elements within the Critical Thinking, Written and Oral Communication, Technology, and Active-Societal Engagement standards. Since our initial department assessment in 2000, the Art Department has been actively involved in engaging ALL of the criteria delineated in our department review. Also, in establishing our 5-year plan, we have met and exceeded all but two of our six goals. The following departmental and college-wide goals that remain on our 5-year plan will be emphasized in this review cycle.

FOR THE CURRENT REVIEW CYCLE WE WILL:

A. Develop formal guidelines and varied criteria in individual courses that will help students articulate evidences of improved oral and written communication skills. It is evident to us that our students need more practice speaking and writing with a concerted effort to better communicate by using proper art terminology (Critical Thinking, Written and Oral Communication Standards).

B. Develop new internships and expand our internship offerings particularly in the realms of education, design and computer graphics. Working more closely with the director of internships will help us provide a greater number of opportunities for art students to find practical applications for their learning (Active-Societal Engagement Standard).

C. Develop a student gallery on the Art Department website. Due to lack of exhibition space for ongoing exhibition of student work, and due to the
frequent requests by prospective students to view current student work, we must take the time to invest in this form of communication. At the time of the initial department assessment we were looking forward to occupying our new building and taking advantage of the designated student gallery space. We now realize the additional need for a web-based gallery that will be useful for both recruitment and student feedback (Technology Standard).

**College-wide Goals Assessment Strategies**
The Art Department would like to point out that nowhere in the document “What We Want For Our Graduates” is creativity and invention mentioned. The Art Department recommends that the document be amended to correct this exclusion. In striving to fill the resulting void in this area we will continue to stretch our students and provide them with opportunities to visually and interpretively exhibit what they have learned. By doing so, we will carry out the aforementioned strategies in order to ascertain student fulfillment of college-wide goals.

Also, each member of our department is continually mindful of the non-major students who take our classes as electives for enrichment. Each faculty member is dedicated to engage these students and evaluate them at their particular skill level. It is important that we keep our standards high and assess these students in the same manner as our majors, but we do make concerted effort to adjust certain evaluative aspects for particular skill levels.

**IV. Structures for On-going Conversations**

A. We will schedule bi-monthly department meetings with a program review topic to be addressed at each session.

B. We will specifically address our progress at each semester’s end, and make efforts to consistently and diligently hone our offerings by this method. An end-of-semester Ale and Assessment Bash sounds good to us!

C. We will continue to record and format the minutes of our departmental meetings for quick reference, precise documentation, and ease in following our prescribed progress (see attached sample).

D. Since our department has never been reviewed by an outside source, we are interested in bringing an outside reviewer (perhaps a WASC representative) to objectively assess our program and to make recommendations for improvement.
V. Closing the Loop

Each major source of data that we discuss, collect, and use will be intended to unify our department and its offerings. We intend to use this feedback to encourage every member of our department to make gradual changes to their own comfort zones, and to diligently strive to revitalize assignments and evaluative procedures for student feedback.

VI. Current Discussion Points

A. How do we promote competition amongst our students in order to push them to spend more quality time in the studio and consequently create better, more passionate, work?
   1. have more student shows/ library is now equipped to do that
   2. institute one-person student exhibitions with monetary prize incentive
   3. create a Work-of-the-Month exhibition
   4. institute a student jury/hanging committee as well as faculty input

B. How do we help students respond to current events, hot topics, personal struggles, and help them passionately respond to them?
   1. create issue-based projects in most courses

C. Students, as a whole, have admitted a general sense of apathy. How do we help them find personal ownership in what they are doing?
   1. create issue-based projects in most courses
   2. instructor-based intervention (discussion, proposition, debate) for alternative perspectives

D. Our obligation is to offer students an education that challenges them to do their very best, and to think deeply about what it means to do one’s best. How do we make a concerted effort to invite students to think about the “nature of work” and its place in life? What does it mean to do “good work” as a Christian? What does it mean to follow one’s vocation in one’s work, and how has the college experience helped mold students with a sense of ownership of their major?

E. How do we define excellence?
   1. Work-of-the-month exhibit will offer incentive to excellence